



## environmental affairs

Department:  
Environmental Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Ref: 02/1/5/2

MINISTER

QUESTION NO. 294 FOR WRITTEN REPLY: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

A draft reply to Mr R K Purdon (DA) to the above-mentioned question is enclosed for your consideration.

MS NOSIPHO NGCABA  
DIRECTOR-GENERAL

DATE:

DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED

DR B E E MOLEWA, MP  
MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

DATE:

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

(For written reply)

**QUESTION NO. 294 {NW313E}**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 4 of 2017**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION: 23 February 2017**

**Mr R K Purdon (DA) to ask the Minister of Environmental Affairs:**

(1) Whether (a) her department and (b) the SA National Parks (SANParks) have found that surrounding local communities have been influenced by and are participating in the illegal trade in wildlife and poaching in and around the Kruger National Park; if not, what are the relevant details; if so, what plans have been put in place by (i) her department and (ii) SANParks to regulate the illegal trade in wildlife and poaching in the surrounding communities;

(2) whether SANParks has put a strategic plan in place to work with other government departments to combat poaching both inside and outside of the Kruger National Park; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?      NW313E

## 294. THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS REPLIES:

(1)

Yes, (a) (b) (i) and (ii) the department has found that some members of the local communities have been influenced to participate in the illegal trade in wildlife and poaching in and around the Kruger National Park. There have been instances where some of the community members are used by syndicates to pouch and support those pouchers.

Clarity needs to be given that the approach by the department and the South African National Parks is to combat, root out and stop both illegal trade and poaching, and therefore not to regulate such. Our mandate is to ensure that legal trade is well regulated hence the numerous regulations including Threatened or Protected Species Regulations (TOPS) of 2007, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Regulations of 2010, associated norms and standards, and such complemented by the permitting system adjudicated according to provincial ordinances. The Integrated Rhino Management Approach, being implemented for an example, provides a focused prioritisation of law enforcement, community engagement, biological management, and responsive legislation as its tenants. The implementation of the environmental monitors programme provides an effective interface with the local community. This complemented by the implantation of the People and Parks Programme contributes in the fight against illegal trade and poaching.

### **Additional Information**

(a) Department of Environmental Affairs

#### **❖ The National Biodiversity Economy Strategy:**

The National Biodiversity Economy Strategy is a 14 year strategy which is aimed at addressing developmental and growth constrains of the Biodiversity Economy in South Africa, focusing on the Bioprospecting/biotrade and wildlife subsectors, in particular. The National Biodiversity Economy Strategy serves as a suitable strategic tool to achieve this anticipated sustainable advancement for these subsectors. The strategy also recognises the significance of sustainability of these sectors through ensuring that the ecological infrastructure is safeguarded, as well as that various stakeholders play significant roles, especially the rural communities in and around areas with high biological resources, and the protected areas being one of these. The vision of the National Biodiversity Economy Strategy is to optimise economic benefits from the sustainable use of the country's biodiversity, and provide an enabling environment for communities and entrepreneurs to

participate in the biodiversity economy while contributing to poverty alleviation, sustainable development and conservation of the country's rich biodiversity and ecosystem services. To address the issue on the illegal trade of wildlife and poaching, which also came to light during the development of the National Biodiversity Economy Strategy, the department identified and adopted principles that will ensure the sustainable growth of the sector, these include, inter alia, ensure fair and equitable beneficiation; identify incentive driven compliance to regulation and ensure ethical practices.

In light of the above, the strategy also identified a few Transformative Enabling Interventions to speak to these efforts of ensuring sustainable growth of these two subsectors and these include:

- *Streamlining the Regulatory Environment:* To address a range of regulatory gaps, overly complicated permitting requirements, inefficiencies and capacity constraints that limit the sector, as well as create a legislative enabling environment for business, and build confidence in the regulatory system.
- *Enhancing Education, Skills and Capacity:* To promote Small Micro and Medium Enterprises, to ensure that communities understand the economic value of the wildlife around them and that the young generation understands the value of protecting and sustainably utilising the wildlife.
- *An economic transformation initiative:* Provides an environment where the sector comprises of different players, where rural communities, women, youth and people with disability are also able to engage in economic activities that make a difference in their lives and communities.
- *Advocacy for the Wildlife sector:* To address the negative perceptions in the wildlife sector which will enable the growth and increased participation in the sector. Furthermore, advocacy for sustainable utilisation of genetic and biological resources which is essential to support the growth of local and international markets, and to encourage participation of communities in these markets.

