



environment, forestry & fisheries

Department:
Environment, Forestry and Fisheries
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

(For written reply)

QUESTION NO. 944 {NW1233E}

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 17 of 2020

DATE OF PUBLICATION: 22 May 2020

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

- (1) How does she plan to obtain objective and unbiased advice from the High Level Panel (HLP) on which she has to base her decisions with regard to the sustainable utilisation of trade in elephant, lion, leopard and rhino (details furnished) by the very proponents of hunting, farming and trade in the species, and who make up the majority membership of the HLP?
- (2) has she been informed of the existence of the Consultative Wildlife Forum (CWF) which was formed by her Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) in conjunction with representatives consisting of members of hunting, wildlife farming and other pro-sustainable utilisation groups to advise the DEA on wildlife issues; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so;
- (3) Why has she deemed it necessary to appoint yet another panel which appears to duplicate many of the functions of the CWF?
- (4) Has she been appraised of a certain report (name furnished) on the forum; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details?

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

- (1) The panel is guided primarily by the Constitutional Mandate in the Bill of Rights, especially in terms of Section 24, which provides for environmental rights, but also considering all elements of

the Bill of Rights, including the foundational values of dignity, achieving equality and advancement of human rights and freedoms, the necessity for transformation and restitution.

A Code of Conduct has been developed by the Panel, which binds members to the principles of integrity, good faith, impartiality, professionalism, transparency, accountability, ethics, and confidentiality.

In applying their minds to the challenging and contentious issues that are highlighted in the terms of reference for the panel, an important component of the work is to solicit and receive submissions from interested and affected parties. As such, the panel is expected to be objective.

- (2) The Department's Consultative Wildlife Forum (CWF) was established in 2006, with the aim to create a platform for constructive interaction between government and the wildlife sector. Until 2019, the CWF operated within the scope of the Terms of Reference (ToRs) that were developed and accepted on 12 June 2008.

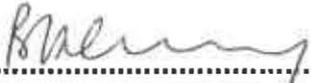
In 2019, the Minister approved the ToRs for the repositioning of the Wildlife Forum, with an aim to refocus on the new dynamics of emerging issues in the wildlife industry and to review and align to the broader imperatives of the Biodiversity and Tourism Lab. The endorsement of the ToRs enabled the Minister to be well-informed of the repositioning of the Wildlife Forum and its fundamental objectives.

The Minister is aware of the existence of the Wildlife Forum, but it should be noted that the Wildlife Forum is not positioned or mandated to undertake policy review as it represents a particular segment of society, hence the High Level Panel was appointed to provide such policy advice.

(3) The reasons for the appointment of the HLP have been explained in the Department's response to National Assembly Question number 231.

(4) The Department is not aware of any body mandated in law to evaluate the functions of the High Level Panel.

Regards



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

DATE: 4/6/2020