



**environment, forestry
& fisheries**

Department:
Environment, Forestry and Fisheries
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Ref: O2/1/5/2

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

(For oral reply)

QUESTION NO. 337 {NO2348E}

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 31 of 2020

DATE OF PUBLICATION: 18 August 2020

Mr N Singh (IFP) to ask the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment:

Whether she has found that the current dire financial situation at Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife can lead to massive negative ramifications regarding the current levels of protection currently provided to critically endangered wildlife resident within the parks; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what (a) steps is her Department immediately implementing in order to mitigate such risks and (b) are the full relevant details?

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

The impact of COVID 19 has exacerbated the already constrained resources for the biodiversity and conservation sectors. The Minister is aware of the financial constraints facing all conservation management authorities and/or entities, including Ezemvelo KZN. The ramifications regarding protection of critically endangered wildlife and other socio-economic implications remain a cause for concern and high on the agenda of the sector.

a) and b) The steps that Minister has undertaken to date are:

- The programme to investigate the rationalisation of the protected areas system has been revived to enhance the effectiveness and achieve the best outcomes in the management of protected areas. All Members of the Provincial Executive Councils have agreed that the recommendations

of a 2012 study entitled "Review of Institutional Arrangements for Management of Protected Areas" must be revisited. Work is currently underway to review these recommendations for consideration over the coming year. This process will lead to harmonised and effective governance of biodiversity and conservation in the country, including the implementation of measures addressing sustainable financing for conservation.

- In terms of Regulation 4 (10) (c) of the Disaster Management Act Regulations, The Minister set-up a Ministerial Task Team (MTT) on Resource Mobilisation for biodiversity to raise funding to cushion against the impact of COVID-19. The Ministerial Task Team (MTT) has been established as an advisory body to advise on, among other things, resource mobilisation for biodiversity and conservation. It comprises experts from diverse backgrounds who will need to consider innovative approaches to sustainable funding for the conservation sector. Initial work is focusing on an emergency response, but with the view to longer-term sustainable funding mechanisms and models. Through this process, the finance needs of each management authority have been prioritised and diverse investment sources are being considered, including innovative financing solutions, for resource mobilisation.
- The Minister has also been supporting an initiative with the non-governmental sector under the leadership of the IUCN and the Endangered Wildlife Trust. This resource mobilisation initiative is meant to support the post-Covid response and recovery in the biodiversity and conservation sector, while building a nature-positive future. Its success will have positive implications across all the geographical regions of the country.
- Together with Management Authorities and entities, the Department is further pursuing options to enhance biodiversity scientific capacity and institutional arrangements for the Scientific Authority in line with Section 31 of the National Environment: Biodiversity Management Act (NEMBA). The enhancement of scientific capacity in the sector will ensure evidence-based and targeted approaches to the management and monitoring of wildlife resources.
- Through the Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN), which is a partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), we have prioritised financing solutions to develop sustainable financing strategies for Protected Areas. As part of this process, Ezemvelo KZN is one of the Management Authorities that will participate in the process.

- Other details are available on the reprioritised budget policy statement for the 2020/21 financial year which was detailed in the Department's budget vote on 23 July 2020.

Regards


.....

MS BD CREECY, MP

MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

DATE: 25/8/2020
.....