❖ The department is implementing the **Great Limpopo Trans-frontier Conservation Area (GLTFCA): Integrated Livelihood Diversification Strategy.**

The aim is that such a strategy would serve to:

- develop a collective vision and integrated approach to enhancing livelihood options in the project area;
- agree on a set of strategic priorities as well as management nodes for priority attention in the first iteration of implementing the strategy (that is from 2016 to 2030);

- identify appropriate, viable and strategic livelihood initiatives that could be applied to the GLTFCA area, including where existing initiatives are working and can be scaled and shared to a wider audience;
- identify and address prevailing constraints to the success of livelihood initiatives; and
- ensure that current and future threats and risks from climate change and other anthropogenic activities (such as land uses) have been considered when identifying livelihood interventions for resilience.

This will be achieved by:

- providing a mechanism or platform to support networking between actors across the GLTFCA;
- agreeing on a common approach to monitoring and research that will support improved data-driven management, comparative analysis and enhanced impact;
- supporting good cooperative governance through coordinating existing strategies, priorities, investments and efforts to achieve synergies, avoid duplication and identify gaps;
- empowering communities to actively participate in resource management decisions;
- supporting the sharing of lessons learnt across the groups and regions, including shared information management;
- defining responsibilities to ensure that all actors are working towards their competitive advantage while also ensuring that activities are being delivered at each scale (household, community, regional levels) and time horizon (short term, medium term and long term);
- providing inputs to support proactive fundraising that is designed to demonstrate to investors and donors how their interests can be achieved by supporting our defined priorities; and
- promoting a regular review cycle to ensure plans are adjusted to changing contexts and new learnings.

The timeframe for the strategy is 15 years - from 2016 to 2030.

The Great Limpopo Trans-frontier Park (GLTP) and its implementing agencies in Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe namely; Administracao Nation das Areas de Conservacao (ANAC), the South African National Parks and the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (ZPWMA) are mandated through the treaty to support the livelihoods of communities in the GLTFCA. They, through the protected areas, also have a vested interest to share benefits and create value for the local communities in conservation and associated activities. The parks (both

public and private) also have a responsibility to communities to (i) mitigate negative impacts and (ii) deliver effective corporate social investment. This, notwithstanding the formal mandate for socio-economic development outside protected areas, falls under government. Civil society organisations, private sector partnerships and donors are able to support this official mandate through augmenting the resources and capacities of government. As much as possible, decision-making should be devolved to community level to ensure greatest likelihood of success and the skills and assets owned by communities themselves are recognised and strengthened. The view is that if all of these players work together on a joint and agreed upon plan, the likelihood of achieving sustainable and meaningful impacts is significantly enhanced. While elements of this strategy are framed from the perspective of the conservation authorities, we recognise that no one party on its own will be able to drive this process without the buy-in and support of others. It is proposed that the GLTFCA stakeholders and the protected areas authorities play an important role in catalysing and sustaining momentum around the establishment of such partnerships. By identifying all the existing 'engines' of delivery and agreeing on how they can be positioned relative to one another under the infrastructure of a shared strategy, we believe our vision can achieve a lift off.

- ❖ The department continues to implement the resolutions of the People and Parks Conferences we have hosted recently which are the culmination of the discussions in the commissions by communities, officials and interested stakeholders. One of the focuses to this is that communities are put in the centre of our efforts to combat wildlife crime, thereby ensuring that a sense of ownership is instilled in order for them to protect and value their natural heritage. Recently the department embarked on a lab activity where details of activities were determined regarding which would be executed/implemented with the view to ensuring that the communities see value in wildlife. Through these, projects earmarked to elevate the value of biodiversity are being packaged and implemented across the sector.
- ❖ Recently the department had embarked on a Rhino Lab process which entails a stream focusing on community empowerment to prevent them from getting involved in illegal trade in wildlife and poaching. The department has also developed a 14 year National Biodiversity Economy Strategy (NBES) which will serve as a suitable strategic tool to achieve the anticipated sustainable advancement for the wildlife and bioprospecting/biotrade industries of South Africa.

