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Agriculture Policy

January 2014

1. PREFACE

The COPE's agricultural policy recognises that both black and white people of South Africa will need to be proportionately engaged in commercial agriculture through single or joint ventures. Rural communities practising subsistence farming will need to be given urgent and considerable support to create diversified systems of agriculture. This will best be achieved by encouraging rural farmers and smallholders to form viable groups. The low average rainfall as well as the high variability within and between seasons will require that sustained attention be given to ensuring the wise use of this precious and limited resource. The effects of climate change will also be monitored on a regular basis so that agriculture in South Africa can adapt to the changes that are anticipated.

2. MISSION

The mission of the Congress of the People is to ensure that all South Africans enjoy access to the economic use of agricultural land so that:

- Agriculture in South Africa realises its full potential through the optimal participation by all citizens who have an affinity and abiding care for the land;
- affordable, nutritious and adequate food and sustenance can be assured for all our people;
- aspirant farmers are encouraged and adequately supported to enter farming;



- marginal lands are not strained in respect of their carrying capacity;
- employment opportunities in agriculture can be expanded and sustained;
- the competitiveness of the farming and forestry sectors is enhanced;
- environmental and ecological issues are given full consideration; and
- the full potential of agriculture's contribution to the economy is fully realised.

3. OBJECTIVES

The COPE agricultural policy will:

- Ensure that rural people are supported with resources, training and access to markets;
- Encourage the marketing of agricultural products directly to buyers and consumers;
- Develop alternative markets for agricultural products and activities;
- Support the processing of agricultural products on the farm, autonomously or as a group;
- Support aspirant farmers with training, mentorship and resources to ensure that they are viable;
- Require the CSIR sustainability tool to be made available to farmers to ensure that fertility, sound environmental practices and ecology are striven for and monitored accordingly;
- Providing financial support to help expand job opportunities in agriculture and to subsidise group housing schemes, electrification and water reticulation in rural areas;
- Ensure that access to agricultural land is open to all skilled or trained farmers through affordable lease agreements with the right to purchase after an agreed interval of successful practice and capital accumulation;
- Support the development of eco-villages with a view to promoting multi-unit houses, cohousing, tourism and permaculture;
- Support rural areas with research findings, science and technology and to encourage the private sector to partner with organised rural communities for their equal and mutual benefit;
- Support the development, improvement or enlargement of essential community facilities in rural areas and towns to provide for health care, internet, public safety and public services.
- Support and facilitate the meaningful participation of farm workers, casual or full time, at all levels of decision making with the right to an equitable sharing of risk and profit arising from all economic activities;
- Implement participatory land use planning to ensure mixed usage such that arable land is conserved and used for agriculture only while any land on the farm with minimal agricultural potential that was never historically used for food production being permitted for housing, commercial or industrial purposes in keeping with sound environmental principles;
- Ensure efficient use of water and an equitable and just apportionment of water rights;
- Provide for workers, farmers and other rural people to have representation on bodies crafting policies and regulations affecting them;
- Promote regional and international trade cooperation for the benefit of the Southern African farming community.; and
- Use all the intellectual resources of the state to provide communities with free plans and advice to adopt renewable energy systems and to increase the economic viability of biomass energy projects without impacting on food supply.
- Deal satisfactorily with the DOHA impasse in respect of subsidies.



4. INTRODUCTION

The COPE, in view of escalating food prices, views the agricultural sector as being of crucial importance to the country for the provision of the following:

- food;
- fibre;
- timber;
- energy;
- crafts;
- employment and livelihood;
- export earnings;

While the COPE recognises the role that commercial agriculture plays in feeding the nation, it is also concerned about the environmental damage to land which is a scarce and vital asset of the nation. We therefore envisage supporting sustainable agriculture with opportunities in commercial agriculture for both black and white farmers either as sole enterprises or as joint undertakings with state support for the historically disadvantaged. Rural communities will need skills transfers and resources to enable them to participate in a diversified system that will enable them to attain viability and sell directly to enterprises that partner with them or to the general public.

5. ADMINISTRATION

A COPE led administration will require that proper verification procedures be put in place to ensure that qualifications of applicants are checked for accuracy and non falsification and that due diligence is exercised in respect of what is claimed on a CV. All managers, as part of continuous growth, will be required to participate in an ongoing skills training programme to be undertaken in conjunction with a

university providing long distance education. The need to fully understand the PFMA cannot be overemphasised. The PFMA seeks to promote a sustainable financial management culture in the public sector and to ensure that an effective use of government resources occurs. The monitoring devices allow for the measurement of outputs and of value received. COPE recognises that if the PFMA is being fully implemented, greater delivery will occur and wasteful and futile expenditure will not occur. All managers will also need to be thoroughly familiar with the Promotion of Access to Information Act, the Prevention of Corrupt Practices Act, the Financial Intelligence Centre Act and the Protocol on Corporate Governance in the Public Sector.

COPE undertakes to integrate the provisions of all of the above in a handbook for administrators so that the challenges regarding corporate governance are eliminated and the best risk management practices are employed. All administrators, importantly, should only be able to continue in service on the basis of sound ethical and democratic conduct and if these are compromised in any way whatsoever it will be untenable for the administrator to remain within the service. Any appointment to any post within the government administration, at every level, will require a thorough knowledge of all of the above Acts and the Protocol on Corporate Governance in the Public Sector.

In the COPE led administration democracy, innovativeness, flexibility, responsiveness, transparency, accountability, integration, and delivery will have to be demonstrated. A pen pushing and paper shuffling bureaucracy will have to yield to implementation.



Each year in January, the Minister must place in front of the relevant Portfolio Committee a report that must evaluate how successfully the provisions of the PFMA and other applicable legislation and protocols were implemented within the full sphere of its influence. If corrupt practices had come to light or if futile and wasteful expenditure had occurred, the Portfolio Committee will have to ascertain who was culpable and require such a person or persons to come before it and to answer questions.

COPE policy will be totally, totally intolerant of Qualified Audit Reports. The administration must engender financial and legal compliance every moment of its functioning in order that ethical and efficient governance prevails. Where there is total compliance with the PFMA and the other requirements, by the management, there cannot arise situations where the Auditor General has to issue a qualified report. Qualified reports should lead to consequences for senior administrators.

