



environmental affairs

Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Ref:02/1/5/2

MINISTER

QUESTION NO. 952 FOR WRITTEN REPLY: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

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

MS NOSIPHO NGCABA
DIRECTOR-GENERAL

DATE:

DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED

DR B E E MOLEWA, MP
MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

DATE:

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

(For written reply)

QUESTION NO. 952 {NW1038E}
INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 10 of 2018

DATE OF PUBLICATION: 29 March 2018

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

- (1) Whether, with reference to the well documented increase in elephant poaching, South Africa has signed the petition which the Presidents of Uganda, Gabon and Botswana signed, calling on the European Union to close its ivory market; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;

- (2) whether her Department has taken any steps to close the ivory trade; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?

952. THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS REPLIES:

- (1) No, South Africa has not signed the petition with the Presidents of Uganda, Gabon and Botswana calling on the European Union to close its ivory market as South Africa's Constitution allows for the sustainable utilisation of the country's natural resources - ivory is one of these natural resources. South African National Parks and some of the provincial conservation authorities have stockpiles of ivory which have been legally obtained through natural deaths and/or hunting of problem elephants. If the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) approves the international sale of ivory (through the appropriate proposals), the government can then access much needed funds which would result from such sales to be ploughed back into conservation of our natural resources.
- (2) The Department of Environmental Affairs has not taken any steps to close the legal ivory trade in South Africa as the legal trade in ivory is regulated under the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, 2004 (Act No. 10 of 2004) and the Threatened or Protected Species (ToPS) Regulations. Retailers in South Africa who are selling ivory must be registered as traders under ToPS to sell ivory, and a buyer needs a permit to buy and to possess the ivory. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) recommends that Parties to the Convention close domestic ivory markets that are contributing to poaching or illegal trade. There is no evidence that the legal trade in ivory in South Africa is contributing to poaching and illegal trade and, accordingly, the legal ivory trade has not been closed.

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