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Dear Mr Kgopong

REQUIREMENTS FOR REGISTRATION OF NURSERY FACILITIES THAT ARTIFICIALLY PROPAGATE SPECIMENS OF ENCEPHARLATOS SPECIES FOR THE PURPOSE OF COMMERCIAL TRADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH CITES RESOLUTION CONF. 9.19 (REV.COP15)

Regulation 11, of the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act no.10 of 2004 (NEM:BA), CITES Regulations of 2010 makes it mandatory for any facility that breeds animal or propagates plant specimens species listed on Appendix I of CITES to be registered with the CITES Management Authority.

In 2016, the Scientific Authority made a recommendation in the non-detriment finding for the Encephalartos spp. that the seedlings may only be exported if the nursery is registered in accordance with the CITES Resolution Conf. 9.19 (Rev. CoP15), and have recommended that an assessment the facility be conducted prior to the registration of that nursery being registered with the Management Authority. The facility will need to prepare the following prior to an audit being conducted:

- Completed Cycad Nursery Audit Form for CITES Registration
- Photograph of every parent plant
- Petiole and leaf base samples for every plant with wild cycad characteristics (collected under chain of custody protocol; stored in a freezer)
- Petiole/Leaf samples for ID verification (collected under chain of custody protocol; stored in a freezer)

In preparation for the assessment, the nursery is expected to have labelled all parent plants prior to audit (number and species) with a copy of the propagation method and TOPS permits for the facility. The following documents will be required for each plant in the nursery during the assessment:

- A TOPS possession permit
- An affidavit from the owner stating that the plant is not of wild origin

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For exotic species, confirmation of legal import into South Africa and documentary proof of legal acquisition (TOPS permit once the new TOPS list is gazetted)

The South African Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) will conduct an assessment with the use of the nursery audit form which reflects the following information:

- **Section A (Description of the facility)** which looks at the general operation of the nursery taking into account the aspects below:
  - Non-natural environment
  - A specific designated place set aside for propagation
  - Records parental stock and seedling stock
  - Does the facility possess the following feature
    - Protection from the weather
    - Fertilization
    - Irrigation
    - Weed control
    - Soil preparation
    - Potting
  - Description of the facility
  - Propagation Method

- **Section B (Description of the parental stock)**, this will help the assessor to determine whether the species are of wild origin or whether they were artificially propagated. Should a plant be found to be exhibiting any of the characteristics listed below, it is most likely a wild plant. The Scientific Authority has concluded that if any parental plant exhibits characteristics of wild origin, then the nursery may not be registered for that species and may not export that species. The characteristics of a wild plant are as follows:
  - B = Burn marks
  - C = Crescent shaped
  - SD = Stem damage
  - US = Unstable stem
  - SL = Stem length >1m
  - LB = Leaf base appearance small and compact

- **Section C (List of additional plants with two or more wild characteristics)**

Kindly note that should any of the requirements listed above not be met, the nursery will not be accepted for registration. Furthermore, all relevant cycad nurseries must be registered by 14 December 2018; the facilities which are not registered will not be issued with permits to export cycad species in their facilities for commercial purposes.

Yours sincerely

Ms Nosipho Ngcaba
Director-General
Department of Environmental Affairs
Letter signed by: Mr Shonisani Mundzhezdi
Designation: Deputy Director – General: Biodiversity and Conservation
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