In line with what is happening in the private sector, the public sector should follow new management styles that are being advocated by researchers. Charles Handy, for example, advises that 'We used to think that we knew how to run organizations. Now we know better. More than ever they need to be global and local, small in some ways and big in others, to be centralized some of the time and decentralized most of it, workers to be autonomous and more of a team, and managers delegating'. Henk Volberda, while he is clearly addressing the business sector in his statement, is stating a point that is just as relevant for the public sector. He records that the 'Changing competitive environments are forcing companies in almost every sector to re-examine their organizational form. The new flexible firm facilitates creativity, innovation, and

speed, while maintaining coordination, focus and control'. These ideas are even more relevant in state departments.

The modern administrator should be knowledgeable and especially so in respect of Information Technology. Within the management there should be ample provision for each manager to be able to act autonomously provided that professional standards and norms and values are strictly adhered to without exception. The personal commitment from a manager to serve the cause of the people of South Africa, faithfully and honestly, should be the benchmark striven for.

COPE recognises that a lack of democracy, transparency and accountability are bedeviling the administration of departments with intimidatory tactics often being used to silence individuals and to achieve conformity. In such a climate corrupt practices occur. COPE would like to secure the autonomy of the manager and make sure that democracy, transparency and accountability prevail.

A COPE led administration will use the ICT forum that each Department will manage to encourage South Africans to expose corruption and inefficiencies. Those who are accused will be allowed due process and if found guilty, will have their services terminated and no exception will be made. Best practices in fighting corruption will be adopted after Parliament annually reviews the question of corruption within the administration. On all such occasions, an MP who does not belong to the ruling party will chair such a meeting and be responsible for finalising the report to Parliament. Parliament will have to act decisively on the report with all MPs being freed to act on their



conscience and not according to party lines determined in a caucus.

Administration must allow for an optimal amount of decentralisation while ensuring that the unity of direction and purpose is always kept in clear focus. The implementation team must always work in close co-operation with the organisational team so that goals and targets are met according to prioritisation and time frames. The procedures for execution must be innovative, legal, transparent and synergistic. Quality control and financial management must be in place. The target for the service, if the target is identifiable, must evaluate the quality of the service as well as the value for money that was derived from it. This is very important.

COPE will require that administrators utilise staff potential in the fullest way possible so that morale, team spirit, initiative, synergy and drive are all boosted.

Effective integration is essential for effective government. Mutually reinforcing policies are essential to allow improved service delivery. An integration manager must regularly focus on inter-level and inter-departmental integration so that national, provincial and local government operate seamlessly and efficiently. The integration manager must also help to align the efforts of NGO's, the community and other stake holders so that optimal synergy will obtain. It is an absolute imperative that this happens and is seen to be happening.

COPE believes that all administrators should see their duties as exceeding those set out in the closed list deriving from the PFMA. The PFMA is there to ensure fiscal and ethical good behaviour which has become so much of a problem in the present time. Managers, who engender trust and set high standards of ethical, transparent and democratic behaviour for themselves, need not to be constrained by the requirements of the PFMA.

6. FOOD SECURITY, FOOD POLICY AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

The South African Bill of Rights supports the people's 'right to have access to sufficient food and water' and binds the state to use 'legislation and other measures, within its available resources, to (work towards the) progressive realisation of the right to sufficient food' (Section 27).

The concentrated ownership of food processing companies in our country and the control they exert in the production and distribution of agricultural products has serious implications for the farmer as well as for the consumer and therefore every endeavour will need to be made to combat collusion leading to price fixing and profiteering. A win win situation must prevail so that all sectoral interests operate for mutual benefit. The practice of market manipulation by reflecting crop yields as being lower than they are to drive up prices will have to come under strict scrutiny.

The stockpiling of essential foods has also to be given serious consideration in order that prices remain stable and food security is guaranteed especially now that South Africa is no longer a net exporter of food. The likelihood of milk shortage in the country will also need to be examined with a view to supporting an expansion



in dairy farming before this becomes a crisis. Acceleration in climate change could cause major supply side problems and therefore lead to volatility in the market. Reserve stocks can allow for supply to match demand so that price remains stable. The COPE will from time to time determine how much food ought to be stored as there will be cost implications which will have to be taken into account. Other measures to stabilise prices will include variations in the tariff level, payment of subsidies, price control measures.

The COPE is committed to ending poverty, hunger, malnutrition and ill health. The growing food crisis of recent times, exacerbated by the energy crisis and the accelerating climate change, threatens the wellbeing and livelihoods of millions of people. There is a vital necessity for science, technology, economics, and politics to come together in order to meet the crisis. It is imperative that people of the country will always have the ability to afford food within their purchasing power. The COPE commits itself to exempting all basic foods, with scientifically proven nutritional benefits, from VAT. Subsidies on maize-meal and wholemeal bread will be implemented. Foods rich in soft fibres and oils rich in Omega 3 will also be exempted from VAT if they are not already on the list.

The COPE will also offer subsidies to any approved and registered NGO or Community Organisation operating as a formal trust supervised by a registered firm of auditors to create and supervise community gardens and to establish marketing outlets for such produce. Encouragement will be given to joining feeding schemes with such community projects. An integrated approach will allow for state and private resources, material and human, to be joined together so that each village, town and city will operate under a

common umbrella where transparency, financial probity, democracy, representivity, and accountability will have to prevail in the highest measure

COPE recognises that only about 13% of South Africa's surface area can be used for crop production. Of this, only 22% can be classified as high-potential land. Only 1,3 million hectares (ha) are under irrigation. This is why it is very important to conserve arable land.

COPE also believes that the best way to fight joblessness, hunger and poverty is to invest in agricultural research and infrastructure so that innovative ideas and plans can materialise and be employed in optimising our full agricultural potential.

New ideas should be continually on the conveyor belt and not lie on the shelf. Businesses prosper because they operate at the cutting edge of technology.

Agriculture, however, is slow to benefit from knowledge and technology transfers. Our policy will give impetus to research on addressing the safe but effective control of pests through the release of predatory insects etc;

- controlling diseases in livestock, bees, and poultry;
- developing drought-resistant cereals;
- creating opportunities for people living near forests to grasp climate mitigation opportunities;
- using a combination of both organic and chemical fertilisers to enhance yields and improving soil fertility;
- promoting the sustainable and efficient use of surface and underground water;
- promoting access to trade, market, and value-chain systems; and



- ensuring women's full participation in agricultural innovation.

