



**environment, forestry
& fisheries**

Department:
Environment, Forestry and Fisheries
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

(For written reply)

QUESTION NO. 560 {CW696E}

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 32 of 2021

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Ms H S Boshoff (Mpumalanga: DA) to ask the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment:

- (1) (a) How many braille trails have been set up in the Kruger National Park and (b) in which camps have they been established;
- (2) whether such camps have trails that are guided by ropes and/or benches where visually impaired persons can enjoy various bird and animal sounds; if not, why not; if so, (a) are the necessary braille information boards available to them and (b) what are the further relevant details;
- (3) how many shops in the Kruger National Park (a) are disability-friendly and (b) have staff that is able to assist those with hearing difficulties, visual impairments and mobility challenges;
- (4) whether any staff members in shops are sign-language conversant; if not, why not; if so, (a) how many and (b) what are the further relevant details;
- (5) whether there are any agreements with shops and/or restaurants to ensure that such training is provided; if not, why not; if so, (a) what agreements and (b) what are the further relevant details?

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

- 1)
 - a. There is one Braille trail set up in the Kruger National Park (KNP),
 - b. The trail is set up at the Berg-en-Dal Rest Camp.

- 2) The braille trail has a guide rope and is accessible to people with a wheelchair. Benches are available along the trails for visually impaired persons to sit and enjoy sounds of birds and animals along the fence.
 - a. Braille information boards are available for the visually impaired.
 - b. Kudu, hippo, and male and female buffalo skulls are available at the Kruger National Park at Berg-en-Dal Rest Camp for visually impaired people to feel. A life-sized statue of a black rhino is also available for the visually impaired to touch and feel the body size and mouth or lip difference between black and white rhino, as well as touch and feel python and other lizard structures.

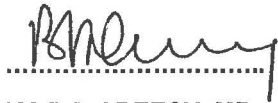
- 3)
 - a. All shops in the KNP are wheelchair friendly and staff provide assistance for people with mobility challenges.
 - b. The shops have staff to provide assistance, but still have a shortage of skilled personnel who are able to effectively assist visitors with visual and hearing difficulties. The Skukuza Parks Shop is currently testing an application called "Hand Talk Translator" which can assist through digital sign language translation.

- 4)
 - a. No, the staff at the shops are not sign language conversant.
 - b. Not applicable.

- 5) Yes, there are agreements in place.
 - a. The Public Private Partnership agreements signed between SANParks and retail/restaurant operators stipulates that the operators are obliged to provide universal access at their facilities. Therefore, the operators are contractually obliged to provide such training if it is required.
 - b. SANParks monitors compliance with the agreements and will intervene where required. SANParks and the operators are comfortable that the shops and restaurants have the ability to assist visitors, particularly those with mobility challenges. The operators have operated for an extensive period in the park and have rarely had any negative issues in relation to

disability accessibility. The organisation however acknowledges that there are challenges in respect to providing universal access for people living with visual and hearing impairments.

Regards



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

DATE: ...14.11.2021