



# agriculture, forestry & fisheries

Department:  
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**08 June 2018**

**For immediate release**

### **WORLD OCEANS DAY - SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES COOPERATIVE TRAINING EASTERN CAPE**

**Cape Town – Friday 08 June 2018:** The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) is finalising its small scale fisheries cooperatives training programme in the Eastern Cape. DAFF has hit a huge milestone in the implementation process of its Small Scale Fisheries sector by commencing a series of training programmes with small scale fisheries cooperatives.

Eight DAFF teams are currently conducting small-scale fishing co-operative training workshops for over 100 Eastern Cape communities. This is the largest logistical undertaking in the history of Fisheries and the reports received indicate that things are generally going well. Communities are very appreciative of the work being done. This training also coincides with World Oceans Day which is the official United Nations designated international day of celebrating the ocean. On June 8th each year, the world celebrates the ocean, its importance in our lives, and it needs to be protected.

“This will be the first of many as training has already been concluded for KZN communities and the Department is currently busy training EC communities. These two provinces together are estimated to account for a further 150 small-scale fishing co-ops to be registered in June/July this year.” said Small scale Fisheries Director Craig Smith.

On the 30 May 2018 history has been when the first small-scale fishing co-operative has been registered in South Africa by CIPC. The first co-operative hails from Hondeklipbaai in Northern Cape and it is called “Longtime Hondeklipbaai Fishing Primary Co-op Ltd”. The other co-operative for Northern Cape, namely the Port Nolloth Co-op, is currently in the process of being registered.

Northern Cape co-ops can now proceed to open bank accounts and hold its AGM to appoint their board of directors and to adopt the by-laws of the co-operative. Once this has been concluded DAFF will engage with the co-operatives to begin the rights allocation process.

This sector is aimed at redressing the inequality suffered by coastal fishing communities which as a result of unintended consequences have remained marginalized through previous rights allocation systems. Furthermore, the establishment of the small-scale sector also seeks to empower small-scale fishers to contribute meaningfully to the GDP of the country and to play a meaningful role in food security and job creation. This process is informed by the Marine Living Resources Act (The Act) and the Regulations thereof which was amended to legally recognize small-scale fishers who have been living in coastal communities and depending on fishing and its related activities as a source of livelihood.

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**WORLD OCEANS DAY**

A few facts:

- Our planet comprises 71% of ocean, and rising climate change. Oceans represent one of the most important life-support systems on earth, with all of us becoming increasingly dependent on the sea natural resources. The sustainable use and management of these resources are therefore critical to our future development.
- With growing dependence on natural resources, we have to ensure that oceans continue to meet our needs without compromising those of future generations. Oceans regulate the planet's climate and are a significant source of nutrition and they provide essential passage for global trade. Their depths hold current and future solutions to humanity's food security and energy needs.
- Status of fisheries globally and locally: Fish supply the greatest percentage of the world's protein consumed by humans and most of the world's major fisheries are being fished at levels above their maximum sustainable yield; some regions are severely overfished. This is according to the FAO.
- Overfishing and destructive fishing practices are threatening important marine resources, fishing livelihoods and economic viabilities of coastal communities. All over the world fish stocks are showing signs of drastic decline. South Africa is not

unique in its challenges and efforts to deal with poaching and the connection between crime and the rampant abuse of our natural marine resources. Overfishing not only causes negative ecological consequences, it also reduces fish production which further leads to negative social and economic consequences. Again, according to the FAO 2014 report it is estimated that rebuilding overfished stocks could increase fishery production by 16.5m tons which would increase the contribution of marine fisheries to food security, economies and wellbeing of coastal communities.

- The paradox of this dilemma is that we are living in a world where almost one billion people continue to suffer malnourishment and the challenge we face is feeding our planet while safeguarding its natural resources for future generations.
- In South Africa we have over 12m people that go hungry every day, in a land where plenty of food is available, produced and cultivated. This food is however not accessible to the millions who go hungry every day.
- South Africa is bordered by three major ocean systems: Atlantic, Indian and Southern Oceans. Marine scientists agree that the whole SA coast from Indian Ocean to Atlantic is one of the richest, oceanographically complex and most biologically diverse marine environments on earth.
- This will all mean nothing we don't invest in youth to learn about the ocean so they can continue these strides, given that nearly half of the world's population is under age 25. It therefore becomes important to empower young people to step up as leaders at an early age, and engage them in a solutions-oriented approach to ocean management and conservation.
- Democracy presented us with the opportunity to broaden access to our country's valuable commercial fisheries, and opened the door for South Africans from all walks of life to explore the wonders of our SA ocean.... This means unlocking the wealth of opportunities that exist in our marine environment
- One of the biggest challenges that we face in SA today is to strike a balance between meeting food security needs of our people while at same time ensuring that the resources they depend on are managed sustainably.
- With our wealth of diversity and such a vast un explored oceans right here on our doorstep... the current and new generation of marine, fisheries and oceans scientists have to be encouraged and supported to discover and explore opportunities of the marine environment to meet the challenges of food security, poverty, unemployment....
- Our ocean environment holds solutions to our current challenges, and the driver has to be our youth... the aspirants of today, the global leaders of tomorrow

## **WHY SHOULD WE CELEBRATE WORLD OCEANS DAY?**

The world's ocean:

- Generates most of the oxygen we breathe
- Helps feed us
- Regulates our climate
- Cleans the water we drink

- Global trade is dominated by sea transport
- Offers us a pharmacopoeia of potential medicines
- Provides limitless inspiration!

Yet for too long, human society has taken the world's ocean for granted.