Research in respect of all of the items listed above, biotechnology, agro-processing, markets, programmes and policies will help to bring the poor inside of the circle of new knowledge and help them to improve their situation and at the same time contribute to achieving food security in the country.

Linking, through state institutions, with private-sector innovation and end-user operations will yield significant results for the investments made in South African agriculture.

It is important for all parties to accept that extensive co-operation has to obtain to ensure that food security is safeguarded. Rivalries and play for power cannot be allowed to interfere with the attainment of these policy goals.

The protection of consumers against excessive levels of pesticides and toxins will have to be under constant scrutiny with the regular education of the farmers as well as the consumers regarding their injudicious or excessive use. Legislation will be enacted to ensure that suppliers provide farmers with the latest research information on toxic products and that at the point of sale people are on hand to train farmers on how to use their products with the safety of the consumers in mind. All farmers should be presented with alternatives so that they become aware of the choices and of the health and ecological issues. The protection of the environment has to enjoy the highest priority.

The more toxic pesticides should only be available to farmers on the production of a time-limited prescription from a qualified field officer. Our policy will encourage field officers to recommend biological controls rather

than chemical controls and to allow for this to be feasible the state and private enterprises will have to play a role in breeding predators in laboratories that can then be supplied at reasonable prices and in bulk to farmers.

An internet operated database, available to everyone, should make available current information on food prices, weather and climatic conditions, extent of the planting of specific crops including those by rural communities, infestation, rainfall, yield forecasts, analysis by experts, production statistics and prices prevailing on the market. Too often, in the absence of reliable data, crop yields are deliberately underestimated to manipulate the market. Reliable and accessible data will allow for everyone to make more informed decisions. The availability of data will also enable policy makers to act decisively and appropriately to counter problems.

7. AGRICULTURAL MARKETING AND PRICING POLICY

Our policy will require that the frameworks governing the markets for agricultural products will need to be re-assessed in order to bring all farmers, large scale and subsistence, into given organizational structures so that they become familiar with marketing skills, knowledge and information. Increased market access for all participants will have to be supported so that greater efficiency in the marketing of agricultural products can obtain. Likewise, optimising export earnings from agricultural products and enhancing the viability of the agricultural sector will have to receive continuous attention.

The work of the National Agricultural Marketing Council will be thoroughly reviewed at intervals to ascertain to



what extent its recommendations were being carried forward and implemented and what use it was serving. Our policy will require that where a decision is taken by a minister, contrary to a recommendation, reasons should be furnished to the Council in order that the Council can reassess its position to enrich the process of dialogue.

Our policy will also continue to require the Minister to seek prior parliamentary sanction for any intervention and to allow meaningful multi-level representation by affected groups to minimise the risk of decisions aimed at favouring the few and disempowering the majority.

Our policy recognises the enormous struggle farmers have in overcoming the challenges posed by a supply-chain mode which is fragmented and oriented to supermarket demands. The concentration that is taking place in the retail sector, is putting pressure on farmers with regard both to quality and quantity. The joining together of small farmers to create a concentration on the supply side is essential to achieve the necessary balance.

Our policy also recognises that specialized knowledge will need to be used to assist land reform beneficiaries in moving beyond informal marketing networks. As such business plans will have to make provisions for marketing arrived at through facilitated meetings. The National Agricultural Marketing Council, established by the Marketing Agricultural Products Act (1996), should require NAMC to provide strategic advice to the Minister as well as to the industry on agricultural marketing to enhance access, marketing efficiency, optimization of export earnings and the viability of the agricultural sector.

The COPE believes that there remains a need for some intervention in agricultural marketing and pricing to ensure that broader food security objectives are

achieved, and that historically disadvantaged groups are enabled to participate in agricultural production, processing and trade.

Government intervention in agricultural marketing may be justified to correct the failure of markets to operate competitively, and to compensate for the effects of unconstrained market forces on patterns of production, consumption, and asset and income distribution which are socially unacceptable.

International experience has shown that direct marketing and pricing controls and state procurement frequently have unintended side-effects and can be too costly to sustain. On the other hand, it is also clear that unrestrained market forces cause instability. Balance will have to be sought.

COPE will also ensure that the collaboration with the European Union (EU) and other export centres will continue to ensure that the South African pesticide initiative programme is implemented and strictly monitored so that chemical pesticide residue do not remain on agricultural products. South African consumers will also be entitled to exactly the same safeguards.

8. COMMERCIAL AND SMALL SCALE FARMING

At least 100 000 new farmers, particularly from disadvantaged communities, will need to be trained and introduced into farming through active learnership programmes on commercial farms on the one hand and through partnerships and individual acquisitions in commercial farming on the other.

While the sourcing of land will still be an important priority, care will need to be taken that commercial farming continues to be sustained at present levels



and that acquired agricultural land is not taken out of production for subsistence farming. Both subsistence and small-scale farming will need to be reorganised so that the full potential of the land is realised. Smaller farms can exploit niche markets by focussing on organically grown produce that is free of GMO's and other activities.

In order to achieve a win-win situation with all farmers, the party will work to ensure that access to land, credit, markets, water, equipment, information, infrastructure, and expertise will be made available to farmers in an integrated and expeditious manner. Facilitation, speed, transparency and accountability on the part of government agencies will be the modus operandi.

Our policy will also encourage a carefully managed shift, where it will be advantageous to the farmer and the country, from field crop production towards higher value horticulture and livestock products. Agro-processing on site and away from the farm will also be given considerable moral, technical, legal and financial support.

Improving soil fertility through organic manuring and recycling will be encouraged. A programme similar to that adopted by Worms Argentina will be introduced to encourage the making and the use of vermicompost. Training will be given to practise effective crop rotation to build up nutrients for future crops. Biogas generation, using organic wastes, will allow for the creation of energy for use on the farm. Technical information and planning services will be provided by the state. Technical kits and skills transfer will be made available to allow farmers to become as self sufficient as possible.

