

Marine Living Resources Fund (MLRF)

2025/2026
Annual
Performance
Plan



forestry, fisheries
& the environment

Department:
Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Marine Living Resources Fund (MLRF)
2025 – 2026
Annual Performance Plan

MARINE LIVING RESOURCES FUND

Contents

Forward.....	I
Official Sign-off.....	4
PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY OF THE MARINE LIVING RESOURCES FUND	
Executive Officers.....	6
Government Department.....	6
Address.....	6
Legal reform.....	6
Legislative mandate.....	6
Part A: OUR MANDATE	
1. CONSTITUTIONAL MANDATE.....	7
2. LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY MANDATES.....	7
Integrated Environmental Management.....	7
Oceans and Coastal Environmental Management.....	7
Rights of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities.....	8
2.1 INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES AND STRATEGIES GOVERNING THE FIVE-YEAR PLANNING PERIOD.....	9
3 RELEVANT COURT RULINGS	10
Part B: OUR STRATEGIC FOCUS	
4. VISION, MISSION AND VALUES.....	10
4.1 Vision.....	10
4.2 Mission.....	10
4.3 Values.....	10
5 SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS.....	10
5.1 External Environment Analysis.....	11
6. MARINE FISHERIES RESOURCES.....	11-14
6.1 PROGRAMME STRUCTURE OF THE MLRF.....	15
6.2 MLRF Interventions Relating to Women, the Youth and Persons with Disabilities.....	15
6.3 MLRF Planning Process.....	15
6.4 Marine Living Resources Fund (MLRF).....	18
Part C: MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE	
7. INSTITUTIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE INFORMATION.....	18
7.1 MARINE LIVING RESOURCES FUND.....	18
7.1.1 Subprogrammes.....	18
7.1.2 Outcomes, Outputs, Output Indicators and Targets.....	19
7.1.3 Output Indicators: Annual and Quarterly Targets.....	20
7.4 Explanation of Planned Performance over the Medium-Term Period.....	21
7.4.1 Programme Resource Considerations.....	22
7.4.1 KEY RISKS AND MITIGATION.....	23
INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS	
INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS	
Part D: TECHNICAL INDICATOR DESCRIPTION	
MARINE LIVING RESOURCES FUND.....	24-26

Acronyms

APP	Annual Performance Plan
DFFE	Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
DPWI	Department of Public Works and Infrastructure
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
FILLER	Fair Industry for Lions, Leopards, Elephants and Rhinos
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
GNU	Government of National Unity
HR	Human Resources
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
INCEIS	Integrated National Compliance and Enforcement Information System
KISS	Kruger-Kirstenbosch-iSimangaliso Icon Status Strategy
METT	Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool
MTDP	Medium-Term Development Plan
NSPGBVF	National Strategic Plan Gender-Based Violence and Femicide
SMS	Senior Management Services
SOL	Statement of Intent



MARINE LIVING RESOURCES FUND ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN 2025/2026 **FORWARD**

I am pleased to present the Marine Living Resources Fund (MLRF) Annual Performance Plan (APP) for 2025/2026, which outlines our continued commitment to sustainable fisheries management, economic growth, and the development of small-scale fishing communities. This plan is aligned with the priorities of the 7th Government of National Unity Administration and the six ministerial priorities of the Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment.

The MLRF, established under the Marine Living Resources Act (Act 18 of 1998), plays a critical role in funding the operational activities of the Fisheries Management Branch. Through its various programs, the MLRF ensures the responsible utilization and conservation of South Africa's marine and aquaculture resources, while also supporting livelihoods, job creation, and economic development in coastal communities.

A key focus of this Annual Performance Plan is the continued support for small-scale fishing communities across the four coastal provinces—Eastern Cape, Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, and Northern Cape—through registered cooperatives and local co-management structures. These initiatives aim to strengthen economic participation and resource sustainability in the sector. In the 2025/2026 financial year, the Working for Fisheries Programme will contribute significantly to job creation, with a target of 796 Fulltime Equivalent jobs and 1 ,591 Work Opportunities in the fisheries sector.

The MLRF remains aligned with three key outcomes:

- 1 A well-managed fisheries and aquaculture sector that sustains and improves economic growth and development.
- 2 An effective and enabling regulatory framework for the management and development of

fisheries and aquaculture.

3 Improved socio-economic conditions for fishing communities, under the theme 'Fishing for Freedom'.

To achieve these goals, our efforts in the 2025/2026 financial year will focus on.

- Expanding South Africa's aquaculture industry, with annual growth in aquaculture production.
- Strengthening enforcement and compliance, with increased inspections across the six priority fisheries (hake, abalone, rock lobster, line fish, squid, and pelagic).
- Enhancing collaboration, through 40 joint operations with partners, including under Initiative 5 of Operation Phakisa,
- Supporting small-scale fishing enterprises, by developing co-management structures and integrating cooperatives into the oceans economy value chain.
- Creating employment opportunities, with a focus on EPWP-driven job creation and skills development.

The Marine Living Resources Fund is committed to ensuring a sustainable, inclusive, and thriving fisheries and aquaculture sector. This Annual Performance Plan reflects our dedication to balancing economic development with environmental sustainability, while improving the livelihoods of those who depend on our marine resources.

I extend my gratitude to all stakeholders, industry partners, and coastal communities who continue to play a pivotal role in ensuring the long-term sustainability and prosperity of our fisheries sector. Together, we will build a resilient and prosperous marine economy for future generations.



Dr Dion George, MP

Minister of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment



ACCOUNTING OFFICER FOREWORD

MARINE LIVING RESOURCES FUND ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN 2025-2026

I am delighted to present the Annual Performance Plan (APP) of the Marine Living Resources Fund (MLRF) for the 2025/26 financial year. The MLRF 2025/26 APP has been primarily informed by the mandate, functions, powers and responsibilities of the MLRF as determined in the Marine Living Resources Act (Act 18 of 1998), the Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP) and other legislations applicable to the Department, as well as commitments arising out of the 7th Administration key priorities;

- Strategic Priority 1: Inclusive economic growth and job creation.
- Strategic Priority 2: Reduce poverty and tackle the high cost of living
- Strategic Priority 3: Build a capable, ethical, and developmental state

The MLRF's objectives are closely aligned with priorities 1 and 2 of the MTDP. Inclusive growth and job creation is the Apex Priority for the 7th Administration. In support of Priority 1 and in contribution to reducing poverty and unemployment the MLRF will provide training and employment opportunities through the Working for Fisheries Programme, prioritising women, youth and persons with disabilities

Successful implementation of this APP will depend on strong collaboration and support from all relevant stakeholders and strategic partners, including the fishing industry and local communities. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Minister and Deputy Ministers for their continued leadership and guidance and look forward to successful implementation of the 2025/26 APP.

