



forestry, fisheries & the environment

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

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NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

(For oral reply)

QUESTION NO.807 {NO5241E}

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 46 of 2023

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Mr N Singh (IFP) to ask the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment:

- (1) How does her plan for a just transition and low carbon economy balances itself against current socio-economic challenges and necessity for a coal-based energy supply and employment in the fossil fuel sector;
- (2) Whether there will be skills transfer programmes for people employed in the fossil fuel sector as it transitions to a renewable energy future; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, how will this be ensured with Sasol which is the current fossil fuel energy supplier?

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

- 1) As the country transitions to a low carbon economy, workers in the coal value chain, primarily in Mpumalanga, are most at risk. Other provinces, such as the Northern Cape, Western Cape, and Eastern Cape will experience a net gain as the renewable energy sector grows. Research by the National Business Initiative (NBI) and World Bank demonstrates that South Africa will, at an aggregate level, create more jobs in this transition than those lost. Several initiatives are

under way in response to the risks facing Mpumalanga. Most crucial are the economic diversification projects that seek to expand and grow existing sectors of the economy and identify new economic opportunities based on the competitive advantage of the provinces. Enmeshed in the economic diversification initiatives, are practical guides to establish and implement social forms of ownership in the renewable energy sector, thereby empowering communities and improving household incomes through active participation as part owners of the local economy. These initiatives will be catalysed through the implementation of the South African Renewable Energy Master Plan (SAREM) and the Implementation Plan of the Just Energy Transition Investment Plan (JET IP).

- 2) The skilling, reskilling and upskilling of workers are essential to transition workers to the new opportunities. The skills ecosystem itself is transforming. Skills training is directly linked to tasks, which in turn are linked to occupations. Occupations and tasks determine the development of skills curriculae. These linkages are being piloted and enabled through the use of technology, for example, the PowerUp project by Green Cape. Identifying and projecting skills demand will shape the reskilling and upskilling programme of workers for absorption into the economy.

A three-tier system, aligned to existing skills institutions, will steer the national skills coordinating structure to catalyse and coordinate JET-related skills activities. Tier 1, namely: the JET Desk is formed at the Human Resource Development Council (HRDC) of South Africa within the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), with technical input from the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (DTIC), the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI), Project Management Units (PMUs), and the Presidential Climate Commission (PCC).

Tier 2, namely: the National JET Skills Advisory Forum will facilitate broader engagement with Higher Education institutions, labour, business, and development agencies, and will serve to connect the different actors in the JET skills ecosystem; facilitate more effective communication and better coordinate JET activities; and allow the sharing of work, research and tools, aggregate data, and skills information.

Tier 3 establishes three Skills Development Zones (SDZs), functioning as a learning network, around each core value chain (Renewable Energy, Green Hydrogen 2, and Electric Vehicles),

bringing together local partners to support localisation and local economic development. The SDZs will be framed around key local anchor educational institutions (TVET colleges or centre of specialisation) and will be sites of local implementation, catalytic interventions, and partnerships with business and educational institutions.



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MS B D CREECY, MP
MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT
DATE: ...28/11/2023