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21 February 2012

**OUTSTANDING ISSUES FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES FOR THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES**

**Background**

When the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) appears before the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Committee Members raise questions and issues of concern, which in some cases the Department could not give immediate responses to. On numerous occasions, the Department will on request, be allowed by the Portfolio Committee to submit written responses to those questions at a determined date. In some cases, the Committee wanted reports or departmental documents, which it is entitled to as an overseeing body over the work of the Department. Following are some of these issues, which the Department has not responded to, some with dates that the Department and the Committee agreed on:<sup>1</sup>

- Written report regarding allegations of mining activities at Nooitgedacht Agricultural Research Station, which is located outside Ermelo, Mpumalanga Province.
- Asset Registers for the ARC and Ncera Farms (Pty) Ltd.
- Written responses that were supposed to be sent to the Committee on 20 October 2010 regarding Members' questions on the status of Ncera Farms (Pty) Ltd and Fort Cox College of Agriculture in Middledrift, Eastern Cape Province.
- The turn-around strategy for Ncera Farms (Pty) Ltd - by end of January 2011.
- A detailed report on Operational and Financial activities at Ncera Farms (Pty) Ltd, which the Department promised to send by 14 April 2011.
- A turn-around Strategy for Ncera Farms (Pty) Ltd that has been re-worked in collaboration with other government departments, entities, academic institutions and other relevant stakeholders. The Strategy was supposed to be presented to the Portfolio Committee by the end of May 2011.
- The DAFF's Comprehensive Mechanisation Plan for infrastructure development and revitalisation - by the end of January 2011.
- The Forensic Audit Report of the former Marine and Coastal Management (MCM), which is now the Fisheries Division of the DAFF - by May 2011.

<sup>1</sup>Some of the issues (e.g. written responses to questions) might have been responded to through Committee correspondence, therefore, Members must consult with the Committee Secretary regarding these.



- Report on the Fisheries Stakeholder Indaba for the draft Small-scale Fisheries Policy that was planned for March 2011.
- Written responses on questions raised during the briefing of the Committee (25 January 2011) by DAFF on its 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarterly Performance and Expenditure Report. Responses were supposed to be sent to the Committee before the end of business day on 08 February 2011.
- Written response on the question regarding the involvement of Dr Mayekiso's son in Resolve, the company that does assessments/reviews of fishing licence applications for the Department - by 08 February 2011. Dr Mayekiso is the former DDG of the then MCM (now called Fisheries Division).
- A detailed report on the state of all 12 Agricultural Colleges – the Department has previously identified 5 as neglected. The Report must include details of the catalytic fund that the Department had set aside to revive the Colleges.
- A document on Draft Norms and Standards for Agricultural Training Institutions.

**On separate meetings held on the 21 and 28 June 2011, the Department promised to submit to the Portfolio Committee by the 8<sup>th</sup> July 2011 the following reports and written responses:**

- Detailed report on Food and Mouth Disease and the latest Avian Influenza outbreak.
- A detailed Plan on Agricultural Colleges and Monitoring of Sector Education Training Authorities (SETAs).
- Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) between DAFF and the Land Bank.
- Mechanisation Strategy.
- Detailed report on the operations and loan repayments of MAFISA funds.
- Detailed report on the compromised procurement process in the Tractor Programme, which must include parties involved in the fraud, whether they work for the Department, their positions, any loss of government funds, action taken against involved parties, etc.
- The Department must also respond in writing to alleged fraud and a Court case regarding the use and implementation of the Tractor Programme in Mpumalanga Province.



- Status of the Distillery in Ventersdorp, North West Province.
- Draft Climate Change Sector Plan.
- Integrated Climate Change Adaptation Plan.
- Integrated Climate Change Mitigation Plan.
- The status of the Department's website, when is it likely to be 100% operational with all the necessary departmental publications and Policy documents uploaded.
- Written response on environmentally-friendly technologies that are being used in practice (not on paper) to address climate change impacts on agriculture, forestry and fisheries – name of project, location, duration, etc.
- Practical examples of existing agroecology projects that have been initiated by the Department as part of climate change adaptation initiatives – details should include project name, location, activity, beneficiaries and impact.

#### **Other Issues**

- On 30 March 2011, the Department indicated that they were doing an analysis and assessment of the impact of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and Rift Valley Fever on South African Food Exports. The Department reported on FMD but not Rift Valley Fever.
- During its quarterly performance reporting, the Department did not report on Fisheries citing that operational activities are under the Marine Living Resources Fund (MLRF). Earlier in the year (2011), the Department did not present the Strategic Plan of the MLRF but has since indicated that the entity's performance will be presented with the Department's annual report in September/October. This should not be the case as the MLRF has a separate account and is audited separately from the Department. The Portfolio Committee must request for the strategic plan of the MLRF and its quarterly performance as it pertains to operational activities of the Fisheries Division.
- The Department plans to finalise the Draft Small Scale Fisheries Policy by the end of this year (November/December 2011). However, there were issues that were raised by stakeholders and civil society groups regarding the draft policy and the consultation process. The Department has not given responses to the Committee regarding these issues. For example, some fishing communities in the Eastern Cape and Northern Cape provinces, who will be beneficiaries of the Policy, have never been consulted during the drafting process of the Policy. During the Public



Hearings on Transformation in the Fisheries Sector, some community members testified that they were even chased out of the consultation meetings.