Ms Nomfundo Tshabalala

Director-General: Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment

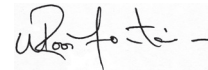
Official Sign-off

It is hereby certified that the 2025/26 Annual Performance Plan:

- Was developed by the management of the Marine Living Resources Fund (MLRF) under the guidance of Minister Dion George.
- Takes into account all the relevant policies, legislation and other mandates for which the MLRF is responsible.
- Accurately reflects the outcomes and outputs which the DFFE will endeavour to achieve during the 2025/26 financial year.

Mr Wickness Rooifontein

Chief Financial Officer: Marine Living Resources Fund



Signature:

Ms Sue Middleton

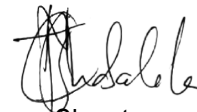
Deputy Director-General: Branch Fisheries Management



Signature:

Ms Nomfundo Tshabalala

Accounting Officer



Signature:

Approved by:

Dr Dion George, MP

Executive Authority
23/10/2024



Dr Dion George, MP

Signature:

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY OF THE MARINE LIVING RESOURCES FUND

The Marine Living Resources Fund (MLRF) is a statutory fund listed as a Schedule 3A Public Entity in Government Gazette 22047 of 16 February 2001 under the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act no 1 of 1999) and established in terms of the Marine Living Resources Act, 1998 (Act No. 18 of 1998) and falls under the control of the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment. The Branch Fisheries Management operates as Programme 9 within the National Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment (DFFE) and its main purpose is to implement the mandate and provisions of the Marine Living resources Act, 1998 (Act No.18 of 1998) ("MLRA"). The MLRF provides funding to the Fisheries Management so that it can fulfil its mandate and obligations in terms of the MLRA which is mainly to manage marine resources, to ensure the development of sustainable use and orderly exploitation of marine and coastal resources, as well as the protecting the integrity and quality of our marine and coastal ecosystem. The MLRF existed as the Sea Fishery Fund under the Sea Fishery Act, 1988 (Act No. 12 of 1988) and its existence was continued by sections 10 and 11 of the MLRA, which reads as follows:

- "10. (1) The Sea fishery Fund referred to in section 27 of the Sea Fishery Act, 1988 (Act no. 12 of 1988), shall continue to exist under the name the Marine and Living Resources Fund, notwithstanding the repeal of the said Act by section 84.*
- (2) Into the fund there shall be paid, notwithstanding the provisions of any other Act, but subject to section 22-*
- (a) money paid in respect of fines, penalties and interest for any offence committed in terms of this Act, including any proceeds from the sale of any vessel, vehicle, aircraft, gear or fish forfeited or seized in terms of this Act.*
 - (b) all interest and fees collected in terms of this Act.*
 - (c) money appropriated by Parliament for the realisation of objects of the Fund.*
 - (d) interest on investments*
 - (e) donations, with the approval of the Minister in consultation with the Minister of Finance.*
 - (f) money which, with the approval of the Minister in consultation with the Minister of Finance, accrue to the fund from any other source; and*
 - (g) any levy on fish, fish products, aquatic plants or other marine resources, imposed and collected in terms of this Act, the Sea Fishery Act, 1988, or any other law.*
- (3) The Fund shall be administered by the Director-General in consultation with the Minister, in accordance with an estimate or a supplementary or revised estimate of revenue of revenue and expenditure approved by the Minister in concurrence with the minister of Finance in respect of every financial year, which will end on 31 March, and no expenditure payable from the Fund may be incurred except in accordance with such estimate of expenditure.*
- (4) The Director-General shall be the accounting officer charged with the responsibility of accounting for money received and expenditure incurred in the Fund.*
- (5) The Director-General shall invest money in the Fund not required for immediate use with the Public Investments Commissioners.*
- (6) Any unexpected balance in the Fund at the end of the financial year shall be carried forward as a credit in the fund for the next financial year.*
- (7) The Auditor-General shall annually audit the books and accounts of the Fund.*

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

Minister:	Dr. D George
Director-General:Accounting Authority:	N.Tshabalala
Deputy Director-General:	S.C Middleton
Chief Financial Officer:	W. Rooifontein

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT

Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment

ADDRESS

Marine Living Resources Fund	
Foretrust Building	Private Bag X2
Martin Hammerschlag Way	Vlaeberg
Foreshore	8018
Cape Town	
8001	

LEGAL REFORM

The entity is a Schedule 3A Public Entity under the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act no 1 of 1999) and established in terms of the Marine Living Resources Act, 1998 (Act No. 18 of 1998).

LEGISLATIVE MANDATE

The mandate and core business of the Marine Living Resources Fund (MLRF) is managed under the Branch Fisheries Management, Branch of the Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment (DFFE), underpinned by the Constitution of South Africa and all other relevant legislation, policies applicable to entities and government departments.

The specific mandate of the MLRF is derived from the following Acts, Policies, Treaties and Conventions:

- Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996
- Marine Living Resources Act 18/1998
- National Environmental Management Act, 107 Of 1998
- National Environmental Management Act: Integrated Coastal Management Act, Act 24 of 2008
- Marine Pollution Act, Act 6 of 1981
- Public Finance Management Act, Act 1 of 1999
- Public Service Act, Act 38 of 1999
- Basic Condition of Employment Act, Act 75 of 1997
- Promotion of Access to Information Act, Act 2 of 2000
- Promotion of Administrative Justice Act 3 of 2000
- National Treasury Regulations
- Preferential Procurement Framework Act and regulations
- Supply Chain Management Framework
- Cabinet and Ministerial directives and policy decisions.

