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SAIF and DALRRD sign off on Phase 1 of rebuilding regulatory capacity within Act 36

The Strategic Agricultural Input Forum (SAIF) and the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) signed a letter of engagement on 20 September 2022, marking the acceptance of a gap analysis conducted in terms of the status of the regulatory capacity within the Directorate Agricultural Input Control (AIC). The signing lays the foundation for developing an operational plan to address these gaps and rebuild regulatory capacity within DALRRD's AIC.

The trade associations responsible for the respective agricultural input sectors represented under Act No. 36 of 1947 joined forces in May 2020 to form SAIF and currently includes AFMA, CropLife SA, Fertasa, Pet Food Industry Association of Southern Africa (PFI), Plant Science Consultants' Association (PSCA), Renderers South Africa (RSA), the South African Animal Health Association (SAAHA), South African Bioproducts Organisation (SABO), South African Pest Control Association (SAPCA), HORTGRO and the Citrus Growers' Association (CGA).

According to De Wet Boshoff, chairperson of SAIF, the signing of the gap analysis is a momentous milestone and testament to the spirit of building partnerships. This was acknowledged by DALRRD director-general Mooketsa Ramasodi, who described the gap analysis as a sterling piece of work accomplished between the two partners since the establishment of SAIF.

The gap analysis was developed during several workshops and engagements, delivering a top-class document that identifies critical gaps in the regulatory framework and the necessary capacity to manage the framework, with the full support of both partners.

The immediate priority and items to be addressed in the gap analysis will be closing those gaps that cause backlogs in product registrations and registration renewals from the capacity gaps within the AIC.

In the medium term, the partnership will identify and deploy tools and processes to streamline the submission, validation and processing of future registration applications to create a sustainable regulatory environment.

In the longer term, the partnership will identify and propose a new regulatory environment for agricultural inputs in South Africa. This environment will support new technology introduction, enable agricultural production, promote employment, support the production and export of farm produce, and ultimately contribute to food security in South Africa.

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