

**HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 22 December 2023**

1. Cabinet has taken note that the Fisheries (Fishing of Sea Cucumbers) Regulations 2023 would be promulgated by the Minister of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping. The Regulations would provide for a moratorium on the sea cucumber fishing in the lagoon around Mauritius for a further period of six years, from 01 January 2024 to 31 December 2029, with a view to allowing the existing mature adults to reproduce and also allow the juveniles to grow and attain sexual maturity. Only semi-industrial fishing vessels would be granted authorisation to fish for sea cucumbers in the fishing banks, whereas in Mauritius island, the sea cucumber harvesting would only be authorised beyond 15 nautical miles (instead of 12 nautical miles as was currently the case) from the shoreline of Mauritius.

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2. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Information and Communication Technologies Authority and the National Social Inclusion Foundation (NSIF) with a view to promoting access to Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and internet by residential care institutions and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). The areas of cooperation would be, *inter alia*, to –

- (a) promote innovation and access to ICT to vulnerable groups;
- (b) set up appropriate working mechanisms for programmes and projects including the monitoring and evaluation;
- (c) design capacity building programmes; and
- (d) prepare concept document on access to internet and communication tools to residential care institutions and NGOs which are beneficiaries of the NSIF.

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3. Cabinet has agreed to the renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding between the State Trading Corporation and the *Empresa Nacional de Hidrocarbonetos* of Mozambique, for another period of two years, for cooperation on the development of Liquefied Natural Gas business in Mauritius.

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4. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms and the University of Mauritius to establish a cooperative relationship with a view to developing and fostering academic linkages between both institutions.

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5. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of an agreement between the *Compagnie Sucrière de St. Antoine* and the Road Development Authority for the construction of an access road and roundabout on the Goodlands Bypass.

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6. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Working Agreement between the Mauritius Ports Authority and the Mauritius Fire and Rescue Service with the objective of minimising loss of life and property as a result of any emergency incident and preventing misunderstanding by defining the responsibilities of each party to safeguard accountability. It would also provide for, *inter alia*, the following areas of cooperation which shall be conducted by both parties –

- (a) inspection of port-based installations to assess the level of risks onsite;
- (b) updating the Evacuation Plan for the Port;
- (c) regular audit of port-based operators; and
- (d) ships firefighting (ashore).

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7. Cabinet has agreed to the implementation of an e-Aeronautical Information Publication system by the Department of Civil Aviation, in line with the requirements of the International Civil Aviation Organisation. The system would be beneficial for the –

- (a) management of aeronautical information through a centralised database;
- (b) publication, exchange and sharing of the Aeronautical Information Publication including sharing of important safety related information in an electronic format in real time;
- (c) data integrity and quality assurance of aeronautical data/information being published; and
- (d) reduction in the cost of production and distribution of aeronautical information.

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8. Cabinet has agreed to the setting up of the National Guarantee Corporation Ltd, to provide corporate guarantee to financial institutions, including commercial banks, to allow them to provide financial support to viable companies but having inadequate collateral.

The main objective of the National Guarantee Corporation Ltd would be to increase lending capacity of financial institutions to enterprises with inadequate collateral, by reducing the risks of financial institutions through the guarantee coverage.

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9. Cabinet has agreed to the implementation of the following projects by the Central Water Authority –

- (a) renewal of lateral pipes in the region of L'Escalier (Phase 2);
- (b) renewal of pipeline in the region of Mahebourg (Phase 2); and
- (c) milling, resurfacing of roads and related works in Bon Accueil and its vicinity (Phase 2).

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10. Cabinet has agreed to the construction, in Midlands, of a drain network and other related infrastructure, including stormwater drain, retaining wall and culverts.

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11. Cabinet has taken note of the status of the extension of Metro Express and implementation of the Curepipe Master Plan for Development Projects at La Vigie. The Urban Terminal Project would be implemented on a Public-Private Partnership basis.

In an endeavour to get all stakeholders on board, a presentation of the Curepipe Master Plan was made at the Municipal Council of Curepipe on 18 December 2023, where the representatives of relevant Ministries/departments, the Municipal Council of Curepipe, economic operators and the media were present.

