



Wes-Kaapse Provinsiale Parlement
Western Cape Provincial Parliament
IPalamente yePhondo leNtshona Koloni

Ref: 11/4/1/2/11

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT
PLANNING**

Tuesday, 10 May 2022 (at 13:00), Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

PRESENT

Members

Democratic Alliance

Botha, LJ
Maseko, LM
Van Der Westhuizen, AP (Chairperson)

African National Congress

Smith, D

Freedom Front Plus

Marais, PJ

GOOD

August, S

Apologies

Mr G Bosman, Member of the Democratic Alliance
Mr P Marran, Member of the African National Congress
Dr I Meyer, Minister of Agriculture
Dr M Sebopetsa, Head of Department of Agriculture

The following persons were in attendance:

Department of Agriculture

Mr D Jacobs, Deputy Director-General - Agricultural Development Support Services
Dr I Trautmann, Deputy Director-General - Agricultural Research and Regulatory Services
Ms H Rodkin, Chief Director - Agricultural Education and Training

Ms A Petersen, Director - Sustainable Resource Management
Ms Bongiswa Matoti, Director - Agricultural Economic Services
Mr L Marthinussen, Manager - Disaster Risk Reduction

South African Local Government Association

Mr L Njamela, Advisor - Intergovernmental Relations and Strategic Relations

WCPP Officials

Mr J Vermeulen, Senior Procedural Officer
Ms S Niekerk, Procedural Officer
Ms N Mshumpela, Committee Assistant
Ms C Morris, Information Technology Assistant

1. Opening and welcome

The Chairperson opened the meeting and welcomed the members of the Committee, the Departmental officials as well as the officials from the Western Cape Provincial Department.

2. Briefing on the shift of the Elsenburg Agricultural Training Institute to the Department of Higher Education and Training

The Department of Agriculture informed the Committee that several meetings were held with the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) and the National Treasury regarding the shift of the Elsenburg Agricultural Training Institute to national government. The Committee was further informed that that the parties agreed that executive consultation must be held before further administrative processes could be instituted. No date has been set for the executive engagement.

The Department of Agriculture provided the Committee with the five options in respect of the Elsenburg Agricultural Training Institute which would form part of the executive engagement, one of which was the proposed shift to DALRRD.

The Committee deliberated and informed the Department that it was under the impression that the Agricultural Training Institute would move to the DHET and not to DALRRD.

The Committee further noted that it was not in favour of the shift of the Elsenburg Agricultural Training Institute to National Government.

2.1. Resolutions/Actions

2.1.1 The Committee RECOMMENDED that:

2.1.1.1 Whichever option is to be pursued going forward, the Elsenburg Agricultural Training Institute needs to be able to focus on the specific training needs of the agricultural sector in the Western Cape and that this must be the focus in terms of the future curriculum;

2.1.1.2 The Department ensures that the Western Cape Agricultural Sector be able to determine the curricula of the Elsenburg Agricultural Training Institute going forward as well as the important interaction between the training of its students, including skills training at levels that are perhaps not at a higher education band; and

2.1.1.3 If a compromise must be reached with national government, the Department should request that the existing framework agreement should be expanded so that more courses will be incorporated.

2.1.2 The Committee REQUESTED that the Department provides it with a time-line in respect of the shift of the Elsenburg Agricultural Training Institute to national government.

3. Briefing by the Department of Agriculture on the Locust Swarm situation in the Western Cape

The Department contextualised the locust infestations in the Western Cape, actions employed by the Department and the related cost. Challenges experienced as well as mitigation measures that were initiated were provided.

The Committee deliberated and noted the fact that, whereas these kinds of pests are, in terms of legislation, the mandate of the national government that it is grateful that the Western Cape government stepped in and provided financial support in order to be able to address the problem and to strengthen the control over these locust swarms.

3.1 Resolutions/Actions

The Committee REQUESTED that the Department investigates the nutritional value of locusts and whether these pests can be used elsewhere in the agricultural sector if poison is not used to eradicate them.

4. Briefing by the Department of Agriculture on the Drought and Veld Recovery

The Department informed the Committee that there was relatively good recovery in the summer rainfall areas that received above average rainfall. The Committee was further informed that in areas that did not receive good rainfall, many plants have died and that the veld will need two or more years of above average rainfall to return to its full potential.

