

## OUTCOME OF MEETING BETWEEN BAN ANIMAL TRADING, EMS FOUNDATION AND MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT ON THE EXPORT OF WILD ANIMALS FROM SOUTH AFRICA



The Minister of Environment, Barbara Creecy, initiated a meeting with the EMS Foundation and Ban Animal Trading in response to the publication of The *Breaking Point* Report which highlighted the shameful live wildlife trade between South Africa and China. The meeting was held this morning.

We welcome the Minister's commitment to investigate the serious issues raised in our Report, within a three month period.

We also welcome the Minister's commitment to strengthening the permitting system, her commitment to greater transparency within governmental systems and access to information produced by the Department, and the provinces. The Minister acknowledged that civil society has a role to play in holding government to account and therefore government should be transparent.

The Minister recognised that national government has the overall responsibility and the obligation to ensure that the system implementing CITES complies with CITES regulations.

The *Breaking Point* Report showed the fundamental problems which are systemic in nature and relate to overarching policy issues. We were disappointed that the Minister was not willing to engage in policy discussions at this stage but she did commit to doing so in appropriate forums.

The Minister would not agree to a moratorium on the international export of live wild animals. We believe a Moratorium is an appropriate first-step response to addressing the expansive systemic problems. Given the degree and nature of the failings of the current system, it would be irresponsible to continue exporting wild animals until the investigation has been completed and the problems have been addressed. For these reasons, particularly given the fallout from COVID-19, we will continue to push for a Moratorium.

We believe our *Breaking Point* Report contains sufficient information to enable the Minister and her Department to identify the transgressions immediately. Over and above our Report, which is the tip of the iceberg, the Minister's Department has all the information to hand to begin with their investigation immediately.

The organisations agreed to provide the Minister with a Memorandum that will highlight issues to be included in her investigations as well as recommendations that will address the inadequacies in the systemic framework.

We look forward to the results of the investigation. As environmental, social justice and animal protection organisations we will continue to speak up for animals and the environment.

The report can be sourced here:

[https://bananimaltrading.org/attachments/article/209/BreakingPoint\\_FINAL\\_15052020\\_web.pdf](https://bananimaltrading.org/attachments/article/209/BreakingPoint_FINAL_15052020_web.pdf)

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