

## PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

B/521 The Honourable First Member for Beau Bassin and Petite Rivière  
(Mr. Bhagwan)

*To ask Dr the Honourable Minister of Agro Industry and Fisheries:-*

**Whether in regards to the islets, he will state (a) if there is any management plan in relation thereto (b) if Government proposes to set up an Islets Nature Park (c) the number thereof given on lease since July 2005 to date, indicating (i) the names of the beneficiaries and (ii) the purpose of the lease and (d) the measures that have been or will be taken to prevent their degradation?**

### REPLY

**Mr. Speaker Sir,**

#### **Part (a)**

In reply to part (a) of the question, I wish to inform the House that a Strategic Plan was developed for sixteen (16) islets known as the Islets National Park Strategic Plan in 2004. Six (6) of these islets have already been classified as Nature Reserves under the Forests and Reserves Act 1983. Further, eight (8) islets have been proclaimed and declared as National Park under Section 11 of the Wildlife and National Parks Act.

You may wish to note that Management Plans for five (5) islets around Mauritius have already been developed and approved. These are Ile d'Ambre, Ile aux Flammants and Pigeon Rock Islet which are National Parks and Gunner's Quoin and Serpent Island which are Nature Reserves. Management plans for four (4) islets in Rodrigues have also been completed. They are Cocos Island, Sables Island, Crab Island and Gombrani Island.

The Draft Management Plan for Round Island is also ready. My Ministry has also called for consultancy services for the preparation of Management Plans for Flat Island, Gabriel Island, Ile aux Mariannes, Rocher des Oiseaux, Ile aux Fous, Ile aux Fourneaux and Ile aux Bénitiers.

#### **Part (b)**

In reply to part (b) of the question, I refer the Honourable Member to my answer to part (a) and wish to state that in view thereof government does not propose to set up an Islets Nature Park.

#### **Part (c)**

In relation to part (c) (i) of the question, since July 2005 to date, only Ilot Gabriel has been given on lease to Ocean Blue Island Co. Ltd. The purpose of the lease is for maintenance and cleaning of the whole island and a part thereof for eco-tourism purposes, including the reinstatement and preservation of the natural environment of the islet.

**Part (d)**

As regards to part (d) of the question, I wish to inform the House that the Islets National Parks Strategic Plan is being examined and its recommendations are being implemented. The lease of Gabriel Island for eco-tourism purposes is in line with the recommendations of the Strategic Plan. Further, Government through the National Parks and Conservation Service (NPCS) and the Forestry Service are jointly implementing conservation activities with the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation (MWF) for conservation work on Round Island and Ile aux Aigrettes.

A permanent National Coast Guard (NCG) post has been set up on Flat Island and the National Coast Guard is acting as a privileged partner to prevent littering and overnight camping on the island.

Plant restoration activities on Flat/Gabriel Islands and Gunner's Quoin have been carried out while rodents have been eradicated completely since 1995.

Monitoring of reptiles including the small population of *Nactus Coindimerensis* and the rare orange tailed skink is ongoing on the island by National Parks and Conservation Service.

A Darwin funded project is underway to restore the reptile communities which have disappeared on islets such as Ile aux Aigrettes, Gunners Quoin , Ilot Chat and Ile aux Fouquets.

Cleaning campaigns are to be organized by NPCS in collaboration with NGOs and local communities on Ile aux Fouquets (Ile aux Phares), Ilot Marianne and Ilot Vacoas in the South East.

A training programme for NCG personnel has already been prepared so as to enlist their collaboration in the policing of islets and to create awareness on the various legislations governing islets.

Fact sheets on islets biodiversity are being prepared for primary and secondary students and the general public as part of our awareness and education programmes.