



environmental affairs

Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Ref:02/1/5/2

MINISTER (ACTING)

QUESTION NO. 408 FOR WRITTEN REPLY: NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

A draft reply to **Dr H E Mateme (Limpopo: ANC)** to the above-mentioned question is enclosed for your consideration.

**MS NOSIPHO NGCABA
DIRECTOR-GENERAL**

DATE:

DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED

**MR D A HANEKOM, MP
MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS (ACTING)**

DATE:

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES
(For written reply)

QUESTION NO. 408 {CO594E}

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 42 of 2018

DATE OF PUBLICATION: 26 October 2018

Dr H E Mateme (Limpopo: ANC) to ask the Minister of Environmental Affairs:

- (1) Whether any records of all the endangered species of fauna and flora in all the provinces exist; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details; and
- (2) whether this includes traditional herbs that are only found in South Africa; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?

408. THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS REPLIES:

- (1) A national list of threatened or protected species (TOPS) has been developed in terms of section 56 of the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, 2004 (Act No. 10 of 2004) (NEMBA). This list contains indigenous plant and animal species that are critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable (collectively referred to as threatened species) on a national scale, as well as plant and animal species that require national protection or are of high conservation value (collectively referred to as protected species). Although non-indigenous species could also be listed as protected species, the TOPS list currently does not include any non-indigenous species.

Restricted activities involving any specimen, whether it involves a live or dead specimen, whether it involves the whole specimen or only part thereof, or whether it involves a raw or processed specimen, require a permit in terms of section 57(1) of NEMBA. This species list, as well as the Threatened or Protected Species (TOPS) Regulations that set out the permit requirements and processes for the carrying out of the restricted activities (generally those activities that have a direct impact on a specimen of a listed species), were published for implementation on 23 February 2007 and were effective since 01 June 2007.

The NEMBA also provides for the development of the Biodiversity Management Plans for species (BMP-S). The BMP aims to provide for a long-term survival of species in the wild, and provides a

platform for an implementing organisation or responsible entity as appointed by the Minister to monitor and report on the progress regarding the implementation of the BMP.

In determining the threat status of the species, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) updated the so called the Red Lists which categorises species on the bases of their threat status. This listing process has become the backbone of global species conservation as a unified and standardised protocol to measure biodiversity loss and inform policy decisions. Extinctions, however, occur regionally before globally. National (or Regional) Red Lists are thus needed to help prioritise regionally threatened species and to feed into global assessments. The Red Lists indicates the risk of each species becoming extinct and assist the conservation authorities to prioritise conservation efforts and allocate resources effectively.

Botanic gardens collectively serve as a global repository for documented plant material, with at least one-third of all flowering plants maintained in living collections or seed banks. Utilising knowledge gained from these collections, related herbaria and libraries, and combined with landscape knowledge from field surveys and ecological research, botanic gardens bring the understanding necessary to ensure that restoration leads to adequate taxonomic diversity and incorporates appropriate genetic provenance. Botanic gardens are uniquely positioned to help address the issues relevant to restoring ecosystems. They provide knowledge and expertise in plant taxonomy, horticulture, biodiversity inventory, conservation biology, restoration ecology and ethnobotany – all key elements for achieving successful restoration.

Indigenous species are also protected in terms of provincial conservation legislation, and the categories of species differ from province to province. However, the scale of protection are generally determined at provincial level.

South Africa, being a Party to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the Minister of Environmental Affairs published the CITES Regulations, on 05 March 2010, for implementation. These regulations were published in terms of section 97 of NEMBA, and give effect to the Republic's obligations in terms of a ratified international agreement as far as it relates to international trade in endangered species.

The CITES is an international agreement between governments, regulating trade in species of fauna and flora included in its Appendices across international borders; thereby having the

purpose of ensuring that such species are not exploited unsustainably, and that international trade does not threaten their survival in the wild.

The species covered by CITES are listed in three Appendices according to the degree of protection they need, namely:

- Appendix I: species threatened with extinction, which are or may be affected by trade;
- Appendix II: species not necessarily threatened with extinction, but for which trade must be controlled to avoid them from becoming threatened with extinction, and species that resemble species already included in Appendix II; and
- Species for which a country is asking Parties to help with its protection.

When the Appendices are amended during the Conference of Parties, a notification thereof is published by notice in the *Gazette*; whereby all provinces are informed of such amendments.

- (2) The national TOPS list also contains traditional herb species that are considered threatened, but these are not necessarily herbs that only occur in South Africa. Similarly, the list of species included in CITES Appendices also contains traditional herb species, but these are not necessarily herb species that are only endemic in South Africa.

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