



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. 4085 {NW5366E}

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 47 of 2023

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

- (1) With reference to her reply to question 3473 on 10 November 2023, what are the full details of the (a)(i) basis on which the decision to cull 87 buffalo in the Kruger National Park in 2022 was made and (ii) scientific evaluations in this regard, (b) income and expenditure for the Skukuza Game Meat Processing Plant for the 2022-23 financial year, (c)(i) reasons for the off take of 16 elephants as damage-causing animals, (ii) nature of the damage caused and (iii) number of repeated incidents and (d) steps taken to mitigate and prevent reoccurrence of the damage, and thus avoid the necessity to euthanise the elephants;
- (2) (a) how were the communities in need identified for the donations of elephant meat to communities on the western and southern boundaries of the Kruger National Park, as there are presumably many more communities in need than could be satisfied by the donation of meat from 16 elephants and (b) what are the details of oversight by senior management and specific measures taken to avoid nepotism and corruption?

4085. THE MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT REPLIES:

1. (a)(i)

The 59 buffaloes referred to in *Parliamentary Question 3473* were part of a Yale University Research Project (USA) on Bovine Tuberculosis and were processed through the Skukuza Game Processing Plant (GPP).

(a)(ii)

An approved veterinary research project on Bovine Tuberculosis in Buffalo in collaboration with Yale University is still ongoing. The scientific research results are not yet available.

(b)

The income for Skukuza Game Processing Plant for the 2022/23 financial year was R5 565, 241.01 and the total expenditure, including the payment of salaries and benefits, was R6 335, 510.00.

(c)(i)(ii)(iii)

Elephants removed were animals that were continually breaking the fence of the Skukuza Airport causing serious risk to properties in the Skukuza staff village, exiting the KNP and harassing communities in the Phabeni area as well as breaking into support infrastructure at Letaba camp.

(d)

A total of six beehives were installed in areas where the elephants broke the Skukuza Airport fence in an attempt to use bees as a deterrent mechanism against elephants, this had no impact. A new 'porcupine' type electric fence was installed in sections of the Skukuza Airport and assisted somewhat in reducing breakages. Camera traps were set up around the areas of the Skukuza Airport where elephants were breaking fences so as to identify individual culprits of repeated breakages. In addition, multiple helicopter flights were conducted to chase the elephants away from the Skukuza Airport space and out of neighbouring communities.

2. (a)

The recipients of meat donations are primarily identified together with Community Forum Representatives, with a main focus being on local schools (mostly primary schools, but including pre-primary and senior schools), drop-in centres, old age centres and orphanages as well as Traditional Council Centres adjacent to the park in both Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces. Although the meat from a few elephants does not reach everyone, the small amount goes a long way to support poor communities. For transparency, the information is shared through the KNP forum representatives. This promotes broader and fair benefit sharing and relationship building for conservation.

(b)

To maintain transparency, offtake and donation processes are done in close liaison with Community Forum Representatives. The school donations take place on a rotational basis. SANParks keeps a school database to ensure that all schools in an area receive a donation before any school receives a second donation. Lists of recipients in various communities are kept.



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MS B D CREECY, MP
MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT
DATE: 29.11.2023