PART A: OUR MANDATE

1. CONSTITUTIONAL MANDATE

The mandate and core business of the Marine Living Resources Fund (MLRF) is underpinned by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Constitution) and all other relevant legislation and policies applicable to government, including the Transforming Public Service Delivery White Paper, 1997 (the Batho Pele White Paper). In addressing the mandate for sound environmental management, the following policies, legislation and regulations have been enacted to give effect to the constitutional environmental rights of all South Africans in section 24 of the Constitution, which provides a specific definition for the term “sustainable development”, namely that – everyone has the right to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being; and to have the environment protected, for the benefit of present and future generations, through reasonable legislative and other measures that –

- i. prevent pollution and ecological degradation;
- ii. promote conservation; and
- iii. secure ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources while promoting justifiable economic and social development.

2. LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY MANDATES

In giving effect to these fundamental environmental rights, as expressed in South Africa’s Constitution, Parliament has enacted several key environmental pieces of legislation and regulations that guide the work of the MLRF. The enacted legislation, regulations and other approved policies deal with specific subsectors of the environment, such as biodiversity and conservation management, oceans and coastal management, climate change and air quality management, forestry, and waste and chemicals management.

Climate Change Act, 2024 (Act No. 22 of 2024) provides for a coordinated and integrated response to climate change and its impacts by all spheres of government in accordance with the principles of cooperative governance.

Integrated Environmental Management

National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) establishes the concepts of participatory, cooperative and developmental governance in environmental management. It establishes principles for environmental management and provides for structures to facilitate these.

Oceans and Coastal Environmental Management

Sea Shores Act, 1935 (Act No. 21 of 1935) declares the President to be the owner of the seashore and the sea within South Africa’s territorial water and regulates the granting of rights and alienation thereof.

Prince Edward Islands Act, 1948 (Act No. 43 of 1948) provides for the confirmation of the

annexation to the Union of South Africa of the Prince Edward Islands, and for the administration, government and control of the said islands.

Sea Birds and Seals Protection Act, 1973 (Act No. 46 of 1973) provides for control over certain islands and rocks for the protection and conservation of seabirds and seals.

Dumping at Sea Control Act, 1980 (Act No. 73 of 1980) regulates the control of dumping substances at sea.

Sea Fishery Act, 1988 (Act No. 12 of 1988) – most of the powers in terms of this Act were transferred to the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. The Minister only retains powers in terms of section 38 of the Act.

Antarctic Treaties Act, 1996 (Act No. 60 of 1996) provides for the implementation of certain treaties relating to Antarctica. The treaty is primarily concerned with the regulation of activities in Antarctica, including territorial claims, research and strict environmental protection in general, and the protection of certain identified species such as seals.

The Marine Living Resources Act, 1998 (Act No. 18 of 1998) deals with the long-term sustainable utilisation of marine living resources. Most of the powers and functions in terms of this Act were transferred to the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. The Minister responsible for environmental affairs only retained functions pertaining to the Marine Protected Areas, regulatory powers that relates to the protection of the marine environment.

National Environmental Management: Integrated Coastal Management Act, 2008 (Act No. 24 of 2008) establishes a system of integrated coastal and estuarine management in South Africa; ensures that the development and use of natural resources within the coastal zone is socially and economically justifiable and ecologically sustainable; determines the responsibilities of organs of State in relation to coastal areas; controls dumping at sea and pollution in the coastal zone; and gives effect to South Africa's international obligations in relation to coastal matters.

Rights of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities

Employment Equity Act, 1998 (Act No. 55 of 1998) seeks to achieve equity in the workplace by promoting equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment by eliminating unfair discrimination and implementing affirmative action measures to redress the disadvantages in employment experienced by designated groups.

National Framework for Women Empowerment and Gender Equality, 2000, establishes a clear vision and framework to guide the process of developing laws, policies, procedures, and practices that will serve to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women and men in all spheres and structures of government, as well as in the workplace.

Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, 2000 (Act No. 4 of 2000), seeks to prevent and prohibit unfair discrimination and harassment; to promote equality and eliminate unfair discrimination; to prevent and prohibit hate speech.

Policy on Reasonable Accommodation and Assistive Devices for Employees with Disabilities

in the Public Service, 2014, seeks to facilitate the implementation of programmes for the provision of reasonable accommodation measures, which includes the provision of amenities and assistive devices to employees with disabilities.

Gender Strategic Framework within the Public Service, 2015, is aimed at achieving women's empowerment and gender equality in the workplace.

White Paper on the Transformation of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2015, seeks to provide a comprehensive framework for promoting and protecting the rights of persons with disabilities by ensuring eliminating barriers to full and equal participation in society.

Gender-Responsive Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Auditing Framework, 2019, sets out an approach to ensure that South Africa and government-wide systems explicitly and consistently respond to women's empowerment and gender equality priorities.

South Africa's National Policy Framework for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality outlines South Africa's vision for gender equality and for how it intends to realise this ideal.

Strategic Framework for Gender Equality within the Public Service – The objective of this strategic framework is to spearhead the creation of an enabling environment that would facilitate the development of strategies, mechanisms and interventions by government departments and provincial administrations, to achieve the strategic objectives of women empowerment and gender equality.

2.1 INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES AND STRATEGIES GOVERNING THE FIVE-YEAR PLANNING PERIOD

- National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy
- National Freshwater (Inland) Wild Capture Fisheries Policy
- White Paper on Conservation and Sustainable Use of South Africa's biodiversity, 2023
- White Paper on Environmental Management, 1998
- White Paper for Sustainable Coastal Development in South Africa, 2000
- National Framework Strategy for Sustainable Development, 2009
- White Paper on National Climate Change Response, 2011
- National Aquaculture Strategic Framework, 2012
- National Aquaculture Policy Framework, 2013.

3 RELEVANT COURT RULINGS

No.	Court Case	Court Ruling
1.	FRAP 2021/2022 (ABALONE) Andre Cimme Western Cape High Court 16818/2023	Application dismissed with cost. Court order granted on 9 October 2023.
2.	FRAP 2021/2022 (TRADITIONAL LINE-FISH) Hussain & Lalla Western Cape High Court17507/2023	Judgment granted in favour of the Minister on 25 June 2024.

PART B: OUR STRATEGIC FOCUS

4. VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

4.1 Vision

A prosperous and equitable society living in harmony with our natural resources.

4.2 Mission

Providing leadership in environmental management, conservation and protection towards sustainability for the benefit of South Africans and the global community.

