



agriculture, forestry & fisheries

Department:
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA RELEASE

UPDATE ON THE FISHING RIGHTS ALLOCATION PROCESS (FRAP2015/16) FOR THE ABALONE FISHING SECTOR

Cape Town: Monday, 7th of August 2017: The Delegated Authority has decided to postpone the allocation of the fishing rights in the Abalone fishing sector for one fishing season.

This decision was not taken lightly. In the light of government's priorities of ensuring food security and nutrition, creating jobs and contributing to economic growth, the allocation of fishing rights should contribute to these priorities. The abalone fishery is however, operating more as an illegal fishery rather than a legitimate one. The illegal catch far exceeds the legal Total Allowable Catch (TAC). It is therefore noted with serious concern that the illegal component of the fishery is not contributing to job creation or to the national fiscus through the payment of taxes, levies and other fees. The Delegated Authority is also mindful that the abalone resource will in future be part of the basket of species for the Small-scale sector. This fishery requires radical economic transformation and further needs new approaches to how rights should be allocated, managed and enforced.

The Department needs to consider the issues with regard to the determination of the TAC and its apportionment to the different fishing sectors, illegal fishing, socio-economic concerns, stock rebuilding strategies, integrated and creative anti-poaching efforts and the long term sustainability of the resource.

The decision to postpone the allocation of rights in this fishery has been taken in order to allow the Department time to engage meaningfully with interested and affected parties, with the aim of developing a road map and turnaround strategy involving a range of local and international stakeholders for the future sustainable management of this fishery. To this end, the Delegated Authority intends to appoint a special task team with specific Terms of Reference to take the process forward as a matter of urgency.

An Exemption in terms of **Section 81 of the Marine Living Resources Act, 1998 (Act No 18 of 1998)** is granted to the previous Abalone exemption holders for the 2017/2018 fishing season. This will allow these exemption holders the opportunity to continue operating while the Department embarks on this consultation process.

DEPUTY-DIRECTOR-GENERAL: FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

Designation: Delegated Authority: Abalone Fishery

Date: 8/08/2017