The transfer of technical knowledge, practical experience and business skills through intensive mentorship, in the main, will inform the process of

transformation. Not only will new farmers be offered such services, but all farm workers will be similarly targeted for recruitment into the programmes. The development of skilled workers is as important as attracting new farmers into the industry.

The party believes that the state must work in full and equal partnership with all other role players to achieve a mustering of resources and an integrated approach.

Support will need to be given to emerging farmers through further sustained investments in rural infrastructure, information management, on site training, technical support, land reform programmes and advisory services.

Starter and back up packs for the rural poor will need to be increased and group ventures encouraged through appropriate incentives.

Agricultural microfinance under the micro-agricultural finance initiative of South Africa (Mafisa) and Ilima Letsema initiative will continue to receive support through state resources.

Industrial and commercial interests will need to be encouraged to forge partnerships with rural communities and emerging farmers to ensure the injection of greater resources into the rural and agricultural areas.

9. THE ENVIRONMENT

The enforcement of conservation measures will be undertaken in close collaboration with the Department of Environmental Affairs. There is no doubt that agriculture has contributed to the degradation of soils and vegetation across the country. The loss of top soil has to be regarded as a national crisis and must be dealt with as such. In many places present agricultural



practices have also affected the quality of water through the wide scale run-off carrying pesticides and chemical fertilizers into the water system. Sustainable development will not be possible if soil loss continues at nearly ten times the rate at which it is replaced. There is clearly a deficit that is arising here which can have catastrophic consequences for our nation.

Our policies will aim at ensuring the proper management and conservation of natural resource in order to achieve sustainability. The CSIR sustainability tool will be utilised to achieve standardisation throughout the country.

Communities and individuals must adopt an ecologically sustainable approach to the management of our environment and natural resources. Soil, water and vegetation resources must be used in a responsible manner to ensure that future generations will also be able to use them to their benefit. Each province will need to identify where land and water degradation are occurring so that they can be listed on a register for continuous monitoring until both are rehabilitated.

Legislation providing for the conservation of natural agricultural resources through maintaining the land's production potential; combating and preventing erosion; and protecting vegetation and combating weeds and invader plants will be reviewed annually.

The cultivation of virgin land, the burning of veld and the ploughing of the soil where soil; erosion by wind and water is pronounced will be subject to prior approval and exercise of strict control. The implementation of 'best practice' in conformity with the CSIR's Sustainability Tool will be required from all users of agricultural land.

A National Action Programme in keeping with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention to Combat Desertification will be drawn up or revised and integrated into a regional programme for the Southern African Development Community (COPE) region.

10. CO-OPERATIVES

The COPE is committed to promoting the development of sustainable co-operatives that comply with co-operative principles as every encouragement needs to be given to groups that subscribe to values of self-reliance and self-help, and who choose to work together in democratically controlled enterprises.

Our policy will strive to promote both equity and the greater participation by black persons especially in rural areas. Women, persons with disability, youth and all vulnerable group will be given encouragement and training to form sustainable co-operatives. The co-operatives will encompass agriculture and a broad range of other economic activities.

11. RURAL CREDIT AND THE LAND BANK

The COPE policy will be encourage the implementation of microcredit programmes to achieve poverty reduction by allowing the people who qualify to generate income and employment and to take the best possible decisions for themselves. The mobilisation of microsavings will also be given enthusiastic support because the one will make the other possible. Our policy recognises that access to financial services and markets are prerequisite for self-sustained poverty reduction through self-help. The professional management of microcredit by local institutions taking savings deposits and offering financing for economic



activities, housing and marketing will be supported in every way that is necessary. Such institutions should also provide special insurances, business consultancy and advanced training to those who would otherwise be excluded from such support.

COPE is committed to the Millennium Development Goals and will explore how sector-specific needs in respect of cooperatives of different orientation can be allowed to link into a multi-tier structure while still being part of a decentralized system. The improvement of the economic and social situation of individuals, especially those who are impoverished or living close to the poverty line will be afforded the highest priority by the party.

The state must facilitate and coordinate rural development in a sustainable manner. The Land Bank must not only promote, facilitate and support agricultural development but must be visibly seen to be doing so. Its operation must be totally transparent and accountable. It must continue to support equitable ownership of agricultural land by historically disadvantaged people as well as agrarian reform in all its dimensions. In order for a full and proper engagement by all role players, the Land Bank must set up an Internet Discussion Forum so that all role players can participate in its policy making and decisions. All of its processes must be open to full public scrutiny.

The improvement of agricultural productivity and profitability through innovative agricultural and rural financial systems is an important national goal that has to be realised. In achieving this goal due regard must be had to land use that is environmentally sustainable in terms of the CSIR sustainability tool so that the nation's food security is guaranteed.

The expeditious sale of repossessed farms to development clients has to occur so that infrastructure does not deteriorate, productive land is not kept idle, and farm workers are not out of their jobs. The Land Bank should also evolve a programme similar to that of the Grameen Bank to ensure that first time borrowers can get a hand up with small loans that can be effectively utilised to improve their productivity and therefore their returns from their investment.

12. HEALTH & CONSUMER PROTECTION

COPE policy will seek to protect consumers and the public by adopting a Central Authentication Service. The CAS quality food mark certification system will improve the quality of agricultural products and processed goods to protect consumers. The foods that will bear the CAS mark will include meat products, frozen foods, fruit and vegetable juices, quality cereals, pickles and preserves, TV dinner, fresh mushrooms, refrigerated prepared foods, fermented foods, snacks, fresh eggs, and freshly-cut produce. Education and publicity activities on the CAS system will enable the public to have a better understanding of the CAS quality food mark.

13. FARM WORKERS

In order for agriculture to thrive and be sustainable it is imperative to meet the stringent international market requirements. Food safety, as well as worker safety, must be seen as non-negotiable market access requirements. Training farm workers in the responsible use of pesticides and other dangerous chemicals is very important. Extension officers must pay attention to proper labour relations practices as envisaged in labour, health and safety legislation. A programme of



sustained education and training will not only impact on safety and productivity but will enable farm workers to avail themselves of better working conditions and partnership opportunities. COPE will ensure that every farm worker can complete literacy programmes urgently in order to enrol for special educational and training programmes that will allow them to gain certification. Farm workers with aspiration will thus be able to study at tertiary institution on the completion of certain entrance requirements which will be seen in conjunction with practical experience. The access to training will be given priority. By ensuring that all training programmes are complementary and integrated into the national education and training system, farm workers will be able to move up the ladder of knowledge at their own pace.

