



# environmental affairs

Department:  
Environmental Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Ref:02/1/5/2

## NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

(For written reply)

QUESTION NO. 2363 {NW2608E}

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 28 of 2017

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**Mr N Singh (IFP) to ask the Minister of Environmental Affairs:**

In respect of the biodiversity compliance workshop that her department hosted with muti traders and traditional leaders in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal on 8 June 2017, what (a) were the outcomes of the workshop and (b) steps are being taken by her department to prevent the continuing trade in critical and endangered species at the Durban and other muti markets in operation around the country? NW2608E

### 2363. THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS REPLIES:

- (a) The compliance promotion and awareness workshop held on 08 June 2017 produced positive outcomes in relation to the implementation of the department's environmental legislation. The workshop provided:
- i) the competent authorities (national Department of Environmental Affairs, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife and Ethekwini Municipality) with an opportunity to present to the traditional healers, muti traders and muti collectors all applicable environmental legislation and to promote awareness of all legal requirements that have to be complied with when they carry out their business;
  - ii) the traditional healers and muti traders and muti collectors with an opportunity to provide an insight into their understanding of the various legal requirements that they have to comply with;

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- iii) the traditional healers, muti traders and muti collectors with an opportunity to provide proof of their willingness to comply with environmental legislation and the steps or initiatives undertaken to ensure that they operate within the ambit of the law; and
- iv) the traditional healers, muti traders and muti collectors also had an opportunity to highlight the challenges and frustration they encounter in respect of the permit application process and the delay in issuing permits by some of the authorities. They also requested authorities to consider reviewing the duration of the permit with a view to increasing the validity period from one year to two or three years.

The highlight of the workshop was the announcement by Mr Zihlahlazemithi Cele (a traditional healer from the area of uMlazi, who has cultivated more than 500 indigenous plants species with medicinal value) that he no longer harvests from the wild. The department is accordingly encouraging all traditional healers to be like Mr Cele and establish their own muti-gardens.

- (b) The department is working with all relevant stakeholders in the province, namely, the South African Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), the provincial environmental authorities, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife, the eThekweni Municipality and the leadership of traditional healers to ensure that there is increasing compliance with environmental legislation. The department is working closely with Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife which is a permitting authority in the province to ensure that permits are issued as speedily as possible. These initiatives are aimed at preventing the trade in critical and endangered species at the various muti markets in operation around the country and is the first phase of an ongoing compliance drive being pioneered in this economic and medicinal sector.

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