4.3 Values

We are driven by our **Passion** as custodians and ambassadors of the environment, we have to be **Proactive** and foster **Innovative** thinking and solutions to environmental management premised on a **People-centric** approach that recognises the centrality of Batho Pele, for it is when we put our people first that we will serve with **Integrity**; an important ingredient for a high **Performance-driven** organisation such as ours.

5 SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

The reflected on the external and internal factors that have an impact on the successful delivery of its mandate. These factors there shaped the initiatives that the MLRF deemed critical to deliver on during this five-year period.

5.1 External Environment Analysis

The Marine Living Resources Fund plays a crucial and unique role in shaping South Africa's future, both within our coastal borders, and within an increasingly complex geopolitical landscape. Through ensuring promoting sustainable use of natural resources and supporting the fishing industry that rely on a healthy environment, the work the MLRF does touches the lives of every South African.

6. MARINE FISHERIES RESOURCES

Some of South Africa's marine fishery resources are targeted by multiple sectors (e.g. the Cape hakes are targeted by the hake handline and inshore and offshore demersal trawl sectors), and several resources are taken as bycatch by one or more sectors other than that targeting a specific resource. However, the latest assessments indicate that 66% of the 77 stocks are considered not to be of concern (being of unknown, abundant or optimal status), while 34% of stocks are of concern (being of depleted or heavily depleted status). These figures indicate an improvement over the past eight years, with 46% of stocks considered not to be of concern in 2012, 49% in 2014, 52% in 2016 and 61% in 2020. The number of stocks for which the status and fishing pressure are unknown has increased.

Based on the above as well as reflecting on its operating environment, the MLRF developed a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis to identify key opportunities and the MLRF should address

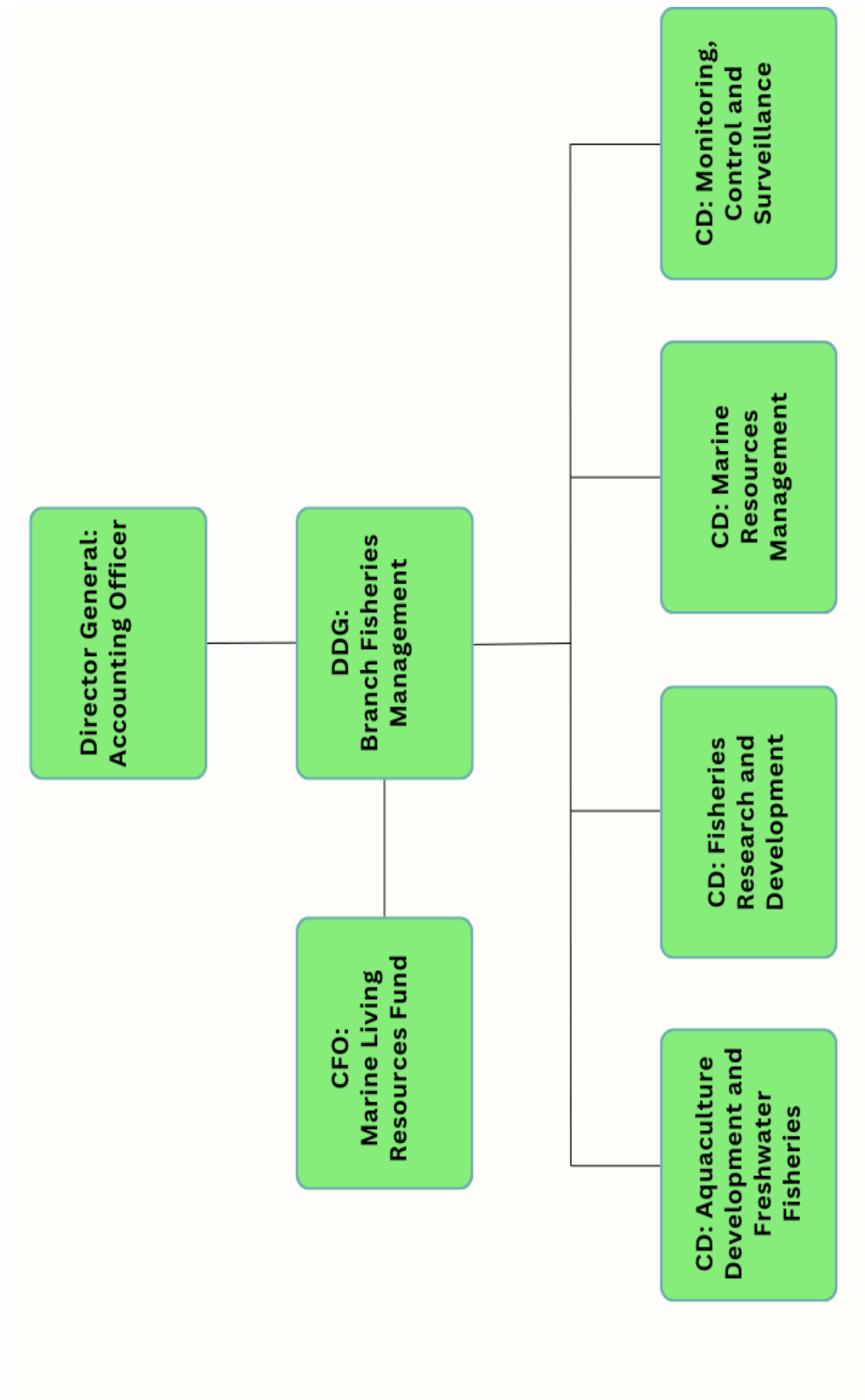
Table 1: SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong governance and public support: The MLRF mandate is aligned to the Constitution, enjoys strong public support and is a pillar of sustainable development. It operates with measurable goals and is well-regulated, contributing to clean audits, transparency, and stakeholder visibility. • Highly skilled workforce and leadership: The MLRF benefits from a highly skilled, knowledgeable, and committed workforce guided by strong leadership and effective intergovernmental relations. The personnel are committed to environmental protection and contribute significantly to job creation, poverty alleviation, and policy development. • Effective policy implementation and collaboration: Policies are well-drafted, with clear timelines and collaboration across government spheres. The MLRF ensures progressive change informed by global movements and collaboration with national and international experts, particularly in biodiversity and climate change. • Environmental stewardship and innovation: The MLRF is driven by its passion for environmental protection, with legislative mandates to safeguard biodiversity and address climate change. It is technology-aligned, innovative, and responsive to global Environmental, social, and governance (ESG) agendas, with strong values in managing the environment. • Global recognition and professionalism: With a solid regulatory arm, competent technical skills, and well-articulated policies, the MLRF is globally recognised for its professionalism. It is known for its efficient decision-making structures and well-managed public entities with stable leadership. • Strong research capabilities and stakeholder engagements. • Effective public participation processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth through innovation and technology: There is room for innovation and technology development, influenced by global trends and the ESG agendas. Expanding the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and aligning with global advancements can drive the Department forward and improve its capacity to address environmental challenges. • Training and workforce development: There are opportunities to train the current workforce to adopt new strategies and think innovatively. By leveraging existing talent and encouraging innovation can enhance the MLRF's effectiveness and ensure a more progressive and adaptable approach to environmental management. • Community empowerment and environmental protection: The MLRF has the potential to empower communities by creating sustainable jobs, improving life quality, and changing perspectives on environmental protection. This opportunity aligns with community-driven development and fostering a healthier, more environmentally conscious society. • Policy supports and global partnerships: Policies supported by evidence and global partnerships can address key strategic issues. By aligning with global environmental management standards and leveraging partnerships, the MLRF can implement more effective strategies for biodiversity protection, climate action and economic development. • International partnerships for funding and climate action. • Alignment with SDGs and local economic development. • Leveraging co-regulatory mechanisms with private sector and non-governmental organisations.

