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Portfolio Committee slates DAFF over slow pace of legislation

On the 13th of June 2017 the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries conducted an oversight meeting into the affairs of the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. The MPs grilled their counterparts in the Department over what they perceived as the slow pace of legislative reform, especially regarding the Amendments to National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC) and the Preservation and Development of Agricultural Land Bill (PDALB).

The progress of the Amendments to the NAMC Bill are somewhat unknown to us as the Bill was first published for public comments in 2013 but is still within the Department. Be that as it may, there are certainly mitigating factors as far as the PDALB are concerned because the slow pace can likewise be attributed to the Department's commitment to a comprehensive public consultation process. The first version of the Bill was published in 2015 but received wide-spread resistance due its incorporation of the 'public custodianship' principle and a reference to expropriation of underutilized land. A much-improved Bill was published in 2016 and was sent to Nedlac shortly thereafter where Agbiz is playing a leading role as part of the Business constituency.

Whilst one can sympathise with the MP's frustration at the time delays, one must commend the Department for conducting the necessary due diligence and working extensively with affected stakeholders on the Bill. The full report from the Portfolio Committee meeting can be viewed by following the link below:

[Department of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries response to Committee oversight & BRRR, with Minister & Deputy](#)

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