



environmental affairs

Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Ref: 02/1/5/2

MINISTER (ACTING)

QUESTION NO. 3093 FOR WRITTEN REPLY: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

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

**MR ISHAAM ABADER
DIRECTOR-GENERAL (ACTING)**

DATE:

DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED

**MR D A HANEKOM, MP
MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS (ACTING)**

DATE:

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

(For written reply)

QUESTION NO. 3093 {NW3457E}

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 35 of 2018

DATE OF PUBLICATION: 26 October 2018

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

- (1) With regard to the Kruger National Park (KNP) District Court being accused of lenient sentencing for wildlife crimes, (a) does the department monitor the cases and comment accordingly and (b) has the department taken up this issue with the Chief Magistrate of Mpumalanga;
- (2) has bail been granted to repeat offenders; if so, (a) what are the details of cases in which bail was granted to repeat offenders in the past calendar year, (b) what is the conviction rate of the KNP District Court for the past calendar year and (c) is the department campaigning for stricter sentencing; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?

3093. THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS REPLIES:

- (1)
 - (a) Although the department does monitor the cases in the Kruger National Park (KNP) Court; the department is provided with the information related to these cases and does participate in the relevant structures and attends the Mission Area Joint Operational Centre (MAJOC) meetings where monthly feedback is provided on progress related to the deployment within the area, arrests, seizures, cases and other related matters are discussed.
 - (b) The department has not taken the issue regarding lenient sentencing in the KNP District Court up with the Chief Magistrate of Mpumalanga. However, the South African National Parks (SANParks) has engaged with the Judge President of Mpumalanga and expressed concerns around the drop in the nature of the sentences in the district court, aspects related to bail, transfer of cases and other aspects related to cases in the KNP.

- (2) The department is aware that bail has been granted to repeat offenders in some cases.
- (a) The South African Police Service is the custodian of this information.
 - (b) The National Prosecuting Authority and the Department of Justice determine relevant conviction rates and should be approached in this regard.
 - (c) The department has not formally campaigned for stricter sentencing but is amending current legislation to make provision for priority crimes linked to wildlife trafficking and to increase penalties for such crimes.

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