



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. 3602 {NW4786E}

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 41 of 2023

DATE OF PUBLICATION: 03 November 2023

Ms T Breedt (FF Plus) to ask the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment:

- (1) Whether she and/or her department has been informed of the alleged forced removals of local communities from the Kuno National Park in Central India following the translocation of the cheetah; if not, will she engage with the relevant Indian authorities to establish the facts on this issue; if so, will she furnish Ms T Breedt with the relevant details of how the removal of persons from the land to where the cheetah would be relocated was taken into account in reaching the decision to translocate the cheetah to India;
- (2) whether she has found that concerns regarding social injustice surrounding the translocation of the cheetah would move her to reconsider her support of Project Cheetah; if not, why not; if so, how will such concerns be taken into account in deciding on future translocations of cheetah to India;
- (3) whether she will make a statement on the matter?

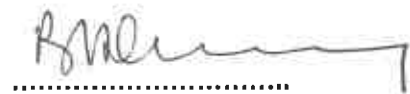
3602. THE MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT REPLIES:

(1)(2)(3) In January 2023, the Republic of South Africa and the Republic of India signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the purpose of –

- establishing a viable and secure population in India through the reintroduction of cheetah in their former range areas where they became extinct;
- sharing, exchanging expertise, and building capacity aimed at promoting cheetah conservation in the two countries, including human–wildlife conflict resolution, wildlife capture and translocation, and community participation in conservation;
- collaborating and exchanging best practices in large carnivore conservation through technology transfer, professional management, policy, and science training; and
- creating a bilateral custodianship arrangement for cheetahs that have been translocated between the parties.

India's system of national parks is open and not fenced off. Prior to the relocation of the cheetahs, the management of the Park engaged local communities to build support for the cheetah introduction. An incentivised **voluntary** resettlement programme was undertaken by the Indian authorities to relocate villages that were in the Park.

The South African government fully respects the holistic wildlife conservation approach and complementary management policies of India and trusts that the cheetah relocation will lead to the establishment of a viable and secure cheetah population in their former range, as a contribution towards India's sustainable development priorities.



MS B D CREECY, MP
MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT
DATE: 16/11/2023