All farm workers will need to pass a test which will require the interpretation of pictograms on chemical containers in order that they know clearly how to follow safety instructions. All manufacturers will be required to ensure that their pictograms are reflective of the full cycle of safety measures and that they include protective clothing, face masks, washing, mixing, storage and finally the disposal of the containers.

COPE policy will encourage the development of ecovillages and cohousing to ensure that farm workers have the right to own and possess their own homes through title and practise permaculture to supplement their incomes. The ecovillage can exist as a subdivision on a single farm or be situated as a collective in close proximity to several farms. Support for the ecovillage will come from farmers, the government, NGO's and private individuals with means who wish to have a cottage amongst the farm workers. The concept of cohousing will ensure that farm workers have common houses for recreation, meeting and socialising. The fact that private

individuals can buy into such villages will enrich the community by the infusion of artists, writers, artisans, professional people and business people among them. The present system of housing provides no more than a roof over people's heads and that is not adequate to living a wholesome or full life. The ecovillage should have amenities and be able to accommodate visitors and tourists.

The right to assisted title will mean that no one will ever need to fear eviction or the loss of livelihood. The policy envisages that every ecovillage / cohousing complex will have adequate land assigned to it to allow the community to be self-sufficient however variable the opportunities for employment. The COPE policy seeks to make life on the farm safe, attractive and sustainable. People should not flow out of the rustic settings into the urban area without a reverse flow to rustic life.

The Ministry of Labour will be required to ensure that farmworkers' rights, as set out in the COPE policy, are given effect. Our policy will encourage both social and political participation by rural people. Representatives of farmworkers' organisations will sit on relevant structures for which the Agriculture Ministry is responsible to achieve participatory and effective planning.

14. DROUGHT MANAGEMENT AND RELIEF

COPE's policy on drought will require that all farmers should plan for droughts and successfully manage these when they occur. Preparedness, self-reliance and risk management ought to be the first line of defence against drought. Water conservation and storage will be supported through ordinary and persuasive measures. A safety net will exist to support



producers against climatic events which are beyond their capacity to manage or plan for. Drought management strategies and tools must be proactively made available to farmers to enable them to manage the onrushing change.

The COPE is committed to developing policies on water to ensure continuous availability. In South Africa, drought is the norm rather than the exception.

15. AN EARLY WARNING SYSTEM

An early warning system has to be in place to allow farmers to plan in advance of the drought.

Relief for drought stricken areas should also be prepared before the crisis develops.

Water storage efforts should be increased and water loss through evaporation minimised.

The COPE is committed to advising farmers on seasonal weather forecasts. Agro-meteorological advice to farmers is recognised as being very important and will be developed with enthusiasm.

16. AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICES

SUPPORT SERVICES AND RESEARCH

Farmers and more especially emergent farmers need technical, administrative, financial and marketing support. Farmers also need infrastructure to be in place to enable them to develop the land effectively. Help will need to be given to them to build or repair fences, windmills, water tanks, troughs, implements and machinery.

The most effective way of helping farmers, commercial and emerging, is to divide South Africa into 400 constituencies. Each constituency will be supervised

by at least one member of parliament. Each constituency will have several hire centres from where farmers can obtain technicians or plant and equipment. A scheme for the granting of subsidies to these centres will be worked out and put in place. The private and educational sectors in the area will be encouraged to adopt a hire centre with a view to assisting in every way possible. One field officer, with appropriate social and language skills, will be attached to not more than four of these hire centres. The centres will also serve to provide training and advice on a regular basis.

Deficit producers in urban, peri-urban and especially rural areas will also have full access to these hire centres in order that they too can maximise household food supply. Botanical gardens and nurseries will attach to these centres to support all food producers.

High schools, colleges and universities will work in close conjunction with these hire centres. The training and certification of farmers will be facilitated through educational institutions in the area. Programmes will be prepared by qualified personnel, edited, moderated, and published for handing down to the centres. DVDs on aspects of agriculture practised in the area will be available on loan to farmers or to the educational institutions providing extra mural training.

Continuous attention will also be given to facilitating finances for operational costs and enterprise expansion. Farmers will be encouraged to partner with businesses on the basis of shared risks and profits without in any way compromising land ownership. Well wishers and consumers will also be encouraged to enter into arrangements that will be mutually beneficial to both parties. Such an arrangement can also encompass non farming activities to improve viability through the creation of a multi stream income.

Government support must be aimed at providing:



- i. Information, communication and knowledge management;
- ii. Financial, technical and advisory assistance;
- iii. Education, training and capacity building;
- iv. Contracting, marketing and business development;
- v. On and off-farm infrastructure and technical services, and;
- vi. Regulatory and supervisory services.

Ecology, land care programmes and water conservation will have to be given the highest priority. Loss of species, top soil or water will receive constant monitoring.

The COPE believes that a farmer-driven, as opposed to state-driven approach must be central to new policy. Services should seek to build on people's knowledge and work with them to find locally acceptable and sustainable solutions. Communities must be involved in assessing their needs and analysing ways in which constraints can be overcome with the resources available to them.

17. AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

Agricultural research will be given considerable support and extended beyond that which is occurring at present. The COPE believes that agricultural research must be redirected towards improving returns and reducing risk for the production methods and farming systems feasible for commercial as well as small scale farmers. The Agricultural Research Council should service Africa and our policy envisages engaging all interested groups to map a way forward which will yield optimal results and allow the Council to grow to the very full limits of its potential.

Scientists within the Council will be empowered so that they have as much influence as anyone else to determine policy. Scientists who retire or leave or are

on a visit to our shores should have access on terms mutually agreed to allow for scientific work to continue unimpeded. The Council should be seen as belonging to the people, not the state. For this reason ARC should set up an Internet Discussion Forum so that there is continuous engagement among all role players and to ensure transparency and accountability.

The development of technology and its transfer should be facilitated through the internet.

