

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

B/1287 The Honourable Third member for Curepipe and Midlands
(Mr. Dowarkasing)

To ask Dr. The Honourable Minister of Agro Industry and Fisheries:

Whether, in regard to the La Ferme Marine de Mahebourg project, he will state (a) the details of the lease agreement (b) the extent of the lagoon leased to the promoter and (c) the conditions of the Environment Impact Assessment Licence and table copy thereof?

REPLY

Mr. Speaker Sir,

With your permission, I am tabling the reply to P.Q. B/1287.

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REPLY

(a) Details of the lease agreement.

On 13 September 2001, Government had approved the grant of an Industrial site lease to the Company "Ferme Marine de Mahebourg Ltd" for the setting up of a Marine Fish Farming Project over part of PG Quatre Soeurs of an extent of 24,165 m² (exclusive of the Flacq – Mahebourg Road crossing the land) with authorisation to carry out fish farming activities over an area of 67,500 m² (150m x 450m) in the Old Grand Port Lagoon, the area under culture for fish rearing being 4000 m², for a period of twenty years with effect from 13.09.01 to expire on 12.09.2021 subject to the payment of an annual rent of rupees forty eight thousand (Rs 48,000/-) for the first ten years and rupees seventy two thousand (Rs 72,000/-) for the 2nd ten years.

The Lease Agreement has been signed on 26.11.2001 and registered at the survey office 23.01.2002 in Lease Book 158 folio 11 and transcribed on 11.02.2002 on Volume TB 311 No. 147.

The lease is subject to the conditions which are being tabled (Annex I)

On 14 January 2006 Government had in principle agreed to granting permission to the Company "Ferme Marine de Mahebourg Ltd" to carry out fish farming activities in the Old Grand Port Lagoon over an additional area of about 4000 m², subject to the conditions: (Annex 2).

The authority granted under the lease does not imply that the lessee will have exclusive use of the demarcated area of the sea.

The fee for use and occupation has been assessed by the Chief Government Valuer (for the additional area of 4,000m²) at Rs 6,000 per annum for period 18.01.2006 up to 12.09.2011 and Rs 9,000 per annum for period 13.09.2011 to 12.09.2021.

The annexure to the lease agreement has not been finalized yet.

(b) Extent of the lagoon leased to the promoter

- (i) On 13 September 2001, Ferme Marine de Mahebourg Ltee was granted a lease to carry out fish farming activities over an area of 4000 m² in the Old Grand Port Lagoon.
- (ii) On 14 January 2006 Government had in principle agreed to granting permission to the Company "Ferme Marine de Mahebourg Ltd" to carry out fish farming activities in the Old Grand Port Lagoon over an additional area of about 4000 m²

(c) Conditions of the Environment Impact Assessment Licence

The project is not a scheduled undertaking under the Environment protection Act and therefore does not warrant an Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) licence. However, the Ministry of Environment expressed no objection to the project subject to the following conditions:

- (i) All necessary permits from the relevant authorities, including clearance from the Ministry of Fisheries, shall be obtained and all the conditions stipulated therein shall be scrupulously observed.
- (ii) The development shall not interfere with the activities of fishermen and pleasure crafts in the area.
- (iii) Appropriate measures shall be undertaken for the safety and security of the Public.

Furthermore the then Ministry of Fisheries set the following conditions prior to starting the project:

- (a) the promoter should cause a notice to be published in the Gazette and two daily papers regarding the part of the project proposal to set floating cages for culture in the lagoon specifying the exact location and extent that will be utilized (which shall exclude any part of the marine protected areas or fishing reserves), giving one month's delay for the public to submit comments to the ministry and providing for public inspection of the project document.
- (b) The ministry after receiving any objection by written notice, will require the promoter to show cause within 15 days why the objection should not be upheld. The ministry will also reserve the right to make such enquiry as it considers necessary grant or refuse the application.

(c) The approval was also subject to the following conditions:

- (i) that the promoter seeks clearances from the relevant authorities for the land leases or uses for the project;
- (ii) that the promoter applies separately to the Ministry for introducing each consignment of the red drum in Mauritius and that he strictly adheres to conditions that will be stipulated on the permit;
- (iii) that the promoter complies with any other directives that may be issued by the Ministry to safeguard and protect the marine environment prior to and during the implementation of the project.

According to the lease agreement, the Ferme Marine de Mahebourg Ltee published in two daily newspapers: the "L' Express" and the "Tribune" of 15 and 16 November 2000 regarding the proposal for fish culture in the lagoon, the Permanent Secretary of the then

Ministry of Fisheries did not receive any objection from members of the public after one month from the date of publication of the notice. The Ferme Marine de Mahebourg Ltee was informed on the 02 May and 13 September 2001 by the Ministry of Housing and Lands that there is no objection to this development/undertaking.

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