Agri SA

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Agri SA reageer op jongste uitlatings van Minister Nkwinti oor grondplafonne

AGRI SA RESPONDS TO MINISTER NKWINTI'S LATEST STATEMENTS ON LAND CEILINGS

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Minister Nkwinti het op 26 April tydens sy begrotingsrede gesê dat die Wetsontwerp op die Regulering van Grondbesit, in terme waarvan die hoeveelheid grond wat enige individu of entiteit mag besit, beperk sal word, gedurende Junie in die Parlement ter tafel gelê sal word. Meer onlangs, op 21 Mei is berig dat die Minister tydens 'n grond-oorhandiging seremonie in die Kruger wildtuin gesê het dat perke van tussen 1000 hektaar en 12 000 hektaar toepassing sal vind en dat die regering die grond wat meer is as die vasgestelde plafon, sal koop en herverdeel.

Die wetsontwerp sal ook die besit van grond deur buitelanders verbied. Die Minister het reeds verlede jaar aangekondig dat hy voortgaan met sodanige wetgewing. Tot op datum is die wetgewing nog nie gepubliseer vir kommentaar of ingedien by die Parlement nie, het Johannes Moller, president van Agri SA in Upington gesê. "Daar is al sedert 2011 met die bekendstelling van die Groenskrif op Grondhervorming sprake van sogenaamde grondplafonne. Agri SA het van meet af aan, sterk standpunt hierteen ingeneem en deurgaans goed-gemotiveerde ekonomiese-, voedselsekerheids- en grondwetlike argumente teen grondplafonne op die tafel geplaas. Daar is 'n werkgroep gestig deur die Minister waaraan Agri SA ook deelgeneem het en onafhanklike kundiges is getaak om hierdie werkgroep te adviseer. Die meerderheid van hierdie kundiges het ook teen die instel van grondplafonne gewaarsku," het Moller bygevoeg.

"Internasionale ervaring met grondplafonne dui onder andere daarop dat dit allerlei negatiewe gevolge gehad het, soos die fragmentasie van landbougrond, negatiewe impakte op produktiwiteit, swak winsgewendheid van landbou-ondernemings, min tot geen positiewe impak op armoede-verligting, hoë administrasiekoste en 'n negatiewe impak op investering in die sektor. Ons kan verseker nie bekostig om te eksperimenteer met iets wat internasionaal so klaaglik misluk het nie, ons dobbel met ons voedselsekerheid", het Moller verder gesê.
"Agri SA wag die publikasie van die wetsontwerp af en sal dit onmiddellik deur senior regslui laat nagaan, het Moller gesê.
Uitgereik deur Agri SA, Direktoraat: Korporatiewe Skakeling

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On 26 April, Minister Nkwinti said in his budget vote that the Regulation of Land Holdings Bill, which proposes that the size of land that any individual or entity may own should be limited, would be tabled in Parliament in June. More recently, on 21 May, the Minister reportedly said during a land hand-over ceremony in the Kruger National Park that a limit of between 1 000 and 12 000 hectares would be applicable and that government would purchase any land in excess of the set ceiling for redistribution.

The Bill also prohibits ownership of land by foreigners. The legislation has not yet been published for commentary or submitted to Parliament, said Agri SA president Johannes Moller in Upington.

"There has been talk of so-called land ceilings since the release of the Green Paper on Land Reform in 2011. Agri SA had from the outset firmly opposed such land ceilings and has repeatedly tabled well-motivated, economic, food security and constitutional arguments against the proposed legislation. A working group was established by the Minister in which Agri SA also participated, with independent experts being tasked to advise the working group. Most of these experts also warned against the introduction of land ceilings," added Moller.

"International experience with land ceilings has indicated adverse consequences, such as fragmentation of agricultural land, a negative impact on productivity, a reduction in the profitability of agribusinesses, very little positive effect – or none at all - on poverty relief, high administration costs and a negative impact on investment in the sector. We certainly cannot afford to experiment with something that has failed so dismally internationally. We would be gambling with food security," according to Moller.

"Agri SA is waiting for the publication of the Bill and will immediately have it scrutinised by senior counsel," said Moller.

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