Research should concentrate on ecology for ecosystems, organic agriculture, climate change, rain harvesting, water capture and the efficient use of water, renewable raw materials, sustainable livestock production, sub-tropical bio mass, advanced technologies for livestock housing, small-scale diversified farming; land and water-mapping, national agricultural output data on the internet, ecovillages, agricultural energy self-sufficiency, the Cuba special period with implications for South Africa.

Research on constraints and opportunities of communal tenure; special needs of women; peri-urban farms; and urban agriculture and horticulture must also be on the research agenda with results being published on a dedicated internet site. Question and answers will likewise be facilitated through the internet.

18. ANIMAL HEALTH AND PRODUCTION

The COPE will ensure that biosecurity will be practised to protect the health of livestock. This is important for the farmer, the consumer, and the reputation of South African agriculture. Diseases obviously impact negatively on the economic viability of an agricultural enterprise as well as on the welfare of a herd. Therefore, the prevention of disease is the best investment a farmer and a country can make.



Extension officers must regularly educate farmers about the danger of not practising good hygiene or leaving dirty items lying around to contaminate food or water. Farmers should also have regular training of how diseases spread through water, wind, insect bites, contaminated clothing, vermin and contact with wild animals. Farmers will be required to provide clean, dry, and warm environments.

The COPE will support a holistic approach to animal health and production and work co-operatively with all concerned parties to create optimal synergy, enthusiasm and motivation. Government personnel will be facilitators and will operate under a continuously evolving policy to meet the needs as they arise and in as dynamic a manner that is possible.

The State Veterinary Service will train Veterinary Aides who will be able to relieve veterinary professionals by undertaking field visits and dealing with problems within their capabilities. Such veterinary aides will be able to improve their qualifications over a period of time until they meet the requirements to be fully certified. The creation of more posts for full-time and part-time state veterinarians and animal health officers, both on a fulltime and part-time basis will receive continuous attention.

COPE policy will encourage optimal co-operation between state laboratories and private laboratories to ensure that the countries resources, public and private, are there to support the farmers. The internet will be used to publicise information so that farmers can have access to current information and thereby be proactive in preventing the outbreak of diseases.

The availability of highly scheduled pharmaceuticals to farmers will require a written prescription from persons qualified to issue these. COPE will further develop this policy after more consultation.

COPE will work towards expanding primary veterinary services and establishing a multidisciplinary teams at local level to address the needs of the farming community. The Onderstepoort Biological Products Limited (OBP) company, as a national key point (NKP) with ISO 9000 accreditation, will be required to improve production infrastructure and develop new products for the local and the export market.

19. NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The COPE believes that policy must protect and be seen to be protecting all our natural resources which have taken at least hundreds if not millions of years to evolve. The quality and potential of natural resources will have to be both maintained and improved. The CSIR sustainability tool will be made to apply to all land owners. The policy will not seek to place the burden on the farmer with the state merely acting as controller and enforcer. The policy envisages a fully facilitated approach with minimal bureaucratic and procedural processes.

A red list of natural resources in danger will be published annually so that decisive steps can be taken without seriously compromising a vital natural resource.

All government departments having a bearing on land and agriculture will create one umbrella service structure to which they will then second personnel to create a multidisciplinary team operating as an integrated group with a common purpose and an agreed agenda. A common financial centre, with representatives from agriculture, will exist to control funds from the department and co-ordinate expenditure. Organised agriculture will have representatives on the board controlling finance. They



will be replaced annually to ensure that the highest level of probity exists. The chief financial controller will likewise have his / her position reviewed annually with continuation in office, in terms of the contract, depending on an independent audit finding the finances in order.

All natural resource management will be conducted on the basis of broad consultative forums and the open and transparent sharing of all information. The role of tertiary institutions in this regard will be substantially expanded. Soil, in particular, will have to be seen from now on as being part of the climate change problem. Studies will be undertaken to ascertain the extent to which soil-emitted greenhouse gases is occurring and what measures will need to be in place to maintain carbon in the soil and to offset fossil fuel emissions.

South Africa, we recognise is richly endowed with many natural resources, but water is very scarce. The impact of climate change on our water resources is predicted to be very severe. Fresh water is critically important to society and to the environment alike. Our policy will aggressively protect its sources, pathways, uses, and conservation. Resources will be made available to study water issues and monitor its uses. As afforestation schemes have major implications for water catchment areas, the multi task teams will investigate and promote best practices for each locality in the country. Soil erosion, soil compaction and acidification caused by commercial forestry will have to be remedied through mutually agreed plans. The COPE will ensure that the environmental cost of commercial forestry is accurately audited to ensure that conformity with the national resource management strategy obtains.

Social forestry and agroforestry will be promoted to meet rural development needs. All unused public lands

in all municipalities will be evaluated, however small they may be, for establishing groves and coppices in order to beautify the landscape, ameliorate climate change, create an ecological system and provide natural resources. All government institutions will also be required to follow suit.

National parks will continue to receive enthusiastic support as they constitute an important source of income, opportunity and resources for the people living within or in close proximity to them. The participation of local communities in developing ecotourism will be assiduously supported to ensure that direct benefits flow to them. The management of these resources should be on a consultative basis.

20. FORESTRY

Forestry has negative as well as positive environmental implications. On the one hand there is soil degradation and the depletion of water supplies. On the other hand forests serve as significant carbon sinks. All forests should fall under the control of the multi task team to ensure that best practices obtain. The COPE will require forestry to play an essential role in rural development through social forestry programmes devised in collaboration with rural communities. Linkages among the relevant government, research and training bodies is the central pillar of COPT policy as time is of the essence and all role players are required to stride forward at equal pace with no one falling back or holding the others. Sustainable forestry must take place on a scale never before witnessed in South Africa.

The role of forests in rehabilitating soils, protecting watersheds and maintaining biodiversity must be exploited to the full on the basis of a transparently co-operative effort. COPE policy will make provision for



the removal of those who impede the progress in this regard for whatever reason and are unwilling to cooperate with commitment and enthusiasm.

Monocultural afforestation which have adverse effects on the water supply, cause soil compaction and acidification will have to be counteracted with immediate effect in the best scientific and technical manner possible. Every forest will need to work with the multi task team to achieve best practice.

The COPE policy will emphasise the management, expansion and conservation of natural woodland, especially on communal lands, as a means of providing resources.

