

**environment, forestry
& fisheries**

Department:
Environment, Forestry and Fisheries
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Ref: O2/1/5/2

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
(For written reply)**

QUESTION NO. 728 {NW932E}

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 13 of 2020

DATE OF PUBLICATION: 01 May 2020

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

Whether she intends to ban the export of wildlife from the Republic, with the exception of instances pertaining to conservation agreements, given the risks of zoonotic viruses emanating from the sale and export of wildlife, as has been evidenced by the outbreak of the coronavirus?

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

International trade in wildlife is a significant economic activity, an important conservation incentive and a key component of the biodiversity economy and socio-economic development in South Africa, continentally and globally.

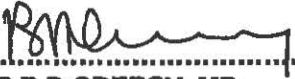
The two species which have been currently suspected of causing the Covid-19 virus were bats and pangolins. South Africa does not legally export any of these species. South Africa was the co-proponent for the uplisting of pangolins from Appendix 2 to Appendix 1 of The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora (CITES), thus according highest level of protection and stopping all legal commercial trade in pangolins. **This means that no**

commercial trade in pangolin is permitted from South Africa. Current studies and understanding highlight that the main areas of concern for zoonotic disease risk arise from the following:

- **Human encroachment into new areas of pristine habitat (mostly in tropical forest areas) resulting in novel contact with previously unexposed populations of wild animals.**
- **Harvesting and consumption of certain high-risk taxa (notably bats, primates and certain rodents) for food.**
- **Live capture of animals and mass confinement in unhygienic marketplaces where they are exposed to other species, including domestic ones, with which they may exchange pathogens.**

The above conditions do not generally apply in South Africa, in which consumption of game meat has a has generally well-established and safe harvesting, sale and distribution practices, governed by strict safety regulations from the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development.

Regards


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MS B D CREECY, MP
MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT
DATE: 15/5/2020