



agriculture,
forestry & fisheries

Department:
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Speech by Minister Senzeni Zokwana on the launching Small-Scale Fisheries Sector of KwaZulu-Natal

eMandeni, KwaMazitapele,

19 March 2019.

Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries: Mr Sbusiso Buthelezi
MEC for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, Mr. Sihle Zikalala.
MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development, Mr. Themba Mthembu.
District Deputy Mayor of Ilembe , Clr S Gumede
District Mayor of King Cetshwayo District, Ms Nonhle Mkhulisi.
Local Mayor of eMandeni, Clr S B Zulu
Inkosi yeSizwe Sase Macambini,

It is with greatest exhilaration that today I am here in KwaZulu-Natal to conclude the work that my Department has been doing in the province in setting up co-operatives in the coastal communities, registering them with the CIPC and providing extensive training in fishing and co-operative management. As this ANC government, we took a decision that is in line with the amended Marine living Resources Act, to introduce and nurture the Small-Scale Fisheries as both an act of redress from apartheid past exclusion and, as a contribution to the building of rural and coastal economy, and mass job creation.

Today we are here to launch the Small-scale fisheries sector in KwaZulu-Natal province by:

1). Declaring small-scale fishing co-operatives by handing over the co-operative certificates to the first twenty-nine (29) registered co-operatives with over 2000 members from communities located in the greater KZN area to be allocated 15 year fishing rights

2). Announcing the schedule for the rights application and allocation process, and 3) announcing some of the support programs for small-scale fishing co-operatives in partnership with the Provincial Government of KZN.

We are building this Small-Scale Fisheries Sub-Sector within the Fisheries sector in line with the government strategic framework's Outcome 4: Decent employment through inclusive economic growth; Outcome 7: Vibrant, equitable, sustainable rural communities contributing to food security for all; and Outcome 10: Protect and enhance our environmental assets and natural resources. Therefore, this is a significant milestone for the history of South Africa and, particularly, that of traditional fishers in coastal communities.

We are earnestly rolling out the establishment of the Small Scale Fisheries in all our four (4) coastal provinces. Last year we launched in the Northern Cape province and we are here today in KwaZulu Natal as a second province for Small Scale Fisheries sector. Our next province is Eastern Cape followed by Western Cape. As part of radical transformation and diversification of the sector from white dominated established commercial fishing companies harvesting our marine resources, I have made a declaration to allocate small-scale fishing rights from 5 years to 15-year renewable rights allocation only to Small Scale Fisheries Co-operatives. This will allow space for them to grow through trial and error, be mentored and supported through resources.

Our imagination is to see Small-Scale Fisheries sector organizations graduating from small-scale primary fishing to processing and marketing' ; we must see them owning big vessels and competing at a bigger scale of the market. Fisheries is a trillion rands worth sector within the ocean economy. It cannot be left to the whims of those who dominate it for their goodwill and generosity to open up to those who were previously disadvantaged. Government is intervening to impose those denied in the past. These fishing rights allocations and enterprise support is but one of these measures.

The Small-Scale fishers across South Africa are an integral part of the community in which they live and work daily. Using mostly traditional methods of fishing, generally without the benefit of much technology, they harvest from the sea, eat and sell their own catches and live close by as well. Often the fishing skills are passed on through many generations.

The conditions under which small-scale fishers and their communities work, may be harsh and their efforts to provide for themselves and their families are worthy of our admiration. Many other economic activities linked to the harvesting by small-scale fishers occur as a direct result of their efforts. These are:

- Sales of fish and fish products;
- Fish cleaning and preparation;
- Boat-building and boat repairs;
- Net-making and repairs, etc.

What's more gratifying is that women are the most beneficiaries of these multiplier effects Brought about by the Small Scale Fishing.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) viewed South Africa's small-scale fisheries policy (SSFP) as the most progressive of its kind in the world. The challenge was always on how the SSFP would be interpreted and implement given the broad and

idealistic scope of the policy. In 2013 the Small-Scale Fisheries Implementation Plan was adopted, which was a high-level document explaining how the policy would be implemented over a period of 5 years and at an estimated cost of over R400 million.

The first steps required to make the SSFP a reality was to develop a full legal framework. At that time the Marine Living Resources Act, 1998 (Act 18 of 1998) (“the Act”), which is the primary legislation in South Africa regulating fishing activities, did not recognise a small-scale fishing sector. The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries went through an extensive consultative process in order to amend the act to make provision for a small-scale fishing sector. In addition to the amendments to the Act, new small-scale fishing regulations had to be developed in consultation coastal communities and other relevant stakeholders in order to prescribe the manner in which the small-scale fishery would be implemented and regulated. The promulgation of the amended MLRA and approval of the Small-Scale Fishing Regulations occurred in March 2016 thereby providing the full legal framework for the implementation of the SSFP.

After a window of expression of interest was open to all coastal communities, KwaZulu Natal had 2184 small-scale fishers which were finally recognised for the province, having met all the requirements and criteria used. The Small-Scale Fishing Regulations stipulated that small-scale fishing communities can only be recognised as a Small-scale community with a minimum of 20 recognised small-scale fishers. The recognised Small-scale fishers from the remaining communities that do not meet the minimum requirements will join other recognised fishers to form a virtual small-scale fishing community. Consequently, thirty-seven (37) communities have been recognised as Small-Scale fishing communities in KZN. The Department has to date successfully registered twenty-nine (29) co-operatives from the thirty-seven (37) declared as Small-scale communities in KZN. We are to complete the remaining numbers soon.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs in the province for working with us in this journey.

The Department assisted a lot partnering with our Fisheries branch in identifying support programs and gone together to communities for direct engagements in a sustainable way beyond this launch. We also appreciate the presence of provincial Department of Agriculture.

The presence of various Municipalities bodes well for us as our ocean is primarily located in these municipalities. We know that the IDP processes and budget plans are beginning. We implore you to ensure that the Small Scale Fisheries co-operatives in your municipalities are factored in, in your planning as part of local economic developments (LED). Gone are the days where black people appreciate ocean only for recreational purposes in beach to swim, ocean is economy!

We urge all spheres of government, the provincial and municipalities, as you should do in Small Scale Agricultural revolution, we need a similar effort in providing support in growing this new sub-sector of fishing sector established to increase previously disadvantaged people into fishing business. The department together with Abalobi NPO joined hands in developing an App for cellular phones for all Small-Scale Fishermen called Abalobi App. This Abalobi app profiles the fishing species as they are caught from the sea and feed the data which connects Small-Scale Fishermen directly to the restaurants automatically. Orders from the market get received through this App. All of this comes handy as we are beginning to rollout the aquaculture and small-scale fisheries revolution. We want to establish a fishing culture by involving those away from the sea to use dams and rivers to do fish farming for markets. We have a full Chief Directorate in Fisheries working on that program which will be another game changer even in inland provinces.

Conclusion

I want to take this opportunity to thank the provincial government and the coastal municipalities for their commitment to this ground-breaking initiative. But more importantly, I want to congratulate all our Small-Scale Fisheries beneficiaries today. I

want to say that we will continue to support your growth so that in future, can compete in the market with the large players in the sector.

Thank you
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Ngiyabonga.

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