



**environment, forestry  
& fisheries**

Department:  
Environment, Forestry and Fisheries  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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**Ref: O2/1/5/2**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**(For written reply)**

**QUESTION NO. 1061 {NW1353E}**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 19 of 2020**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION: 05 June 2020**

**Mr N Singh (IFP) to ask the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment:**

With reference to the *Breaking Point: Uncovering South Africa's Shameful Live Wildlife Trade with China*, the second part of *The Extinction Business* investigative report series, and given that her department has publicly declared that the Republic's trade in wildlife is well regulated, (a) why were the majority of the permits found to be in breach of the regulations of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (details furnished) and (b) what action does her department intend to take against the (i)(aa) traders, (bb) exporters and (cc) agents and (ii)(aa) authorities and (bb) individuals found to have issued non-compliant permits?

**1061. THE MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT REPLIES:**

- (a) In addition to the other allegations made in the report, the matter of permits not complying with CITES requirements is under investigation, but South Africa's CITES legislation is regarded as "category A" in terms of CITES compliance with legislative requirements. Category A essentially means that South Africa is fully compliant with the requirements of CITES. South Africa will nevertheless continually look at improving its management and enforcement

measures to ensure that legal trade is sustainable and not detrimental to survival of species in the wild.

- (b) Only once the matter has been comprehensively investigated and the allegations factually verified, will further action be taken against the (i)(aa) traders, (bb) exporters and (cc) agents and (ii)(aa) authorities and (bb) individuals found to have issued non-compliant permits. The Department views the allegations mentioned in the report authored by Ban Animal Trade and the EMS Foundation titled *Breaking Point: Uncovering South Africa's Shameful Live Wildlife Trade with China* in a serious light. Notwithstanding that the department is not a permit issuing authority for the traders, exporters and agents, the Department is currently preparing a comprehensive assessment of the elements that are covered in the report. This analysis will be informed by additional information which has been requested from the authors of the report. I have instructed the relevant officials in my Department to provide a report on their investigations within three months.

At this stage, the department is not able to conclude on any of the allegations mentioned in the report, until such time that the outcome of the investigation has been received and considered.

South Africa is a signatory to CITES as well as other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA's) such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and Migratory species and is bound by the international obligations that it has ratified in terms of section 231 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. In addition, South Africa has domestic legislation which regulates the country's approach to the environment, ecosystems and species. In South Africa, international trade in wildlife is regulated in terms of the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, 2004 (Act No. 10 of 2004) (NEMBA), its subsidiary legislation (the CITES Regulations of 2010 and the Threatened or Protected Species (TOPS) Regulations, 2008) and various provincial legislation.

**Regards**

  
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**MS B D CREECY, MP**  
**MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT**  
DATE:.....19/6/2020