

Report: curb illegal fishing and revive SA abalone stocks

According to Allafrica.com, a report tabled by the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) at a Parliament's Portfolio Committee meeting sounded a grim warning that South Africa's depleted abalone stocks will not recover unless illegal fishing is reduced dramatically.

The report comes in the wake of violent clashes at the weekend between alleged poachers in the Western Cape fishing community of Hawston and the police.

"The stock will not recover to the target levels unless illegal fishing can be reduced dramatically for a sustained period through effective implementation of the Integrated Fisheries Security Strategy," the report said, adding that the recovery of abalone (also known as perlemoen) was not meeting the targeted recovery levels. "The demand for the wild product far exceeds supply and its extremely high value continues to drive illegal fishing," the report said. Illegal fishing of abalone, the report say, was several times above the total allowable catch level and was continuing to depress stock recovery.

Acting DAFF deputy director General Ceba Mtoba told the portfolio committee that the safety of South Africa's coastline was a serious concern "not only to Members of Parliament but to all of us," Allafrica.com reports.

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