Weaknesses	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource constraints and bureaucracy: Budget constraints, cost containment, and limited financial resources hamper progress. Supply chain issues and untransformed sectoral structures add to these challenges • Limited advocacy and transformation: The MLRF is underfunded and lacks adequate advocacy for environmental challenges, with minimal involvement from the private sector. Additionally, it remains untransformed, with limited skills among the majority of the population • Aging workforce with limited succession planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource constraints and capacity issues: Limited funding, human capacity and budget cuts undermine the entity's ability to address environmental challenges • Litigation and regulatory risks: Overregulation could lead to litigation by industries and non-governmental organisations, which could derail progress. • Infrastructure and community conflicts: Security concerns, vandalism, neglect of infrastructure and competing needs of communities (e.g. land for housing vs. environmental protection) place additional strain on the entity. Managing these conflicts with limited resources makes it challenging to achieve environmental goals • Socio-economic pressures leading to illegal activities and environmental crimes • Stakeholder engagement and community buy-in: The MLRF faces difficulties in engaging stakeholders equitably, with some communities, especially poorer ones, lacking an understanding of regulations

Recognising the difficulties faced by small-scale fishers and coastal communities, the MLRF has initiated a process to simplify the application for fishing licenses. By removing bureaucratic barriers and streamlining procedures, the MLRF aims to make it easier for local fishers to obtain the necessary permits to operate legally and sustainably. The Statistics South Africa's Quarterly Labour Force Survey indicates that the unemployment rate decreased by 1,4% to 32,1% in the 3rd quarter of 2024, as compared to the 2nd quarter in 2024. The year-on-year comparison indicates a 0,2% increase in the unemployment rate from 31,9% in Q3:2023 to 32,1% in Q3: 2024.

The survey further indicates that the South African labour market is more favourable to men than it is to women. These statistics reflect the challenges that the country continues to face relating to high levels of unemployment. To address this, the MLRF will implement various job creation initiatives including creating 8202 work opportunities through the Expanded Public Works Programme over the next 5-years



6.1 PROGRAMME STRUCTURE OF THE MLRF

The work of the MLRF is implemented through the following programmes:

- Aquaculture Development and Freshwater Fisheries
- Chief Financial Officer
- Fisheries Research and Development
- Marine Resources Management
- Monitoring, Control and Surveillance

The priorities identified for implementation span across every programme of the MLRF and their successful implementation relies on a collaborative approach. Each programme will contribute to these initiatives in their unique ways and ensure that the strategies are implemented effectively across all levels of the MLRF. By working cohesively, the MLRF is leveraging its full strength to create meaningful and lasting impact for the people and environment of South Africa.

6.2 MLRF Interventions Relating to Women, the Youth and Persons with Disabilities

The National Development Plan, 2030, envisions an inclusive society and a fairer economy that provides opportunities, particularly for those people who were previously disadvantaged such as women, the youth and persons with disabilities. Government adopted a combination of interventions such as legislation, monitoring and accountability to address these imbalances.

In response to government's goal of equality within the workplace, the MLRF has targeted to employ 50% of women at Senior Management Service (SMS) level and has a workforce that comprises of 2% persons with disabilities. Through EPWP, the MLRF will create 8202 work opportunities targeted towards women, youth and 2% of persons with disabilities. This will ensure that the MLRF directly contributes towards the realisation of the National Development Plan vision of an inclusive society and a fairer economy that provides opportunities, particularly for those people who were previously disadvantaged such as women, the youth and persons with disabilities is realised.

6.3 MLRF Planning Process

The outcome of the general elections on 29 May 2024 saw the formation of the Government of National Unity (GNU). A Statement of Intent that binds the GNU was developed and lays the foundational principles and minimum programme of priorities. In July 2024, Cabinet Lekgotla agreed on a minimum Programme of Priorities and approved that these priorities be translated into a more detailed plan in the form of the 2024-2029 Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP). The MTDP will thus serve as the 5-year medium-term plan for the 7th administration of the GNU and the implementation framework for the National Development Plan: Vision 2030, which is the existing long-term plan for South Africa towards 2030.

In his Opening of Parliament Address in July 2024, the President of the Republic of South Africa announced the following 3 strategic priorities that the GNU will action over the next 5 years:

- Inclusive growth and job creation;
- Reduce poverty and tackle the high cost of living; and
- Build a capable, ethical and developmental state.

