



agriculture,  
forestry & fisheries

Department:  
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## AVCRT NEWSLETTER 1 OF 2015

### VISIT BY PROF COOK, CHAIRPERSON OF THE AQUACULTURE STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

Professor Peter cook gave an excellent presentation on the importance of certification of aquaculture products. The presentation provided an insight on the process to get farms certified and benefits of being certified. The ASC works with all stakeholders in the seafood value chain, i.e. farmers, processors, traders, distributors, retail and food service companies and ultimately consumers. ASC works with a programme of independent assessment and certification by third parties. In South Africa there is a need for certified auditors but in the meantime farmers can get certified auditors from other countries. ASC is currently operating in 13 countries in the world.

### AQUACULTURE BILL UPDATE

DAFF has appointed a Service Provider to assist the Department to draft an Aquaculture Bill which is a project under Operation Phakisa. Technical Instructions were drafted by DAFF and forwarded to the Service Provider. An Action Plan to draft the Bill was also prepared. A schedule for public participation was also prepared and distributed to members of the AVCRT. A draft concept document for the Aquaculture Bill has also been developed and circulated. Public consultation meetings have been scheduled and interested parties may submit written inputs to the DAFF by no later than 17H00 on 30 March2015.

### AIS REGULATIONS

The Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) is currently reviewing the AIS regulations and they had incorporated the inputs received from affected stakeholders. Norms and standards for abalone and trout were being developed. It was also noted in the AVCRT meeting that the standards cannot be used for all farmers as farmers have different situations. The regulations will be forwarded to the secretariat of the AVCRT for distribution to the entire AVCRT membership.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF PHAKISA PROJECTS**

Eight initiatives were identified for aquaculture and individual owners are reporting on progress. Although there is progress in these projects, there are serious challenges such as delays for EIA outcomes, accessing land, finalising leases for sea space in Saldanha and funding. Deputy Director General: Fisheries Management has already escalated the matter to the ministers concerned for further attention.

### **OPERATION PHAKISA WORKING GROUP**

There is a move to establish Operation Phakisa Working Group. This proposed working group will have similar functions with the AVCRT and as a result it was suggested that they be merged. This led to the agreement that new ToRs should be drafted and be forwarded to all members for inputs. The meeting decided not to abolish the AVCRT as it is the platform where industry communicates with government.

### **MARINE FINFISH MONITORING PROGRAMME AND OVI**

There is available funding for conducting monitoring but the challenge is that monitoring results are not being released by OVI because of lack of capacity at the OVI. DAFF was asked for intervention on this matter.

### **RECORDS OF DECISIONS**

The following decisions were agreed upon during the meeting on the 03<sup>th</sup> March 2015:

- Process of developing regulations/laws should be dealt with and consulted under the AVCRT;
- A task team should be set up within the AVCRT to merge the ToRs (instructions from DPME) for the Operation Phakisa Working Group with the current ToRs for the AVCRT;

- DEA will consult with the stakeholders about the revised AIS regulations before approval;
- Ms Mary Katerere should circulate the notice for public participation and the draft Concept document for the Aquaculture Bill to the AVCRT members; and
- DAFF should assist with setting up a bilateral meeting with the Onderstepoort regarding the Marine Finfish Monitoring Programme.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- The 2015 Aquaculture Conference will take place from 27 September 2015 to 2 October 2015 in Polokwane, Limpopo province;
- The 2017 World Aquaculture Conference will take place from 26 to 30 June 2017 in Cape Town, South Africa

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