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12. Cabinet has taken note that a Tree Management Programme would be implemented by the Ministry of National Infrastructure and Community Development. The Programme aims at developing and implementing strategies focusing on management of roadside trees which represent potential danger to the road network and adopting a proactive management of such hazardous trees to reduce any risks to road users and the public at large.

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13. Cabinet has taken note of the publication of the National Accounts Estimates released by Statistics Mauritius where the projections for Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth for 2023 had been revised from 6.8 percent to 7.1 percent and for Gross Value Added (GVA) growth from 6.7 percent to 7 percent. The higher growth was being driven by better-than-expected performance of the –

- (a) tourism sector with tourist arrivals now expected to be slightly higher than 1.3 million;
- (b) agriculture sector based on higher production of sugar, fish and food crop; and
- (c) ICT and transport sectors.

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14. Cabinet has taken note that the African Public Health Leader of the Year Award has been granted to Dr the Hon Kailesh Kumar Singh Jagutpal, Minister of Health and Wellness by the African Leadership Magazine. The award is given to an African who is making outstanding contribution to public health in Africa, by protecting and promoting the well-being of the people of Africa and building strong healthcare systems and infrastructures at the community and national levels.

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15. Cabinet has taken note that, on 25 July 2023, Mauritius submitted a written statement to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in the matter of the request of the United Nations General Assembly for an advisory opinion in respect of Palestine. Mauritius would make oral submissions at the hearing to be held before the ICJ in February 2024. The participation of Mauritius in these hearings would testify to its unwavering solidarity with the Palestinian people and its unflinching support for their legitimate struggle and their inalienable right to self-determination on the basis of the two-State solution, in accordance with all relevant United Nations resolutions.

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16. Cabinet has taken note that Mauritius would, pursuant to the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) Resolution 23/03 on "Establishing a voluntary Fishing Closure in the Indian Ocean for the conservation of tropical tunas", observe a voluntary fishing closure for a period of 31 consecutive days from 01 to 31 May 2024, of all gears of tuna fishing in the IOTC Area of Competence. The Resolution aims at achieving, inter alia, the following objectives –

- (a) rebuilding the Bigeye and Yellowfin tuna stocks and bringing back the Skipjack tuna catches closer to the sustainable levels in a collective effort from all Non-Contracting Parties; and
- (b) providing for a fishing closure of one month for all gears as a means of reducing catches to sustainably manage the available fish stocks for future generations.

The closure of 31 days would not apply to fishing vessels of less than 12 metres so as to prevent a disproportionate burden on artisanal fishing.

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17. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of a Centralised Work Placement Scheme (CWPS) at the level of the Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms for university students, enrolled in tertiary education institutions accredited by the Higher Education Commission, willing to acquire work experience in Ministries, Departments and Parastatal Bodies during their final year of studies.

The main objective of the CWPS would be to provide Mauritian university undergraduate and postgraduate students who were enrolled on a full-time course in tertiary education institutions in Mauritius with practical and hands-on experience in a real-world work environment for the enhancement of their academic learning, as well as the development of their professional skills with a view to boosting their employability.

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18. Cabinet has taken note that the International Trade Centre would conduct a consultative mission to Mauritius for the project on the “Climate competitiveness: Building opportunities in the green economy for emerging and developing countries” during the week of 15 to 19 January 2024. The International Trade Centre is the joint agency of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization, fully dedicated to supporting small businesses of developing countries to trade. The main objective of the consultative mission would be to raise awareness around the trade and climate nexus among all relevant stakeholders and define technical assistance needs for Mauritius.

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19. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Health and Wellness would release the Family Planning and Demographic Yearbook 2022, which is published on a yearly basis. The present issue of the 48<sup>th</sup> Yearbook would provide data on population trends and vital rates, family planning and health service points for the islands of Mauritius and Rodrigues.

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20. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the National Health Financing Dialogue 2023 organised by the Ministry of Health and Wellness in collaboration with the African Union Development Agency-NEPAD, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Global Fund against AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. The multi-stakeholder High-Level Dialogue focused on the four key pillars of the Africa Leadership Meeting Declaration, namely –

- (a) More Money for Health;
- (b) More Health for the Money;
- (c) Equity for Improved Financial Protection in Health; and
- (d) Strengthened Country leadership of the Health Financing Agenda.