- The Portfolio Committee has repeatedly asked for **detailed** reports on all smallholder and subsistence farmers who received development financial services through MAFISA, CASP and Ilima-Letsema. Such reports must include name of project, province and location, duration of project, kind of support or assistance received, the amount that each farmer or group received, as well as the impact of such assistance on the beneficiaries or community's livelihoods.
  - The Department must submit to the Portfolio Committee, the current vacancy status and filling of positions - details of positions that have been filled and state whether these are acting, contract (senior management) or permanent positions, as well as details on vacancies, particularly at management level and give reasons why the positions have not been filled. In addition, the Department must submit details of gender equity at senior management level, i.e. DDG and Chief Director Levels. The last time the Department presented its structure, only 2 females (both with Doctoral qualifications) were at DDG level (both were acting), while the rest were males.
  - On 25 October 2011, the Committee instructed the Department to meet and hold discussions with the Red Meat Industry Forum (RMIF) to resolve the issues that the RMIF raised with the Committee about the Department. It was then decided that the Department will report back to the Committee in a month's time (end of November 2011).
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**Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries**

**Chairperson- Hon Mr ML Johnson**

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**List of Issues to be considered by the PC as a matter of urgency.**

- 1) Forensic Audit Report on the Ncera Farms - Proposed interventions at Fort Cox
- 2) Draft Report on Food Security – To be briefed jointly by DTI and DAFF on the Smart subsidies initiative
- 3) Report on the Fisheries Stakeholders
- 4) Report on the dormant state of the Aquaculture Farm in Port Nolloth, Northern Cape that was lodged as part of an Economic Development initiative – To consult with Hon C De Beer, Chairperson, Select Committee on Finance
- 5) Traceability of wool output
- 6) Briefing on the tariff structures for exports- DTI and its concerned entity to be consulted
- 7) Governance issues at the OBP
- 8) Perishable Exchange Control Board- Briefing on Governance at the Exchange Control Board
- 9) Progress report on the release of emergency funds to flood affected farmers in the Northern Cape
- 10) Evaluation of the Bagolagadi Community Project
- 11) Briefing on the availability of funds of the Eastern Cape Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP)
- 12) Forensic investigation into allocated funds at the Phezukomkhono Co-operative by DAFF and Eskom
- 13) Ernest & Young Report, Transitional Harbors Project, Harbor Revitalization Project- Why the recommendations of the Report had not been implemented despite the costs associated with the report amounted to R10 million (**Issues interlinked**)
- 14) Re awarding of fishing quotas – Tight time frames associated with the awarding process, lessons learned in the previous rounds and how these lessons would be improved upon in the second round of awarding
- 15) Report on the poaching of the South African fish resources- Briefing on the measures that the DAF had put in place to curb poaching – linked to the selling of confiscated abalone on a closed secret tender process, How the DAFF utilized resources, in the curbing of poaching, through the Marine Resources Fund.
- 16) Detailed briefing on the State of Projects initiated by the DAFF.
- 17) Briefing on the awarding of the R800 million tender to conduct patrols- Sekunjalo vessel service maintenance and manning of the patrol vessels



- 18) Detailed report on the distribution of tractors to the Provinces
- 19) Briefing on financial assistance to the Wool Farmers Programme in the Eastern Cape
- 20) Report on the Fishing Sector Public Hearings Report – Committee Report
- 21) Briefing on the alleged appointment of auditing firm KPMG and if so. Why?

### **Human Resources Issues**

- 1) Briefing/ Investigation into the circumstances surrounding the suspension of former Director- General Me Njabulo Nduli during June 2009
- 2) Briefing/Investigation into the circumstances surrounding the transfer of Doctors Mogajane, Modisane and Maja, trained veterinarians, to other Sections within DAFF
- 3) Information on all Chief of Staff (COS) in the Ministry of DAFF from May 2009 to date (To clearly indicate periods served, reasons for transfer/ resignations and if any of the officials were placed on compulsory leave)
- 4) Information on all Advisors whom had served the Minister ( Information to clearly indicate the period served, reasons for resignation/ transfers to other sections/ departments)
- 5) Information on all officials who had since May 2009, served in the Directorate: Communications (Information to clearly indicate reasons for resignations/ transfers to other sections/ departments).
- 6) Detailed briefing on the DAFF organizational structure- Emphasis on why after 3 years critically funded post, Senior Management, was still occupied by staff in acting capacities.