



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF FISHERIES AND MARINE RESOURCES

2019 MINISTERIAL STAFF ADDRESS

BY

BERNHARD ESAU, MP

MINISTER OF FISHERIES AND MARINE RESOURCES

Windhoek

13th February 2019

Honorable Silvia Makgone, Deputy Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources;

Dr Moses Maurihungirire, Executive Director of the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources;

Members of staff of the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources;

Members of the media;

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning.

Since I haven't met most of you this year, and I understand that several of you are just resuming from your annual leave, let me begin by wishing you all a successful and happy 2019.

As you are aware, we - as family of staff and leaders in the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources, have been tasked with the responsibility of managing Namibia's fisheries resources, which is one of the key economic sectors in our country. This is a big responsibility, and one that calls for sobriety, professionalism, and dedication. I am happy to note that the state of our fishing stocks is healthy and stable, and data on forex earnings from our fisheries trade, and employment figures shows that the sector continues to be a strong economic mainstay of our country. I therefore take this opportunity to thank all staff, and stakeholders for your continued services and dedication, which is contributing to the stability of our fisheries sector.

His Excellency Dr Hage G. Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia, stated in his Statement at the opening of the first decision making Cabinet meeting on 5th February 2019 that,

and I quote '2019, is the year of Accountability'. Indeed, for us at the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources, accountability is a very appropriate theme because 2019 is a year of momentous activities, decisions and milestones in our fisheries sector. To mention just a few activities, in 2019 the Ministry is determined to:

1. Finalize on issuance of new fishing rights and renewals of existing rights, which began in late 2018;
2. Implement fully the fisheries scorecard for quota allocations, and take value addition to a new level;
3. Eradicate some IUU activities that have been reported in our northern maritime borders;
4. Finalize on ecolabelling of our hake fisheries;
5. Conclude on in-depth studies on our pilchard fishery, including a study on seals;
6. Re-engineer our inland aquaculture model, and strengthen protection of inland fisheries to facilitate continued contribution of fisheries to food security in our rural areas;
7. Continue our international collaboration and leadership on blue economy, oceans health; and implementation of MoUs with fisheries partner states;

among other activities.

As outlined, we as a ministry have a tall order of important business, which must be done for the socioeconomic benefit of the ultimate sovereign, the people of Namibia, who we must serve diligently.

Accountability is the duty of everyone, from the lowest ranked staff member, to the most senior. From a moral perspective, every staff member should consider the fact that they are paid by the public, and hence, at the end of every day ask themselves - what have I accomplished today that is worth the pay that I will receive for today's work? Can I account for every hour spend at work today as being spend productively for the work I am paid to do? Accountability must start from the top,

from senior management, and then cascade downwards. One of the accountability issues which needs urgent attention is punctuality at work. I wish to reiterate that work begins at 8am, not later, and ends at 5pm. I urge the Executive Director and managers to come up with measures to monitor punctuality of all staff, even those in management cadres, and ensure that those who violate these staff rules are punished promptly.

In this year of accountability, I will hold the Executive Director, and indeed all senior management, accountable for getting things done - for tangible results in all our activities, much more than I have done in the past. I expect the Executive Director and senior managers to hold all staff accountable for their activities as well. We must strengthen this chain-of-command in our public service system in order to eradicate the culture of excuses and blame game in our civil service.

I wish to note that 2018 was a tough year due to budget cuts, and several activities of our Ministry were not implemented fully, as was the case in other ministries. However, the Ministry has been able to mobilize resources from the marine resources fund (MRF) to supplement the main budget from Treasury, especially targeting essential services of the Ministry. I am happy to note that in September 2018, 30 % of the N\$ 121,586,603 MRF budget (which is about N\$ 36.4 million) was approved for expenditure, in line with Government budget procedures, and by 15th November 2018 I had approved the entire MRF budget for expenditure, in line with Marine Resources Act, 2000. There is therefore no excuse for the Directorates, through the Executive Director, for not initiating implementation of the essential programs in the Ministry that have been pending.

The austerity measures by the Government as communicated by OPM are still in force, and we must implement them fully. We must continue cutting down on non-essential overtime and travel allowances, minimize on office expenditures to essential

ones only, among others. I am happy to note that our essential research, MCS, activities relating to rights and quotas, and aquaculture services to our farmers for food security are increasingly being sustained through supplementation with the MRF budget, in line with our policies and regulatory frameworks. This includes essential overtime payments, transport and procurements.

I wish to reiterate what I said during my annual address to the staff last year (2018): we must become innovative, and do more with less. Managers can use technology to hold meetings and discuss work-related matters routinely - it is not true that if there is no transport and DSA allowances, meetings between field and head office staff cannot take place. We all use technology for our social discussions, and we can do the same for work related issues.

