



environmental affairs

Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

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(For written reply)

QUESTION NO. 392 {NW571E}

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 9 of 2020

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

- (1) What is the (a) total current quota for all sharks and (b) the underlying quota for (i) Soupfin and (ii) Smooth-hound sharks, given that they are considered threatened;
- (2) what steps is her department taking to (a) set the quota for Smooth-hound sharks in line with her department's recommended 75-tonne maximum for sustainability or (b) cancel the specified fishing quota altogether to allow shark populations to recover;
- (3) why has her department's 2015 recommended slot limits of 70-130cm total length not been implemented;
- (4) given that only three vessels are operating in the shark-fin industry with negligible impact on employment, food security and the Gross Domestic Product, (a) why has this practice been allowed to continue and (b) what is the Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment level of the companies owning and operating these fishing vessels;
- (5) why does her department allow the majority of the shark catch to be exported to Australia, given the diminishing shark populations and food security of those dependent on fisheries as a source of food?

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

(1) (a)

Shark fisheries are managed in terms of restriction on the amount of fishing effort that is allowed to be put in, rather than in terms of quotas that may be taken out. In the case of the Demersal Shark Sector, the Total Allowable Effort (TAE) in the sector is six vessels. To restrict by-catch, measures including gear restrictions, observer coverage and percentage of sharks in the catch (less than 50% per year) have been implemented in other fisheries.

(b)

See (1)(a) above.

(2) (a)

The recent stock assessment of the Smooth-hound sharks indicates that the stock is currently being fished close to sustainable levels, but future projections indicate that the stock will decline at current fishing levels. The department has been engaging with various shark researchers through the Linefish Scientific Working Group to evaluate the stock status of the Smooth-hound sharks and it is the department's intentions to reduce their catches in all fisheries to meet the set fishing mortality target reference point.

(b)

See (2)(a) above.

(3) As a result of concerns raised about government's failure to always understand the full costs of changes in regulations and especially the impact on the economy, it is now a legal requirement for a Socio Economic Impact Assessment System (SEIAS) to be conducted to minimise unintended consequences of policy initiatives.

The proposed slot limits apply to various fishing sectors that land demersal shark as part of their by-catch. Consequently, this requires a Socio Economic Impact Assessment System before the department may implement the limits. The SEIAS process is currently underway: Phase 1 has been completed and consultations under Phase 2 were originally aimed to take place in the last 2 weeks in May 2020.

(4) (a)

Rights in the Demersal Shark Longline Sector have been allocated for a period of seven (7) years and will expire on 31 December 2020. The current rights holders will be granted an exemption for one fishing season and the new rights will be allocated by 31 December 2021. When new commercial fishing rights are due for reallocation, stock status will be taken in to account to determine the Total Allowable Effort.

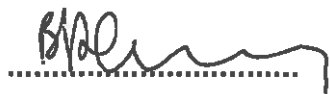
(b)

Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment level of the companies owning and operating these fishing vessels:

No	Name of Right Holder	Company Registration Number	Black Shareholding (%)	No. of vessels
1	BMC Visserye BK	1996/036279/23	100%	1
2	Fisherman Fresh CC	2004/000123/23	100%	1
3	G & K Fisheries	1989/001578/23	3,60%	1
4	Hacky Fishing (Pty) Ltd	1993/004967/07	100%	1
5	Unathi-Wena Fishing CC	1998/001767/23	100%	2

5) The department does not interfere in the marketing of fish and fisheries products. The consumption of shark meat is not popular in South Africa and the majority of products derived from demersal shark landings are exported to Australia, principally for consumption in the fish-and-chips trade.

Regards



MS BD CRECY, MP

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES

DATE: 26.10.3.2020