

## CHARTER UNDERTAKINGS

### **Streamline and expedite afforestation licensing procedures**

Par. 13.2.3 (a) of the Charter contains the undertaking to streamline and expedite afforestation licensing procedures to facilitate the establishment of a minimum of 100 000ha net increase in planted area over ten years, based on a target average of 10 000ha per annum, while at the same time ensuring that forestry's water use is considered and weighted fully against competing proponents for water allocation in licensing decisions. This will comprise the following measures:

- (a) Create an enabling regulatory environment that renders the costs of the water use licence application process affordable to emerging growers.
- (b) Support and advise emerging growers in the water licensing application process, in compliance with environmental and other afforestation authorisation requirements.
- (c) Take steps to ensure that legislative and regulatory requirements do not result in forestry and the planting of trees for commercial and subsistence use being disadvantaged in relation to other forms of land use.
- (d) Ensure that all applications for afforestation are processed expeditiously by developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with and ratified by other pertinent authorising regulatory authorities. The MoU should ensure strict enforcement of the Stream Flow Reduction Activity (SFRA) application procedures and adherence by all participating parties to the laid down time frames prescribed for relevant interventions, such as inspecting sites, receiving and attending to comments, and processing applications.
- (e) Implement a proactive approach to forestry development in areas that have substantial opportunities for afforestation, namely a co-operative government initiative to authorise swift afforestation licensing in areas that have been identified and demarcated as being suitable for afforestation in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. This will be provided for in the Memorandum of Understanding referred to in par (d) above.
- (f) Develop a protocol to be included in the Memorandum of Understanding referred to in par. (d) above to facilitate lawful conversion of tree genus or species, specified as a permit or licence condition, where this change should be informed by forestry practice or economics. The key principle governing such change will be the water use condition of the applicable authorisation.
- (g) Make provision for water use by subsistence and homestead woodlots by providing for the consideration of a Schedule 1 provision and/or General Authorisation for such small-scale woodlots.

- (h) Facilitate the transfer or trade of a water use allocation or existing lawful use of water, and the issuing of licences in the event of conversion of a land use from irrigated cropping (including sugarcane) to timber plantations.
- (i) Allow water use by dryland sugarcane to be allocated to timber plantations, based on an equitable water use exchange ratio for these crops, provided that such dryland sugarcane has been an existing land use practice for at least five years, and that this does not compromise the availability of water to the Reserve and other lawful water users.
- (j) Allow the water use attributed to wattle, pine and eucalyptus jungles that are rehabilitated or converted and correctly managed as commercial timber plantations, to be allocated through an SFRA water use licence to such timber plantations. General Authorisations will be considered in catchments where there is sufficient available water to allow such conversion.
- (k) Develop an efficient and effective framework to authorise the re-allocation of water, where timber as an existing lawful water use in a riparian zone is excised, to alternative plantation areas within the same quaternary catchments or elsewhere within the wider catchment.
- (l) Ensure that emerging timber growers who have lawfully licensed timber plantations are included in DWAF's definition of "resource poor farmers" and subject to the same benefits as others so classified.

### **Sawlog growing strategy and programme for South Africa**

Par. 15.2.2 of the Charter contains the undertaking to develop a sawlog growing strategy and programme. This strategy and programme will include the following measures:

- (a) Ensure that emerging timber growers who have lawfully licensed timber plantations are included in DWAF's definition of "resource poor farmers" and subject to the same benefits as others so classified.
- (b) Review the State Forest Exit Strategy in Southern and Western Cape.
- (c) Create incentives for emerging black growers to invest in long rotation sawtimber crops.
- (d) Develop government conditions on lease of state forestland to ensure the continued production of sawlogs.
- (e) Promote greater investment by the sawmilling industry in raw material supply.
- (f) Create land dedication schemes for long rotation crops linked to, inter alia, tax incentives.

- (g) Develop sector programmes involving government and the industry to combat softwood plantation losses.
- (h) Develop appropriate species selection, growing and harvesting strategies that meet the structured market requirements for a diversity of saw-timber products in the country.

### **Qualifying Small Enterprises (QSE) Undertaking**

During the last meeting of the Charter Steering Committee held on 14 November 2007, the following was agreed:

Government and the Industry through the Forestry Charter Council undertake to commission research to determine the appropriate threshold for qualifying small enterprises (QSEs) and for the determined threshold to be included in the Forest Sector Charter during the process to issue the charter as a sector code (i.e. gazetting under section 9).

### **Forest protection services**

Par. 15.2.3 of the Charter contains the undertaking to develop a forest protection strategy to reduce the currently escalating losses being experienced through fires, pest and disease. This strategy and programme will include the following measures:

- (a) Pests and diseases
  - a. Government, through DWAF, and the Industry undertake to:
  - b. Profile pest and disease issues as a Government priority.
  - c. Compile a risk analysis of the current and potential threats facing timber plantations and to make recommendations as to the best way to mitigate these.
  - d. Develop and agree upon an integrated strategy to implement the recommendations, including providing for increased levels of support through infrastructure, human resource capacity and funding.
  - e. Prioritise pest and disease research aspects in the Forest Sector R&D strategy.
  - f. Negotiate with the national Department of Agriculture to expedite the procedures for importation of Biological Control Agents to assist in the control of pest and disease outbreaks.
  - g. Enhance phytosanitary monitoring and control at ports of entry into South Africa.
  - h. Enhance public awareness about the threats posed by forest pest and diseases.
- (b) Forest fires

Government, through DWAF, undertakes to:

- a. Ensure that policies and strategies are in place to ensure compliance by land owners with the provisions of the National Veld and Forest Fire Act, 1998 (Act No. 101 of 1998) as amended.
- b. Ensure that capacity exists to enforce the provisions of the NVFFA.
- c. Ensure that measures are in place to encourage enrolment and participation in Fire Protection Associations.
- d. Encourage the provision of resources to Fire Protection Associations, particularly those servicing communal areas, to enable them to provide improved levels of service.
- e. Assist Industry through the provision of 'seed funding' to implement emerging grower fire insurance cover as outlined in par. 13.2.5 of the Charter.
- f. Implement, on an ongoing basis, National Fire Awareness campaigns with particular emphasis on high fire risk areas.
- g. Support resource-poor Fire Protection Associations.
- h. Enhance capacity of Working on Fire programme to fight veld and forest fires.

Industry, in turn, undertakes to:

- i. Increase enrolment and participation in Fire Protection Associations.
- j. Increase collective support of equipment, personnel and training for Fire Protection Associations.
- k. Enhance cooperation and support to the Working on Fire programme.
- l. Provide access to fire fighting training for emerging growers.
- m. Implement an emerging grower fire insurance scheme as outlined in par. 13.2.5 of the Charter.
- n. Implement fire awareness programmes in forest areas.