



# agriculture, forestry & fisheries

Department:  
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

Cape Town, Monday 26 November 2018

For immediate release

The Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Mr. Senzeni Zokwana, on Sunday 25 November 2018 met with the Captains of the Fishing Industry to discuss strategic fisheries matters such as the support for the implementation of the Small-Scale Fishing Policy (SSFP), the Fishing Rights Allocation Process (FRAP) for 2020, and transformation imperatives within the broader fishing industry. More engagements of this nature are to follow with different fishing sub-sectors and companies of different sizes, from small, medium and large.

The Minister emphasised the importance of Government leadership and the need of continuous engagement with organised industry, especially captains of the industry in achieving some of the key government objectives, especially broadening participation of the historically disadvantaged individuals (HDIs) and historically disadvantaged companies (HDCs). After 1994 and the advent of democracy, the new government expressed the intent to overhaul the rights allocation system and transform the fishing industry, giving rise to the promulgation of the Marine Living Resources Act, Act No. 18 of 1998 (MLRA), which was to set the broad guidelines on how fisheries were to be managed and transformed. Minister noted some gains having been achieved during the rights allocation processes in 2005, 2013 and 2015/16, where the department has sought to improve transparency, independence with rigorously checks and balances to ensure that the objectives of the act are met. The meeting noted transformation achievements measured in terms of black participation and

ownership in the sectors and the need to further deliberate on transformation targets that can be measured and evaluated over time.

The industry noted that many black industrialists had invested significant capital in the years leading up to 2020 and these black industrialists wanted to understand how they would be treated in the rights allocation process. Security of tenure and clear policy was a key requirement by industry to support the President's drive in job creation and further investment and also give some stability to the investment community which is invested in the listed companies.

The meeting also noted the challenges experienced in the previous rights allocation processes; some of them include issues of assessment criteria and vessel ownership criteria, unsustainable catching agreements, increase in fishing capacity and others. It was highlighted that during the past allocations, transformation criteria was never generally agreed upon, and no targets for transformation had been set by the Department in any of the sectors, neither is there a transformation charter for any sector or for the fishing sector as a whole.

The meeting further raised issues with regard safety at sea and the general conditions of service of fishing workers. Industry and the Department agreed to work with key partners to ensure that guidelines are strengthened for improving safety at sea and conditions of service of fishing workers, especially minimum requirements for work on board fishing vessels and in fishing establishing; conditions of service like sea going allowances, accommodation and food, occupational safety and health protection, and well as medical care and social security.

In charting a way forward, industry agreed to work with the Department to ensure that the FRAP 2020 process is successful, and will ensure they provide inputs and participate meaningfully in the process. The industry highlighted a need for certainty and continuous engagement amongst all stakeholders. The industry

captains also highlighted their commitment to transformation in a practical manner, including supporting implementation of the SSFP. It was agreed that there is a need to unpack the kind of support the Department and the small-scale fisheries sector needs in realising full implementation of SSFP.

Finally, the Department committed to ensuring that the transformation framework for the sector is in place including a mechanism for continuous monitoring and evaluation, using a sector specific scorecard. The Department will also work with industry to conduct socio-economic impact studies and assess status of transformation in each sector. This will ensure that statistics about revenue, jobs, level of industrialisation, dependence of communities, and other issues are readily available for policy and decision-making, as well as promotion of investments in to the sector.

In closing, the Minister thanked the industry for availing themselves at such a short notice to discuss topical issues in the fishing sector. Minister indicated that this is just the beginning of the continued dialogue, as he intends to engage broader stakeholders in their respective sub-sectors along the fisheries value chain. The Captains of the fishing industry thanked the Minister and the Department for organising such an excellent meeting which provided them with a platform to engage and raise their concerns and offer support to the Government work. They applauded the Department for doing a good job despite challenges faced, and for continuing to provide industry leadership and implementing Government policies and programmes.

For media enquiries contact:

**Khaye Nkwanyana**, Ministry spokesperson

Tel: 0214674504; Cell: 083 952 9723; [MLO.Minister@daff.gov.za](mailto:MLO.Minister@daff.gov.za)

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