



**forestry, fisheries
& the environment**

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

Ref: O2/1/5/2

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

(For written reply)

QUESTION NO. 1297 {NW1490E}

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 13 of 2021

DATE OF PUBLICATION: 14 May 2021

Mr D W Bryant (DA) to ask the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment:

- (1) What are the relevant details of the agencies that have been involved in the busts confiscation of the significant amount of rhino horn at the O.R. Tambo International Airport between July 2020 and February 2021 (details furnished), which have been widely reported in the media;
- (2) what has happened to the confiscated rhino horn stockpiles;
- (3) whether the confiscated rhino horn stockpiles have been destroyed; if not, what will be done with it; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (4) whether there are any other confiscated rhino horn stockpiles; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the future plans for the stockpiles?


1297. THE MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT REPLIES:

1. The following agencies have been involved in the busts/confiscation of rhino horn at the O.R. Tambo International Airport between July 2020 and February 2021, which have been widely reported in the media:
 - Private security companies employed by Airports Company South Africa (ACSA) and the warehouse operators / cargo handlers who are responsible for manning the x-ray machines.

- South African Revenue Service (SARS) Customs.
 - South African Police Service (SAPS): Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (DPCI).
 - Environmental Management Inspectors from the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE).
2. The seized rhino horns are handled as per the prescribed crime scene standard operating procedures. A chain of custody principle is followed and the seized horns are bagged, sealed and entered into the SAPS evidence register (SAPS 13). From there, the horns are taken for forensic examination and DNA sampling in order to be compared to the DNA samples in the national database. The horns are then kept in a secure location until the relevant court case is finalised. Thereafter, the horns are moved to another central secure location for storage.
 3. Confiscated rhino horn stockpiles have not been destroyed. They are stored in a secure location.
 4. Yes, there are other seized rhino horn stockpiles, and these are all kept under lock in secure locations.

The High Level Panel (HLP) set up to review existing policies, legislation and practices on matters related to the management, breeding, hunting, trade and handling of elephant, lion, leopard and rhinoceros recommended the Department develop a stockpile management and disposal policy. This recommendation is currently under consideration.

Regards



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

DATE: 28/5/2021