To ensure successful implementation of the National Biodiversity Economy Strategy, the department recently co-hosted with the Department of Tourism a Biodiversity Delivery Lab which took place from 11 April to 13 May 2016, primarily to develop an implementation plan for the National Biodiversity Economy Strategy. The Biodiversity Economy Delivery Lab adopted the Big Fast Results (BFR) methodology which is a similar approach adopted for the country's Operation Phakisa for Oceans Economy. The Lab brought together a team of government, industry, academics and civil society to work in an iterative manner to develop detailed implementation plans that can fast track delivery for solving complex problems/issues and unlock our biodiversity economy.

The Department of Environmental Affairs hosted two work streams in the Biodiversity Delivery Lab namely, the Wildlife, and Bioprospecting. Overall, the Lab aspirations were centred on transformation, sector sustainability and economic growth. In the process, the respective work streams were able to prioritise issues that would move the respective sectors forward within the next three years. Consequently, initiatives addressing each of the prioritised issues were developed and further unpacked in a "3-feet plan (a detailed, line by line implementation plan with assigned owners and timelines) consisting of the budget and legislative requirements to implement the identified initiatives. The initiatives developed during the Lab processes were presented through syndications with relevant Heads of National and Provincial Government Departments and Entities. This saw the adoption of the initiatives by the mentioned stakeholders and also the Heads of Department of provincial departments. The Biodiversity Economy Strategy focuses on supporting community entities that manages or own land suitable for wildlife, such as Communal Property Associations (CPAs), Traditional Authorities and Community Trusts, this work is done in partnership with other departments such as the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform and the Land Claims Commission as well as the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries where applicable.

- ❖ In addition, the department relies on and supports all Security Clusters partners operating in these communities.

(b) South African National Parks

- Community park forums intended to improve interaction between the South African National Parks and the surrounding communities and other stakeholders adjacent to national parks.

These involve regular engagements around issues related to combating wildlife crime, land claims, beneficiation and other relevant matters.

- Implementation of awareness campaigns, environmental education programmes, social legacy projects around the national parks.
- Socio-economic projects designed to ensure that communities adjacent to the national parks benefit directly from the South African National Parks conservation efforts and get them involved in protection of South Africa's biodiversity assets.

(2)

Yes, the South African National Parks works with other government departments to combat poaching both inside and outside the Kruger National Park. The South African National Parks is part of the environmental cooperative governance mechanism of Government that seeks to foster cooperation and harmonisation of approaches. The Kruger National Park in particular, is the hub of anti-poaching operations aimed at combating, particularly rhino poaching. This cooperative approach involves the Security Cluster in the South African Police Service, the South African National Defence Force, as well as the Department of Home Affairs, the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, and the South African Revenue Services. The same lessons learnt from the implementation of this anti-rhino poaching approaches are beneficial to other wildlife species crime combating.

### **Additional Information**

In 2014 the South African National Parks developed a National Rhino Management Strategy that places emphasis on cooperation with other government departments in respect to combating wildlife crime both inside and outside the Kruger National Park. At the core of the strategy is also the intention to relocate rhinos from high risk areas in the Kruger National Park to other low risk areas inside the park and other parks to combat poaching and to ensure continued growth of the rhino population. The aim is to stimulate growth in large protected areas while creating new rhino strongholds to offset the effects of poaching and simultaneously improving the population size.

In addition, the formal cooperation with all relevant government departments and other role-players/stakeholders is guided by the National Joint Structures and implemented from a Mission Area Joint Operations Centre. Joint planning and execution is the norm and plans are tailored to align with the national strategy that addresses four focus areas namely:

- joint anti-poaching law enforcement operations,



- biological management of the rhino population,
- the creation of long term sustainable economic and other alternatives, and
- the constant exploration of game changers such as technology appropriate solutions and the collapsing crime networks.

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