



**forestry, fisheries
& the environment**

Department:
Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Ref: O2/1/5/2

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

(For written reply)

QUESTION NO. 1605 {NW1931E}

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 15 of 2022

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Ms A M M Weber (DA) to ask the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment:

- (1) (a) Where in the Republic do we still find the red data fish species of *Chiloglanis Bifurcus* and (b) how does her department intend to assist to ensure that this Red Data species of *Chiloglanis Bifurcus* does not become extinct due to the Elandsplaagte Gold mine right next to Houtbosloop Valley that is the habitat of the *Chiloglanis Bifurcus* fish;
- (2) (a) how does her department intend to keep the Elandshoogte Gold Mine accountable to ensure that the water does not get contaminated thus ensuring that the fish stay alive and (b) communities will still be allowed to fish;
- (3) whether she has found that the water quality will be safe for fishing; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?

1605. THE MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT REPLIES:

- (1) (a) This species has a restricted distribution and is endemic to the Inkomati River System. Within this system, it is restricted to altitudes between 900 m.a.s.l. and 1 200 m.a.s.l. It historically occurred in the Crocodile and Elands rivers and in some of its sub-tributaries (Elands, Ngodwana, Gladdespruit and Stadspruit) (Kleynhans, 1984). Recently, it was only sampled from a small section of the Elands and Crocodile rivers, as well as in a few tributaries of the Mlumati River in South Africa and Swaziland.

- (b) The distribution range of Incomati Suckermouth is entirely within privately owned land without any formal conservation protection. The two remaining subpopulations need to be given priority for conservation efforts. Land and water use practices need to be managed carefully and the stocking of alien organisms needs to be stopped. The most effective way might be through conservancy agreements with riparian landowners and the Mpumalanga Parks Board. The Elands River and its tributaries have been identified as priority freshwater environments for fish conservation and are listed as fish sanctuaries in the National Freshwater Ecosystem Priority Areas (NFEPA) (Driver et al., 2011).

(2) (a) and (b)

Please refer the matter to the Mpumalanga Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs (DARDLEA).

(3) Please refer the matter to the Mpumalanga DARDLEA.

Regards



**MS B D CREECY, MP
MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

DATE: 13/5/2022