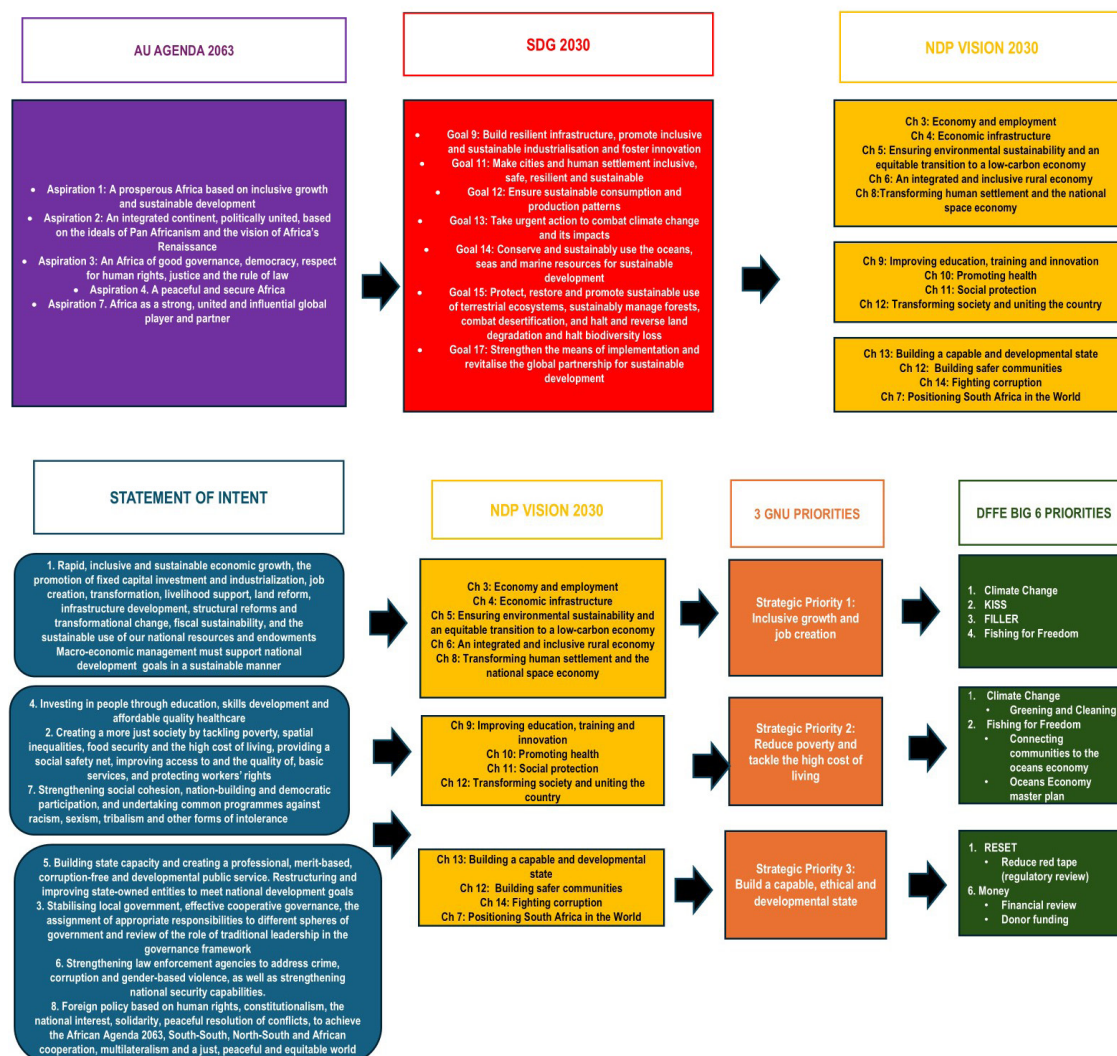
The MLRF participated in two strategic planning sessions in September 2024. During the first session the Minister announced the Big 6 Priorities which are informed by the GNU strategic priorities. This was followed by a second session for the senior management team.

The Big 6 Priorities that the Department, together with the public entities, will implement over the next 5 years are as follows:

- **Climate Change.** This priority will focus on the implementation of the Climate Change Act, and the cleaning and greening programme.
- **Kruger-Kirstenbosch-iSimangaliso Icon Status Strategy (KISS).** The focus of this priority will be on reforming these iconic sites into world-class destinations that set new standards for conservation, education and sustainable tourism.
- **Fair Industry for Lions, Leopards, Elephants and Rhinos (FILLER).** This priority will ensure a fair and sustainable future of South Africa's iconic wildlife.
- **Fishing for Freedom.** The aim of this priority will be to connect local communities to the oceans economy while promoting marine conservation
- **Regulatory Efficiency Strategy for Environmental Turbocharge (RESET).** The focus will be on streamlining governance and compliance processes to make environmental regulations more efficient, transparent and effective.
- **Money.** This priority will aim to ensure that the highest standards of fiscal responsibility are upheld through a comprehensive spending review and to attract donor funding.

The figure below highlights the alignment the Big 6 Priorities to other strategic priorities.

Figure 6: Alignment of Big 6 Priorities to other strategic priorities

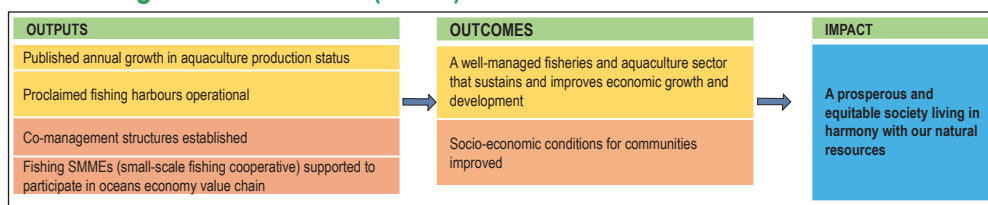


In line with the above priorities, the MLRF identified key interventions which will be implemented over the next 5-year planning cycle. The theory of change and results-based approach was utilised to develop the impact and outcomes that the MLRF intends to achieve over the next 5 years.

The MLRF fully understands that it is crucial for its initiatives to align seamlessly with the broader objectives of the GNU. By supporting the Department in implementing the Big 6 Priorities, the MLRF will directly contribute to the 7th administration's goals of fostering economic growth and a more capable government.

The figure below depicts a high-level theory of change approach on how the MLRF intends to achieve its set impact, outcomes and outputs per programme.

6.4 Marine Living Resources Fund (MLRF)



PART C: MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE

7. INSTITUTIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

7.1 MARINE LIVING RESOURCES FUND

Purpose: Ensure the sustainability, utilisation, and orderly access to marine living resources through improved management and regulation.