The COPE advocates holistic extension programmes offered through multi-disciplinary teams. Government must transparently be seen to be working for the people rather than the people having to be impeded by government that works too slowly and too chaotically. People's input into how government services are offered, the value they give and the speed with which these are delivered will have to shape the running of departments. We believe that the people shall govern and that the role of the people in the use of human resources on offer to them should to a large extent be driven by the people to achieve efficiency and economy. With modern IT the office should accompany field workers wherever they go so that those who are meant to be in the field don't remain confined to their offices.

The multi task team should also have personnel whose responsibility will be to create jobs in the short term as well jobs that are sustainable in the long term. Decision making should be prompt as the multi disciplinary teams ought to be able to undertake all investigations simultaneously and perhaps even on the spot. Where further investigations are supported temporary permits

ought to be provided to allow people to engage in economic activity under specified conditions.

21. FISHERIES

The COPE believes that the marine resources of South belong to all the people of the country, and should be managed and developed for the benefit of the country as a whole. The policy will aim at the highest long term economic yield of fish stocks with the lowest impact on stocks and the marine environment. A specially designed sustainability tool will be used to ensure that the resources are harvested with due regard to the future.

Fishing vessels will be accorded the right to pool, swap or trade allocation between and among themselves in order that discards are not dumped into the sea. Accountability should vest with those who rely on the ocean for their livelihood. This will require that a mobile multidisciplinary team be created for each of the three provinces to share knowledge, facilitate sustainable fishing, amend regulations on the spot if needed to meet the exigencies of the time, to police and to foster good public relations.

People involved in the fishing industry will use the multi-disciplinary team as a resource to achieve value rather than concentrate on quantity alone. Fishing has to be thought of as an economic activity. As fisherman begin to take the responsibility of safeguarding their own livelihood by practising accountability, they should be accorded more freedom to take charge and controls should be diminished. Where transgressions occur the controls will come back into full force.

That the people should govern has to be the underlying philosophy guiding the fisheries policy. The function of the multi-disciplinary team is to educate and even to certify fishermen and fisherwomen in all aspects of



fishing, governance included, so that they can help to protect the marine environment and safeguard stocks.

Six monthly reviews should occur to determine whether transparency, accountability and equitability were present in respect of each recognised coastal centre. If there is no contestation and the management has been good, the right to self control should be extended for a further six months.

The incorporation of ecosystem consideration should always merit considerable importance. Whatever affects the health of the ocean or of the fish should be dealt with immediately and the fact that the recognised fishing management committees will have responsibility for the maintenance of the ecosystem, will allow them to take timely steps to preserve the ecosystem. Where failures occur the rights to manage will be withdrawn and given over to a caretaker until the community and its management had adequately redeemed itself.

To achieve the aim of optimal sustainable utilisation, a management plan - including a harvesting strategy - will be determined for each fishing area on a consultative basis and on the spot. Any grievances will have to be addressed within seven days internally or the matter will proceed to arbitration and the guilty party will bear the cost of the application.

In the election of the management team, which will hold office for one year, the representatives of all economic interests in the town or towns grouped together will have a democratic say. Each management team will after one year in office relinquish office and may only seek re-election after the elapse of a year. Neither will any family member or business associates of the retiring members be eligible

22. LAND REFORM

Delivery of land and tenure reform will have to proceed after rapid consultation of all parties in order to achieve a sustainable win-win situation. South Africa has too much agricultural potential to remain a net food importer. Importing food in excess of thirty billion rands in a year indicates that land reform must not be protracted and all parties must know where they stand.

The COPE believes that criteria ought to be developed to arrive at a fair market value for a farm intended to be repossessed in order to complete the land reforms. All owners of land will need to use the agreed upon criteria so that discussions relating to purchase of the land can be facilitated.

Landowners will need to recognise the enormous harm of opposing land reform. On the other hand confidence will need to be created that COPE is determined to engage in swift negotiations and rapid payment on conclusion of the negotiation. Land that is not being used or is not being used to its full potential should be targeted for purchase. Where serious obstacles to a proactive negotiated approach occurs, expropriation should be considered. All grounds of legal challenge, due process and fair compensation particularly, should be thoroughly canvassed so that the process can be completed expeditiously without the matter being drawn out in court. Independent arbitration should be the preferred route to follow in such instances.

COPE also believes that land claimants should also be assisted by officials to prepare a realistic needs assessment that will determine the size, quality and location of the land needed to undertake the projected agricultural activity they were planning for. After the transfer of the land, extension support from a multi disciplinary must be intense in the initial period to ensure the viability and sustainability of the



programme. All agricultural programmes on transferred land should be supported with good design, proper democratic management systems, and financial and technical support. No group should be given possession of land and then left on their own to negotiate the innumerable hurdles on their own. Each farm that is thus being assisted can help to off-set some of the expenses that government would have to carry.

The role, governance and functioning of the Land Bank will have to be minutely scrutinised in order that it can fulfil its role in supporting agriculture and land reform. The State can share profits with such enterprises for the period

Access to affordable food for millions of people is recognised by COPE as being a major problem that requires the highest priority.

The work of the nine provincial Land Reform offices and the 36 operational regions will have to be fully audited. The success of systems developments in enhancing delivery will be fully analysed. COPE policy will attempt to bring the restitution programme to a rapid conclusion.

The Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development Programme will also be subjected to intense scrutiny in order to evaluate to what extent it had realised its objectives, viz

- To help previously disadvantaged people (Blacks, Coloureds and Indians) to become effective farmers on their own land.
- To help black and poor people in rural areas to improve their living standard by enabling them to access and use land productively.
- To decongest overcrowded former homeland areas.

- To expand opportunities for women and youth in rural areas.
- To increase the number of black entrepreneurs in the agribusiness industry.
- To provide universal access to agricultural support services to emerging black farmers.
- To increase agricultural trade for previously disadvantaged people

COPE policy will require departmental officials to go into communities to organise aspirant farmers and to help them extensively through all the stages of acquiring land and successfully farming such land. The Department will require to be proactive and to facilitate that processes run parallel with one another and that upon transfer the groups will be able to hit the ground running. Time will be of the essence.

