



environmental affairs

Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

(For written reply)

QUESTION NO. 458 {NW1450E}

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

- (1) What is the (a) impact of the declaration of the Aliwal Shoal Marine Protected Area and (b) protection goal;
- (2) What is the impact of line fishing along the shore of the specified protected area;
- (3) Whether there is any portion within A and E that is restricted to line fishing; if so, why;
- (4) What regulations would be applicable in the designated area;
- (5) Is there any restriction on recreational off-shore fishermen launching their boats from within the marine protected area and returning with fish caught in the unprotected area?

458. THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES

REPLIES:

1 (a) The impact of the declaration is to provide much needed protection to habitats and species in the Marine Protected Areas. This does require limits being placed on certain activities and areas, which may have an impact on users, but which will also benefit users in the longer term. The MPA will be monitored to confirm whether the objectives are being reached.

1 (b) The purpose of declaring this marine protected area is:

- To contribute to a national, regional and global representative system of marine protected areas by conserving and protecting coastal and offshore benthic and pelagic ecosystems comprising of reef complex, deep reefs, and other ecosystems on the shelf and including threatened ecosystem types;
- to conserve and protect the biodiversity and ecological processes associated with these ecosystems, including protected, threatened or overexploited species such as tiger sharks, red steenbras, seventy four, geelbek and dusky kob and processes such as the sardine run;
- to facilitate species management and sustainable use of linefish, subtidal and intertidal resources by supporting fisheries recovery and enhanced species abundance in fished areas;
- to support the recovery of linefish and sharks by protecting spawning, nursery, foraging, aggregation and refuge areas;
- to conserve and protect an area of life history importance for migratory species including seabirds, turtles, sharks, seabreams and other fish;
- to support sustainable nature-based tourism opportunities in the area through the protection of marine wildlife and maritime heritage;
- to protect and regulate a scenic area to support sustainable nature-based tourism, cultural and spiritual assets and a functionally connected coastal marine system to retain a land-ocean 'sense of place'; and
- to protect and provide an appropriate environment for research and monitoring particularly research on recovery of linefish, and also to promote and contribute to environmental education.

(2) A key impact of line-fishing from the shore is the removal of fish that are big and old enough to breed. This impact is greater for those fish species which are largely resident in an area and also where there are moderate or high numbers of fishers. Lack of breeding fish rapidly leads to further declines in fish stocks and catches. No-take areas are the best proven tool to ensure that bigger fish can survive and breed in an area, leading to improved sustainability of catches outside the MPA (and within the controlled areas of the MPA). These no-take areas function more effectively

when they are larger and therefore have a minimum size to be effective. The scientifically determined minimum size for a restricted zone in the region under consideration for linefish conservation is between 3-5km coastline length.

(3) There are two inshore restricted (no-take) areas between points A and E (which mark the the northern and southern coastal boundaries of MPA respectively in the regulations). One is in the centre and one is in the south. The central area, named the Green Point Inshore Restricted Area, extends from the rocky point just north of the Mahlongwana Estuary to the white beacon on the Green Point Rocks. The southern area, named the Rocky Point Inshore Restricted Area, extends from the white beacon at start of the rocky point at the southern end of the Rocky Bay Caravan Park to the north bank of the Mzimayi Estuary. These areas will protect vulnerable and over-exploited species of linefish, subtidal and intertidal resources and thus support fisheries recovery and enhanced species abundance in fished areas.

(4) The regulations applicable in the inshore restricted (no-take) areas are that collection of marine resources is not allowed. Specifically Regulation 7 (1) states No person may fish, or attempt to fish, in any Restricted Zone, including spearfishing and fishing for invertebrates or collecting or harvesting of intertidal organisms including any bait species. Further regulations give effect to this by restricting fishing gear and possession of fish in these areas.

(5) Yes. Off-shore fishermen launching their boats from within the marine protected area may only be in possession of or have on board a vessel the species listed in Annexure 2 to the regulations. They may not return to the MPA with any fish, except for the species listed in Annexure 2 to the regulations, even if these fish were caught outside the protected area.

Regards



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

DATE: 3/9/2019