7.1.1 Subprogrammes

Subprogrammes	Purpose
Fisheries Management	Provides strategic leadership and overall management services to the programme
Aquaculture Development and Freshwater Fisheries	To ensure sustainable growth, responsible management and development of the aquaculture sector as well as the freshwater (Inland) fisheries
Monitoring, Control and Surveillance	Ensures the protection and promotion of the sustainable use of marine living resources by intensifying enforcement and compliance with the relevant legislation and regulations
Marine Resources Management	Ensures the sustainable use of, and equitable and orderly access to marine living resources through improved management and regulation
Fisheries Research and Development	Ensures the promotion of the sustainable development of fisheries resources and ecosystems by conducting and supporting appropriate research
Marine Living Resources Fund	Transfers funds to the Marine Living Resources Fund to cover its personnel and operational expenditure

7.1.2 Outcomes, Outputs, Output Indicators and Targets

Outcomes	Outputs	Output Indicators	Audited Performance			Estimated Performance 2024/25	MTEF Targets		
			2021/22	2022/23	2023/24		2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Improved regulatory compliance with environmental legislation	Proclaimed fishing harbours operational	Number of proclaimed fishing harbours operational	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	12 proclaimed fishing harbours operational	12 proclaimed fishing harbours operational	12 proclaimed fishing harbours operational
Increased employment, equitable access and participation in socio-economic opportunities	Yearbook on aquaculture production status published	Yearbook on aquaculture production status published	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2024 growth in aquaculture production status published-	2025 growth in aquaculture production status published	2026 growth in aquaculture production status published-
	Co-management structures established	Number of co-management structures established	N/A	N/A	N/A	20	20 of co-management structures established	20 of co-management structures established	10 of co-management structures established
	Small-scale fishing cooperatives supported to participate in oceans economy value chain	Number of small-scale fishing cooperatives supported to participate in oceans economy value chain	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	15 small-scale fishing cooperatives supported to participate in oceans economy value chain	15 small-scale fishing cooperatives supported to participate in oceans economy value chain	20 small-scale fishing cooperatives supported to participate in oceans economy value chain
	Full-Time Equivalent jobs (FTEs) created within the Fisheries Sector	Number of Full-Time Equivalent (FTEs) created (EPWP)	46	266	276	773	796 Full-Time Equivalent (FTEs) created (EPWP)	820	844
	Work Opportunities created within the Fisheries sector	Number of Work Opportunities created (EPWP)	62	429	600	1545	1591 Work Opportunities created (EPWP)	1637	1688

7.1.3 Output Indicators: Annual and Quarterly Targets

Output Indicators	2025/26 Annual Targets	Quarterly Targets			
		Quarter 1 (Apr-Jun)	Quarter 2 (Jul-Sep)	Quarter 3 (Oct-Dec)	Quarter 4 (Jan-Mar)
Number of proclaimed fishing harbours operational	12 proclaimed fishing harbours operational	12	12	12	12
Yearbook on aquaculture production status published	2024 growth in aquaculture production status published	No milestone	No milestone	Draft sector assessment report compiled	2024 growth in aquaculture production status published
Number of co-management structures established	20 of co-management structures established	No milestone	No milestone	10	10
Number of small-scale fishing cooperatives supported to participate in oceans economy value chain	15 small-scale fishing cooperatives supported to participate in oceans economy value chain	No milestone	Implementation plan for identified support interventions developed	7	8
Number of Full-Time Equivalent (FTEs) created within the fisheries sector (EPWP)	796 Full-Time Equivalent (FTEs) created (EPWP)	180	180	200	236
Number of Work Opportunities created within the Fisheries Sector (EPWP)	1591 Work Opportunities created (EPWP)	1191	100	150	150

7.4 Explanation of Planned Performance over the Medium-Term Period

The South African fishing sector remains a significant contributor to food security and the economy. Stabilising the sub-sector through the allocation of longer-term fishing rights is critical to attracting investment into the industry. The fisheries sector contributes roughly 0.1% to the GDP. It is estimated that direct employment in the industry constitutes approximately 27 000, while an additional 81 000 people are indirectly employed in industries that are at least partially dependent on the fishing sector. The MLRF has sought to promote transformation in the sector through inclusion of small-scale fishing communities. Central to the success of small fishing cooperatives is an increase in the basket of species available to them.

In line with international trends, the MLRF recognises fisheries as an economic activity rather than a purely environmental or biodiversity matter. The MLRF seeks to prevent overexploitation by means of assigning total allowable catch and total allowable effort per species, which are adjusted regularly depending on the estimated state of the resource. Securing the safety of domestic fish stocks is a central requirement for a sustainable fishing industry. The MLRF remains committed to ensuring compliance with international fisheries obligations, which aim to promote the sustainable management of fisheries and marine resources and, most importantly, preserve our rich marine biodiversity.

The Marine Living Resources Fund (MLRF) contributes to two key outcomes:

Improved regulatory compliance with environmental legislation

Increased employment, equitable access and participation in socio-economic opportunities

The delivery of the targeted outputs over the 5-year term will drive progress towards these outcomes, ultimately leading to the realization of the MLRF's broader impact goals.

7.4.1 Programme Resource Considerations

Subprogramme	Audited Outcomes R '000			Appropriated Appropriation R '000 2024/25	Medium-term Expenditure Estimate R '000		
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24		2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Fisheries Management	62 869	60 338	48 450	54 467	47 448	48 141	49 034
Aquaculture Development and Fresh Water	43 987	43 994	41 800	43 341	43 809	45 833	47 941
Fisheries Monitoring, Control and Surveillance	102 726	104 360	133 761	125 026	140 752	147 256	154 031
Marine Resources Management	31 117	32 655	37 303	30 113	42 964	44 950	47 019
Fisheries Research and Development	72 084	74 647	61 944	75 995	65 404	68 426	71 574
Marine Living Resources Fund	305 278	316 625	322 845	303 610	317 212	331 745	346 747
TOTAL	618 061	632 619	646 103	632 552	657 589	686 351	716 346

7.4.1 KEY RISKS AND MITIGATION

Outcomes		Key Risks	Risk Mitigations
MARINE LIVING RESOURCES FUND			
Improved regulatory compliance with environmental legislation	Inadequate resources and support by partners in managing and overseeing the maintenance and operations in the proclaimed fishing harbours.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI) to optimise harbour operations in the twelve (12) Proclaimed Fishing Harbours Collaboration with DPWI in the facilitation of the Harbour Steering Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Filling of the vacant funded posts. Participate in the development of the online permitting systems
Increased employment, equitable access and participation in socio-economic opportunities	Delays in the issuing of permits within service delivery timeframes.		

INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

None.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

None.

PART D: TECHNICAL INDICATOR DESCRIPTION

MARINE LIVING RESOURCES FUND

Indicator title	Number of proclaimed fishing harbours operational
Definition	The Marine Living Resources Act (Act No.18 of 1998) makes provision for the proclamation of harbours in terms of Section 27. The 12 Proclaimed Fishing Harbours are considered proclaimed in terms of Section 27 of the Marine Living Resources Act, 1998. Operational refers to activities undertaken in Proclaimed Fishing Harbours in terms of Fishing Harbour Regulations, under Chapter 9, Part 2 (88-95) of the Marine Living resources Act (Act No.18 of 1998), and as per the approved plan of the activities that would need to be done for each harbour
Source of data	Management progress reports
Method of calculation or assessment	Simple count
Means of verification	Q1 – Q4: Approved Annual Plan and Operational reports of services rendered in terms of the harbour regulations
Assumptions	N/A
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Calculation type	Non-Cumulative
Reporting cycle	Quarterly
Desired performance	12 proclaimed fishing harbours operational
Indicator responsibility	Deputy Director General: Fisheries Management

Indicator title	Yearbook on aquaculture production status published
Definition	This indicator monitors the production growth of the aquaculture sector on an annual basis. This is done through collection of production data and published through the South Africa's Aquaculture Sector
Source of data	Production data from the aquaculture farmers in nine provinces for both marine and freshwater aquaculture sectors
Method of calculation or assessment	Annual growth in Aquaculture production status published
Means of verification	Q3: Compiled draft sector assessment report Q4: 2024 Aquaculture yearbook, proof of publication
Assumptions	Availability of human resources. Cooperation from the marine and freshwater aquaculture farmers
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Calculation type	Non-cumulative
Reporting cycle	Bi-annually
Desired performance	2024 growth in aquaculture production status published
Indicator responsibility	Deputy Director General: Fisheries Management

Indicator title	Number of co-management structures established
Definition	Co-management is defined as "...a governance approach in which government and small-scale fishing communities share the responsibility and authority for the management of a marine resource by that community (SSF, 2016)". The DFFE will be facilitating the establishment of co-management structures, which would include small-scale fishers, traditional leaders, municipalities and other relevant stakeholders. Co-management structures will be established when the terms of reference for each co-management structure is signed
Source of data	Terms of reference from co-management structures
Method of calculation or assessment	Simple count
Means of verification	Q3: Signed terms of reference and Signed progress reports for co-management structures established Q4: Signed terms of reference and Signed progress reports for co-management structures established
Assumptions	Supply Chain Management processes run smoothly
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Calculation type	Cumulative (year-end)
Reporting cycle	Bi-annually
Desired performance	20 co-management structures established
Indicator responsibility	Deputy Director-General: Fisheries Management

Indicator title	Number of small-scale fishing cooperatives supported to participate in oceans economy value chain
Definition	The indicator measures the progress and Development towards creating opportunities for supporting small-scale fishing cooperatives in participating in the ocean economy. Small-scale fishing cooperatives are legal entities established in line with the Small-Scale Fisheries Policy (2012) objectives. Support will be provided in line with the Small-Scale fishing policy and the Integrated Development Support Strategy
Source of data	The Small-Scale fishing policy and the Integrated Development Support Strategy
Method of calculation or assessment	Simple count
Means of verification	Q1: No milestone Q2: Implementation plan signed by the Deputy Director-General: Fisheries Management Q3: 7 Number of small-scale fishing cooperatives supported to participate in oceans economy value chain. Documents demonstrating the support offered by Directorate Small-Scale Management. Q4: 8 Number of small-scale fishing cooperatives supported to participate in oceans economy value chain. Documents demonstrating the support offered by Directorate Small-Scale Management
Assumptions	Availability of financial and human resources to implement and facilitate support interventions.
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Calculation type	Cumulative (year-end)
Reporting cycle	Quarterly

Desired performance	15 small-scale fishing cooperatives supported to participate in oceans economy value chain
Indicator responsibility	Deputy Director-General: Fisheries Management

Indicator title	
Number of Full-Time Equivalents created within the Fisheries Sector (EPWP)	
Definition	This indicator measures the number of Full-Time Equivalents (FTE's) created within the DFFE Fisheries sector within a defined period in the current Financial Year. A Full-Time Equivalent refers to an employment opportunity for a period equivalent to one full working year. One Full-Time Equivalent equals two hundred and thirty (230) cumulative persons days of work (quarterly)
Source of data	Management progress reports
Method of calculation or assessment	Quantitative
Means of verification	Q1: Copies of ID's and contracts, time – sheets. Q2: Copies of ID's and contracts, time – sheets. Q3: Copies of ID's and contracts, time – sheets. Q4: Copies of ID's and contracts, time – sheets.
Assumptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60% Women • 55% Youth • 2% Persons with disabilities
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Calculation type	Cumulative (year-end)
Reporting cycle	Quarterly
Desired performance	Achieving planned targets
Indicator responsibility	Deputy Director-General: Fisheries Management

Indicator title	
Work Opportunities within the Fisheries Sector	
Definition	Coordinate, monitor and report on the number of Work Opportunities and full-time equivalent captured in the Working for Fisheries Programme. A work opportunity paid work created for an individual on an EPWP project for any period. The same person can be employed on different projects and each period of employment can be counted as work opportunity (quarterly).
Source of data	Management progress reports
Method of calculation or assessment	Quantitative
Means of verification	Q1: Copies of ID's and contracts, time – sheets. Q2: Copies of ID's and contracts, time – sheets. Q3: Copies of ID's and contracts, time – sheets. Q4: Copies of ID's and contracts, time – sheets.
Assumptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60% Women • 55% Youth • 2% Persons with disabilities
Disaggregation of beneficiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Spatial transformation (where applicable)	N/A
Calculation type	Cumulative (year-end)
Reporting cycle	Quarterly
Desired performance	Achieving planned targets
Indicator responsibility	Deputy Director-General: Fisheries Management

NOTES

[illegible]

