



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. 702 {CW775E}

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 40 of 2020

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Mr A B Cloete (Free State: FF Plus) to ask the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment:

- (1) What is the current status of the Agriculture Technology Demonstration Centre at the Gariep Dam in the Free State regarding the (a) current departmental staff establishment and (b)(i) salaries, (ii) total budgets and (iii) jobs that have been created in the (aa) 2019/20 and (bb) 2020/21 financial years;
- (2) whether her department has funded the said centre since it was handed over to the South African Government in 2017; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details for each year since 2017 to date;
- (3) whether the centre (a) is fully operational and (b) has value for money for the Free State; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details in each case;
- (4) whether the centre is in line with the envisaged opportunities of aquaculture in the future; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (5) whether she will make a statement on the matter?

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

(1) (a) The China-South Africa Aquaculture Technology Demonstration Centre (ATDC) is focusing on the development of freshwater aquaculture. This function now falls under the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF). The China-South Africa Aquaculture Technology Demonstration Centre is managed through a partnership between DEFF and the Free State Provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (FSDARD). The staff components from DEFF and FSDARD, respectively, and are as follows:

- 1X Deputy Director: ATDC – DEFF;
- 2X Aquaculture Professional Scientists – FSDARD;
- 1X Aquaculture Technician – FSDARD;
- 3X Aquaculture Specialists – FSDARD;
- 1X Cleaner – FSDARD;
- 1X Administration officer – FSDARD; and
- 1X General worker – FSDARD.

(b)(i)

The salaries or Compensation of Employees budget allocation for the ATDC in 2020/21 financial year is as follows:

- R3 806 000 per annum - FSDARD; and
- R733 257 per annum – DEFF.

(b) (ii)

The total budget allocated by DEFF is R3 million for the 2020/21 financial year.

(b) (iii) (aa)

The ATDC employed a total of nine (9) professionals during 2019/20 financial year; and

(b)(iii) (bb)

The ATDC employed a total of ten (10) professionals during 2020/21 financial year.

(2) The then Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) made financial provision for the ATDC as follows (operational costs) under the Marine Living Resources Fund (MRLF):

- 2017/18 - R5 834 714;

- 2018/19 - R4 750 105; and
- 2019/20 - R4 330 328.

The DEFF made financial provision for the ATDC as follows (operational costs) under the Marine Living Resources Fund:

- 2020/21 - R3 000 000 from MLRF.

(3)(a) The China-South Africa Aquaculture Technology Demonstration Centre (ATDC) was handed-over to the Republic of South Africa through the then Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in 2017. The ATDC had four (4) key functions i.e. (i) Hatchery operations (fingerlings production) (ii) Research and Development; (iii) Technology demonstration and (iv) Training and skills enhancement. The ATDC is operational.

Since its hand-over by the People's Republic of China through their Minister of Commerce in 2017, the following has been achieved:

- Over 400 farmers, potential farmers, students, in-service trainees, internship trainees and government officials were trained in different aspects of freshwater aquaculture. For the current financial year (2020/21), training was put on hold due to COVID-19 pandemic;
- Research has been conducted in areas such as fish nutrition; fish health and aquaculture economics on a continuous basis. For this financial year (2020/21) three (3) research projects focusing on i) socio-economics related to aquaculture; ii) fish nutrition, iii) Aquatic fish health in phytomedicine have commenced. Furthermore, there are two new research areas under consideration (i) small-scale fish species monitoring and (ii) aquaculture system technology development.
- Technology demonstration, aquaculture awareness and advisory has been conducted with the ATDC having received over 500 visits from school children and other members of the public. Due to COVID-19 pandemic, technology demonstration and awareness initiatives have been put on hold; and
- Continuous breeding of fish which include African catfish (*Clarias gariepinus*) and common carp (*Cyprinus caprio*) has been taking place twice a year during demonstrations from January to March and from September to February on an annual basis. Currently, this activity is taking place on a small-scale due to the upgrade of the hatchery system into Recirculating Aquaculture System (RAS).

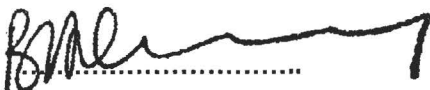
(b) The ATDC directly benefits the neighboring communities, other stakeholders and beyond the Free State Province through extension and advisory services to enterprises, and project development through the provision of fingerlings in provinces such as the Northern Cape, North West and the Eastern Cape. These interactions with communities involved in fish production is intended towards provision of fingerlings to new enterprises and capacity enhancement.

(4) The ATDC was established to support the development of the freshwater aquaculture sector in South Africa and within the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Its key focus in the aquaculture and freshwater fish space that are in line with the Operation Phakisa - Ocean's Economy, Aquaculture Lab are enhancing training and capacity building, research and development, hatchery and technology demonstration.

(5) There are no major announcements planned for ATDC for this current financial year. However, we can indicate that we have had challenges which we are now addressing as follows:

- Permanent security personnel on site managed by the Security division of the DEFF;
- Maintenance programme managed by the facilities division of DEFF;
- Signing of a new Memorandum of Agreement between DEFF and FSDARD with new terms and conditions of the collaboration between the two Departments.

Regards



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

DATE: 27/11/2020