I appreciate the hard and dedicated work being done by the Directorate of Operations in ensuring monitoring control and surveillance of our fisheries resources. I however urge more coordination between the Executive Director and this Directorate in ensuring timely procurements, and execution of activities. A lot more can be done by this directorate especially on addressing IUU incidences reported in our EEZ than is the case now. I note that 77% of all overtime in the Ministry is spend in this directorate, but the results are not satisfactory. The culture of excuses for inaction and delays in execution of activities must come to an end forthwith, and the Executive Director must pay more attention in solving the current MCS issues.

On aquaculture, I take note of the ongoing monitoring programs, especially on shellfish water sanitation surveys. I also take note of training and extension services being offered to inland aquaculture farmers. Because of the critical importance of inland aquaculture to food security in rural areas, I have mobilized resources to sustain feed supply, repairs and

maintenance in our inland aquaculture stations. I am happy to note the healthy harvest we have witnessed in 2018 in several of our demonstration farms around the country. The coordination of activities in our aquaculture stations is however is not satisfactory, and production activities are still not yet sustainable. The Directorate of Aquaculture and Inland Fisheries needs to do more than you are doing at the moment – it is not sufficient. You need to develop and implement plans to eventually make Namibia a major aquaculture country globally. You must run our aquaculture stations sustainably, and as best-practice demonstration farms, for the benefit of our aquaculture farmers. We must develop a roadmap on how we will ensure that our aquaculture does not remain in infancy, as is the case now.

I am happy to note that surveys conducted by our Resource Management Directorate indicate that our main fisheries stocks are being sustainably managed. I note that stock assessment surveys are returning to their normal programming, owing to financing from MRF. In this financial year, I urge our researchers to complete the studies on pilchard stocks, including assessment of interactions between this fishery and seals, as directed by Cabinet. This work should be completed by 2020, to allow ample time for considerations of the findings, and hence facilitate an informed decision on the current moratorium on this fishery which will be reviewed in 2021.

The Ministry has been particularly busy in 2018 with issues ranging from fishing rights, international fisheries collaboration and blue economy issues. I wish to applaud the good work done by our ministry staff and officials from regional councils, during the public awareness and applications for fishing rights in 2018, which was coordinated by the Directorate of Policy Planning and Economics. I note that PPE staff are now busy evaluating right holders who have attained 7 years, for consideration for renewal, in terms of our policies. I urge the staff involved to continue undertaking your duties on this vital

activity diligently, and professionally. In addition, I urge PPE and Operations to strengthen timely, transparent and accurate recording of data on fish landings, which needs urgent improvement.

I am happy to note that in 2018 the Ministry completed signing two memorandums of understanding on fisheries cooperation; one with Indonesia, and another one with Republic of South Africa. We are keen to exchange ideas with Indonesia especially on strengthening our fight against IUU, amongst other aspects. The Republic of South Africa and Namibia are natural partners especially on fisheries, considering that we both share the Benguela current large marine ecosystem. We also trade on fisheries extensively with Republic of South Africa, and we are both parties to several trade agreements, including economic partnership agreement between SADC and the European Union. Our fisheries MoU is therefore aimed at leveraging on these existing ties to facilitate greater fisheries development in both countries.

In 2018, His Excellency the President appointed me as Sherpa, or his personal representative, in the High-Level Panel on Ocean Economies, which is headed by Norway and Palau. During the same year, Namibia made presentations in several high-level oceans and blue economy conferences internationally. These invitations are a recognition of Namibia's leading role in promoting sustainable fisheries and blue economies globally. This recognition is due to our firm, time-tested commitment to ensure that our fisheries is managed sustainably, and that it co-exists sustainably with other blue economies in our ocean. This is what we, as staff and leadership of the Ministry and indeed the whole Government and Country have achieved together. I urge officials appointed to our national inter-ministerial blue economy and Sherpa committees to ensure that they consult widely with all stakeholders, particularly with civil society and industry, in

preparing Namibia's contributions in these international processes.

In conclusion, I urge the Executive Director and all managers to work together and ensure that we work together as a team. We spend the most productive part of our days, and indeed most of our life in our workplace. We should therefore work together to ensure that our workplace is conducive - that we are colleagues, and we do not stress each other unnecessarily. We must be our brother's, and sister's keeper. I am not advocating for laxity or not holding each other accountable - I am talking about having a positive attitude towards each other, even when correcting one another.

Let us all continue working together to ensure that Namibia fisheries remains sustainably managed, and inclusive, for the benefit of our current and future generations.

I Thank You.