



forestry, fisheries & the environment

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

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NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

(For written reply)

QUESTION NO. 3039 {NW3501E}

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 22 of 2025

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Mr A D de Blocq van Scheltinga (DA) to ask the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment:

- (1) With reference to his reply to question 1409 on 29 October 2024 about permits that are issued by his department to the KwaZulu-Natal Sharks Board, what are the (a) designations of the specified permits (b) permit regulations;
- (2) whether there is an approval needed from an ethics board and/or committee for other permits issued by his department, such as research permits involving interactions with marine protected species; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (3) (a) how often are the specified permits renewed, (b) what are the requirements for renewal and (c) which offices are responsible for checking compliance and/or evaluation of renewal applications?

3039. THE MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT REPLIES:

- 1) a) Permit for scientific investigations and practical experiments issued in terms of section 83 of the Marine Living Resources Act, 1998 (Act No. 18 of 1998).

Standing Permit to carry out restricted activities issued in terms of regulations 7 of the National Environmental Management Biodiversity Act, 2004 (Act No. 10 of 2004): Threatened or Protected Marine Species Regulations, 2017 (Government Gazette no. 40876 of 30 May 2017).

- b) Permit conditions issued are extensive and depend on the activities authorised by a particular permit. For instance, permit issued for scientific investigations and practical experiments allows for permit holder to undertake *bona fide* research that is recognised by academic and scientific standards. The standing permit issued to the organisation restricts the distances within which the bathing protection gear may be implemented and provide for removal of gear during large marine mammal migration patterns.
- 2) All research permit applications involving interactions with marine protected species are evaluated by the Department's Oceans and Coasts Research Permitting Committee chaired by the Director: Biodiversity and Coastal Research. The evaluation process is underpinned by a commitment to ethical and responsible research. This approach is informed by the 2019 White Paper on Science, Technology and Innovation, which serves as a guiding national policy. The White Paper promotes a framework for responsible research and innovation that is responsive to South Africa's unique social, environmental and economic context. It underscores the imperative that scientific research must contribute meaningfully to addressing national priorities, including societal and ecological challenges.
- 3)
 - a) A permit for scientific investigations and practical experiments is renewable annually, while standing permit issued in terms of the National Environmental Management Biodiversity Act, 2004 (Act No. 10 of 2004); Threatened or Protected Marine Species Regulations, 2017, is valid for a maximum of three (3) years.
 - b) An application submitted for renewal of permit for scientific investigations and practical experiment is evaluated based on the progress and duration of the research project undertaken during the duration of the permit and the outputs thereof.

An application submitted for renewal of the standing permit is assessed on the annual report submitted regarding the protected species interacted with, their quantities as well as release rate of live animals encountered. A permit is renewed if the release rate of live animals encountered is maintained and or improved.

- c) Compliance of permits issued by the Department for interacting with marine protected species is the responsibility of the Directorate: Oceans and Coast Compliance in the Branch: Regulatory Compliance and Sector Monitoring. The evaluation of permit renewal applications is undertaken by Directorates: Biodiversity and Coastal Research and Oceans Conservation Strategies in the Branch: Oceans and Coasts. Both these directorates have permitting functions of marine protected species.

Regards



DR D T GEORGE, MP

MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

DATE: 3/6/2025