



environmental affairs

Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

(For written reply)

QUESTION NO. 412 {NW1384E}

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 7 of 2019

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Mr J R B Lorlmer (DA) to ask the Minister of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries:

- (1) Whether she has found that long-line shark-fishers operated in marine reserves in the past five years without being stopped by her Department in collaboration with other relevant authorities; if not, how was this conclusion reached; if so, what (a) are the full relevant details and (b) steps does she intend to take in this regard;
- (2) what number of (a) white sharks, (b) smooth sharks and (c) any other threatened, endangered and/or protected shark species have been reported (i) caught and (ii) landed by the experimental long-line shark-fishing operators since 01 January 2016;
- (3) whether she has found any discrepancies in the reporting of the caught shark numbers; if so, what are the relevant details; and
- (4) what are the details of the future of the long-line shark-fishing industry?

**412. THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES
REPLIES:**

1. Yes.

- (a) The Department intercepted a vessel that was suspected of having illegally operated in the De Hoop Marine Protected Area. The skipper of the vessel was subsequently arrested and the catch was confiscated. A criminal case was subsequently opened in May 2019 at the Humewood Police Station, Port Elizabeth. The criminal case referred to above involved a vessel that was operating with a Demersal Shark Long-line Catch Permit. The apprehension was collaborative work conducted with other relevant State Security Agencies involving the South African Police Service as well as the National Prosecuting Authority. This case is currently before the courts for prosecution.
- (b) While the investigation and criminal proceedings are underway, the Department is in the process of initiating proceedings under Section 28 of the Marine Living Resources Act, 1998 (Act. No. 18 of 1998).

2. The Demersal Shark Long-line fishery is not an experimental fishery, but a full commercial fishery that has been regulated separately, and rights have been allocated since 2006.

(a) The numbers of White sharks (i) caught in the demersal shark longline fishery since 2016 was (2) two. The number (ii) landed was (1) one. The first shark caught was released alive, and the most recently caught White Shark in May 2019 has been retained by the Department and will be used as training material in future CITES Appendix II identification Workshops.

(b) The numbers of smoothhound sharks (i) caught and (ii) landed by the demersal longline shark fishery were 17 558 in 2016, 18 298 in 2017, 30 112 in 2018 and 11 796 in 2019.

(c) The numbers of other shark species, including threatened, endangered and/or protected shark species (i) 0 threatened, endangered and/or protected

shark species caught and landed (ii) other shark species caught and landed by the demersal shark longline fishery were as follows:

Year	Southern shark	Bronze whaler shark	Dusky shark	St. Joseph	Spearmose skate	Biscuit skate	Blancmange skate
2016	6384	2038	344	283	310	2698	17
2017	4741	1984	53	528	1191	1241	1
2018	8061	1662	342	721	1213	10	
2019	830	1446	119	178			

3. There are no notable discrepancies that have been identified in the reported shark catches.
4. The long-term rights in the Demersal Shark Long-line fishery will expire in 2020. Depending on the scientific information available at the time, the Delegated Authority responsible for the allocation of fishing rights in the Demersal Shark Long-line fishery will decide whether the resources should be re-allocated and, if so, decide on the effort to be re-allocated and the duration of the rights that will be allocated.

Regards



Ms. Barbara Creecy

Minister of Environment, Fisheries & Forestry

Date: 12/8/2019