In addition to individual grants to buy farms or land for agriculture the following projects should be strive for:

- The creation of food-safety-net projects on an individual or group basis.
- Participation in equity schemes which would allow individuals to get grants to buy into an agricultural enterprise.
- Participation in schemes that allow for grants to be combined with loans from normal banks.
- Access to communal land and assistance to make use of the land for productive use. Grants will allow for individuals or groups
 - to buy land
 - to make improvements to the land or add infrastructure (e.g. irrigation)
 - for short-term expenses, e.g. stock, seeds, machinery

COPE policy will also require the swift implementation of the provisions of the **Land Reform Act 3 of 1996**;



the Extension of Security of Tenure Act 62 of 1997; the Prevention of Illegal Occupation of Land Act of 1998 and the Communal Land Act of 2004.

A COPE government will immediately upon taking office, audit the implementation of the above and all other laws to determine the extent to which all of these were successfully and extensively implemented.

23. GMO's

COPE will ensure that requirements of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety will be strictly observed and promoted. As the question of GMO's needs regular scrutiny, COPE will facilitate an open and transparent debate among those who hold opposite views.

24. INTERNATIONAL TRADE & THE DOHA TALKS

Farmers in Europe and the USA are aided by different forms of support which the WHO unfortunately does not regard as distorting free trade. The EU is annually authorised to spend many billion of dollars a year in Green Box subsidies; and the U.S. is allowed to do the same. COPE is insistent that food sovereignty has to be preserved so that the price of food remains stable and affordable. Boosting food self-sufficiency has to be the way forward. Small farmers will have to be assisted with technical know-how, improved seeds, availability of equipment on easy hire, and community and marketing support as explained elsewhere in this policy. Decision making in support of small farmers should occur on the spot as the multi disciplinary team will be in a position to deal with all aspects of law simultaneously and therefore be able to issue a certificate authorising a programme or development. There should be no bureaucratic stonewalling. Full assistance must not only be given but

must be seen to be offered and given. Nothing less than that will be acceptable.

In order to assist small farmers the department must do what commercial franchisers practise. It must develop a model with plans, layout, standards, and business practices for road side markets cum motels cum resorts. These markets should supply farm produce, farm cooked food, fruit and vegetable juices, crafts, art, plants, herbs, essential oils, flowers etc. The market will be run as a co-operative with the department playing a facilitative role on a planned and sustained basis. Every market should have volunteer local entrepreneurs serving as friends of the co-operatives to ensure that the highest standards are maintained and that the business is profitable and sustainable. The fact that motor vehicles pass up and down will allow for the ready and cost free marketing of the produce and the products of the area. Skills training in keeping bees, extracting juices, preparing foods hygienically, extracting essential oils, making yoghurts, butter, cheeses, baking bread and other activities must occur on a pre-programmed basis. The roadside markets must achieve high popularity for their unique home grown products. Developing motels alongside the markets will allow rural communities to enhance their earning capacities.

The use of residues from the market will have to be used to maintain earthworm farms for ecological farming practices. Bio-degradable wastes from the market and adjoining towns should be used to make composts or create bio-fuels. Dance, drama and music should also be appropriately incorporated.

Rural markets should occur at least every two hundred kilometres. A multi disciplinary panel should evaluate the site for optimal sustainable multi-dimensional development using the CSIR tool for assessing sustainability. The aesthetic appeal of the markets must



register positively with road users. Such markets should be open around the clock to provide travellers with a refreshing and compulsory stopping point.

Any agricultural producer experiencing stress must be enrolled into the scheme so that the benefits flow to the farmer as well as the consumer. The point that should be borne in mind is that developed countries are helping their farmers with subsidies. South Africa does not have the resources to do that. COPE policy on agriculture therefore requires the Department to think innovatively and to act creatively, expeditiously and flexibly to help farmers become viable and to encourage all land occupiers to use the land productively and sustainably.

Such market sites should also be evaluated for developing police control centres to enhance crime and traffic control in respect of hijacking, drug and human trafficking, overloading, un-roadworthy vehicles, speeding, stolen vehicles, unlicensed firearms, drunken drivers, and driving without resting.

Thinking out of the box to cover many bases as possible in order to achieve a multiplicity of objectives is the ideal of COPE's policy across all departments. Departments own nothing and their responsibilities are the sum total of the whole, not just its parts.

25. IMPLEMENTATION

While COPE wishes to have the best possible policies to serve South Africa, it is important for an implementation plan to be created and for management to buy into it. To begin with, implementing new policies will require that management gives consideration to processes, systems and integration. The biggest failure of government has been its inability to get departments to act in a co-operative and integrated manner to deliver lasting and sustainable solutions. This problem has to be addressed decisively once and for all.

COPE has been concerned to keep what has been developed and is working in place so that there is continuity and stability. At the same time it is equally concerned about real benefits from investment and government's ability to expand training and work opportunities for the people of South Africa. The lay out of its policies makes it a whole lot easier for a portfolio committee to carry out its oversight duties. It will test each structure against the target it sets, the resources it consumes, and the output and outcomes it achieves.

All policies, very importantly, have to be assessed for the impact that they have on people, processes and systems. COPE will require that its policies be subjected to intense scrutiny in order that efficiency is enhanced considerably and that the return on investment is clearly evident.

The management of the DTI as well as of each of the entities under its influence will need to develop and submit an implementation plan, a time frame and a list of the people who will be managing it. If relocation and redeployment is required, the plan will specify how this will be done. The communication strategy will have to be fully developed, tested and explained.

The administration will indicate where the project office will be established to allow for optimal oversight to take place. Concentrated focus will be given to quality, budget issues, monitoring processes, verifying results and rectifying anything that was being incorrectly done. Project plans will need to be updated on a monthly basis and submitted for approval to the relevant role players.

Documents relating to the implementation process and changes to process and system workflows will be maintained to facilitate oversight.



26. THINK TANK

A think tank made up of government officials, academia, role players in society, investors and NGO's should use the ICT forum to hold an annual discussion and debate each January on issues of policy, integration, governance, management, strategy, economics, corruption, science, technology and any other issues of relevance. The Think Tank will function outside the immediate sphere of government and be headed on a rotational basis by anyone who is outside of government. The Department and the entities will use a democratic and transparent process to elect a Visionary Task Team to participate in the think tank.

Its findings will be submitted to all political parties to consider and take up.