The expected winter rainfall was outlined and areas at risk as well as drought support initiatives to these areas were highlighted.

The Committee deliberated.

4.1 Resolutions/Actions

The Committee expressed its appreciation to the Department for their ongoing support and monitoring of the need in the drought stricken areas of the Western Cape and that after the winter rain season, it would request a briefing by the Department on the future prospects.

5. Briefing by the Department of Agriculture on the latest Agricultural Outlook (including the impact of the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine)

The Department provided the Committee with information and statistics in respect of South Africa's agricultural trade with Russia and Ukraine by outlining the top ten agricultural imports from Russia and Ukraine as well as the top ten agricultural exports to Russia and Ukraine. The Committee was informed that the ongoing Russia and Ukraine conflict posed a major threat to South Africa and the Western Cape Agricultural Sector and that research on the full impact of the Russia and Ukraine conflict on the Western Cape Agricultural Sector could not be comprehensively assessed as yet. The impact of the war on inflation relating to food prices,

specifically wheat, as well as on the cost of petrol and diesel was expanded upon. The Committee was further informed that the limited supply of wheat in the global markets will have a negative impact on domestic markets and increases in prices of wheat related products such as bread will affect food security, especially affordability and availability.

The Committee deliberated and expressed concern in relation to the escalating food prices and its impact on the most vulnerable. The Committee further contended that if the price of certain food items increased, then the 15% Vat amount also increased which meant that government would receive more taxes because of increasing food prices. The poor would suffer whilst government would benefit from its ability to create revenue from taxes.

5.1 Resolutions/Actions

The Committee RESOLVED that it would call on the national government to investigate and implement ways and means to lower the increases in the cost of living of particularly the poor by looking at reductions in terms of certain levies and taxes such as the levies on fuel which also impacts on food production costs.

6. Consideration and adoption of Draft Committee Minutes

The Chairperson submitted the Draft Committee Minutes of 16 and 18 March 2022 which were considered and adopted.

7. Consideration and adoption of Draft Committee Quarterly Report

The Chairperson submitted the Draft Quarterly Report (January – March 2022) which was considered and adopted.

8. Consideration and adoption of Draft Committee Tracking Document as at 10 May 2022

The Chairperson submitted the Draft Tracking Document containing unresolved matters which was considered and adopted.

9. Consideration and adoption of Draft Committee Programme

The Chairperson submitted the Draft Committee Programme as at 10 May 2022 which was considered and adopted.

9.1 Resolutions/Actions

9.1.1 On the subject of the oversight visit to the Southern Cape on 14 and 15 June 2022, the Committee RESOLVED that it would:

9.1.1.1 Positively consider requests from members who might indicate that they would prefer to travel with their private vehicles but that the final decision on the mode of transport will be made closer to the time;

9.1.1.2 Depart on Monday 13 June 2022; and

9.1.1.3 Take into consideration the Cluster Visit Week planned for the week of 20 June 2022.

9.1.2 On the subject of the briefing to the Committee on Air Quality Management scheduled for 7 June 2022, the Committee RESOLVED that this briefing should include the availability of burial sites within municipalities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

10. Consideration and adoption of Draft Committee Annual Activity Report for the year 2021/22

The Chairperson submitted the Draft Committee Annual Report which was considered and adopted.

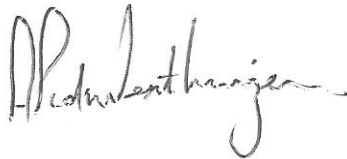
11. Outcome of International Study Trip Proposal

The Chairperson informed the Committee that the proposal to the Speaker to undertake an International Study Trip to the State of California was declined and that the Committee, together with the Standing Committee on Human Settlements would reapply.

12. Closing

The Chairperson expressed his appreciation to the members for their active participation in the meeting and also to the officials for their contribution to the success of the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 16:00.



**MR AP VAN DER WESTHUIZEN, MPP
CHAIRPERSON: STANDING COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND
DEVELOPMENT PLANNING**

Date:24 May 2022.....