



agriculture, forestry & fisheries

Department:
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

13 September 2017

For immediate release

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES (DAFF) CLARIFIES STATUS ON WEST COAST ROCK LOBSTER FISHERY SECTOR

Cape Town – Wednesday, 13th August 2017: The Department has not taken a decision on the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for West Coast Rock Lobster (WCRL) for the 2017-2018 fishing season. A consultative process is underway which is based on a recommendation to reduce the TAC from the previous fishing season. This process is the normal one that is followed to determine the annual TAC and must be stressed that the recommendation does not constitute a decision.

The protest action based on a reduced TAC is misplaced and misleading as the decision has not yet been finalised. The fishing season for WCRL starts on 1 October for the Northern Cape and 1 November for the other areas. The Department will announce the TAC for the coming season shortly.

Through the Fishing Rights Allocation Process (FRAP) the Department has also made a significant provision in the WCRL fishery from both the Offshore and Nearshore sectors for the small scale fisheries as part of the implementation of the small scale fisheries policy.

Thousands of people depend on fisheries resources for food and as a source of income to meet basic needs. The importance of maintaining or even increasing the yields from these fisheries by sustainable harvesting and sound management that

balances science and socio-economic parameters is of great importance to ensure that South Africa's fisheries contribute to DAFF's stated goals which include food security and nutrition, job creation and contribution to the GDP. The responsibility of the Department is to ensure that balance.

The Department recognises that fishers, and particularly small-scale fishing communities have legitimate grievances and demands which the Department is attempting to address together with the affected communities. However, the Department is concerned that the recent protests linked to a rumoured reduction in the TAC is premature. The Department appeals for calm and urges law and order to be maintained to prevent destruction to lives and property.

Issued by the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

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