The main priority areas identified by stakeholders under each of the four Key pillars culminated into a zero Position Statement delivered on the final day of the National Dialogue. The Position Statement was further elaborated and circulated to concerned stakeholders for views and endorsement. Based on the Position Statement, a Work Plan and Technical Support Plan were expected to be developed by mid 2024 with the assistance of SADC and the Global Fund against AIDS.

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21. Cabinet has taken note that a population study and behaviour of the long-tailed macaques in Mauritius would be conducted by Dr Raphael Reinegger, Ecologist of the University of Bristol, UK in collaboration with the University of Mauritius and the National Parks and Conservation Service for a duration of two years. The aims of the study would be to –

- (a) test the effectiveness of drone-mounted thermal infrared cameras for counting macaques in Mauritius and to develop a method for systematically surveying macaques on the island scale, covering different habitat types;

- (b) provide a baseline population estimate of wild macaque for effective population management in the wild; and
- (c) use population data and monitoring tools to effectively mitigate the negative effect of macaques on native terrestrial biodiversity and improve macaques management practices in the future.

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22. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent participation of the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology in the 42<sup>nd</sup> Session of the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in Paris. The Vice-Prime Minister intervened at the General Policy Debate, which is one where heads of delegations highlight their achievements in UNESCO's fields of competence, and their expectations of and views on the Organisation. She also participated in a parallel session on 'Education for Peace' and gave an address during the "Sommet Polaire - One planet".

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23. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the participation of the Minister of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change in the 28<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP28) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE). The UAE Consensus Document was adopted. The Minister also attended the High-Level events on Adaptation, Means of Implementation and Mitigation and he intervened in the first Summit of Leaders of the G77 and China under the chair of Cuba.

In the margins of COP28, the Minister participated in several side events. He acted as panelist in the Menu of Trade-Related Climate Policy Options and participated in the event titled "Islands of Change: Building Fiscal Resilience in the Face of Climate Crisis". He also attended the First Health Day and Climate Change Ministerial Meeting. He was a panelist in the Sustainable Innovation Forum on the theme "Systematic Transformation with Circularity in Mind" and delivered a Keynote Address at the "Circular Economy – the Key to a Net-Zero World" event organised by the International Chamber of Commerce.

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24. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent participation of the Attorney General, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade in the 6<sup>th</sup> Seoul-Africa Dialogue in Korea. He delivered a Keynote Address at the 6<sup>th</sup> Seoul Dialogue on Africa. The Dialogue focused on the following theme "Korea-Africa Partnership Sustainable Peace and Prosperity".

The Attorney General had a bilateral meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea. He also had a working session with the Korean Chamber of Commerce and Industry to follow up on talks already initiated during their visit to Mauritius. He further availed of the opportunity to discuss with the participants of the Africa-Foundation Forum, which comprised public and private business stakeholders.

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25. Cabinet has taken note of the recent participation of the Attorney General, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade in the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and bilateral meetings held in Geneva. The Attorney General participated as panelist in the discussion on the future of human rights and digital technologies.

The Attorney General also had meetings with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Secretary General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs of the Bahamas, the UN Tech Envoy, the Director General of the World Trade Organization, the Director General of the International Office for Migration and the Minister of State for Foreign Trade of the United Arab Emirates.

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26. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent official visit of the Minister of Youth Empowerment, Sports and Recreation to Rodrigues. The Minister participated in an Award of Certificate Ceremony at the Mon Plaisir Leisure and Cultural Centre where he remitted certificates to young Rodriguans, who had successfully completed the National Youth Civic Service Programme fourth cohort.

The Minister also participated in a prize award ceremony for winners of a video clip competition organised by the United Nations Population Fund on the prevention against substance abuse in Rodrigues. He paid courtesy calls on the Chief Commissioner and the Commissioner for Youth and Sports, Arts and Culture, Museums, Archives, Historical Sites and Buildings, Library Services and discussed youth, sports and recreation activities in Rodrigues.

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27. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Valuation Tribunal for a period of three years, with Mr Vijay Appadoo, President of the Intermediate Court (Civil Division), as part-time Chairperson.

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