



forestry, fisheries & the environment

Department:
Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

(For written reply)

QUESTION NO. 3992 { NW5253E }

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 47 of 2023

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Ms A M M Weber (DA) to ask the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment:

- (1) In view of the fact that lions infected with Bovine Tuberculosis have a lower survival and breeding success, what is the total number of lion prides in the Kruger National Park (KNP) that do not have Bovine Tuberculosis;
- (2) Whether there is a decline in the growth of the number and/or births of lions in KNP; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details?

(3) 3992. THE MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT REPLIES:

- 1) Bovine Tuberculosis (BTb) is now endemic in the Kruger National Park (KNP). The disease is found in many prey species for lions, such as buffalo, kudu and impala. Therefore, every lion pride in the KNP may have individuals that have been exposed to BTb and are at various stages of infection. While SANParks has not conducted studies to confirm the number of lion prides infected by BTb, there is no evidence to suggest that BTb has impacted the ability of lions to breed.

- 2) There is no decline in lion populations in the KNP as a result of BTb. Lion populations in the park are doing well. This is most likely because lions are prolific breeders if environmental conditions are favourable, and prey is abundant. They are, therefore, able to offset BTb-related mortalities. BTb is also a progressive disease that does not kill the host quickly and, therefore, females can breed and rear cubs even though they may be infected with the BTb bacterium.



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MS B D CREECY, MP
MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT
DATE: 27/11/2023