



forestry, fisheries & the environment

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

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NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

(For written reply)

QUESTION NO. 2813 {NW3333E}

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 32 of 2021

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Ms A M M Weber (DA) to ask the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment:

- 1) What key lessons (a) have been learned by SA National Parks that have not been accommodated in the revised elephant norms and standards (ENS);
- 2) whether it has been anticipated that it will be accommodated in future policy revisions of the ENS; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details?

2813. THE MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT REPLIES:

1. (a) The 2008 Elephant Norms and Standards (ENS) are very prescriptive in terms of what could be done to manage elephants and their use of space. One of the key challenges for SANParks is the restriction on the number of times an individual elephant can be translocated.

Parks outside of the Kruger National Park, such as Marakele, have had their elephant population seeded from other populations, which meant that these individuals could not be translocated a second time unless there were extraordinary circumstances necessitating such translocation. The same is true for responding to repeat offender damage-causing animals. SANParks' proposal on translocating elephants a second time under extraordinary circumstances has been included in the revised ENS.

The revised ENS still considers the potential stressful impact of translocation on elephants. Therefore, the approach of the ENS to allow the repeat translocation of elephants only in extraordinary circumstances has, therefore, not been changed.

The NCOP has approved the final draft revised ENS. The process to obtain the Minister's approval for the publication of the final draft ENS in the *Government Gazette* for implementation has been initiated and the document is currently undergoing legal vetting.

2. One of the important developments in the revised ENS was the inclusion of Chapter 28 on Research. This will allow for well-structured, repeatable research, meeting the criteria as listed in the revised ENS in order to improve the knowledge and understanding of elephants, their use of space and how to better manage their impacts at a local scale. The outcomes of such research, if and when undertaken, may have a bearing on future policy iterations, which is in keeping with a strategic adaptive management approach, as set out in the ENS specifically and in conservation policy more broadly.

Regards



MS B D CREECY, MP

MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

DATE: 22 December 2021