



## **EFF STATEMENT ON THE PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURAL LAND BILL'S PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Monday, 03 July 2023

The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) acknowledges the current public hearings on the Preservation and Development of Agricultural Land (PDAL) Bill. We categorically reject any unjust and undemocratic preservation of agricultural land that aims to criminalise landlessness and land occupation.

The presence of a law aimed at preserving land solely for agricultural use raises questions regarding its relevance, particularly in light of the pressing issue of land scarcity faced by those living in unsanitary informal settlements.

The existing uncontrolled and often unregulated urban migration necessitates a deliberate and comprehensive approach by municipalities to identify, allocate, and acquire land for the purpose of meeting the growing demands for human settlement and housing.

It is therefore contradictory that there is a significant demand for land among the landless population who seek suitable residential spaces, while agricultural land remains protected under the existing legislation.

As the EFF, we also firmly believe that if there is a significant amount of privately-owned land that is not being utilised for agricultural purposes or not reaching its full potential, it should be made available for public use by implementing expropriation without compensation, thereby freeing it from private ownership.

Our gravest apprehension, however, is that this PDAL Bill is purposefully crafted to enact legislative measures aimed at effectively barricading and isolating the land surrounding towns and cities, hindering its occupation in response to the EFF's resolute call for land occupation.

The EFF strongly advocates for a government-convened National Summit to establish an Agricultural Sector Plan. This summit will provide a crucial platform for discussing, formulating, and advocating for a comprehensive agreement at the national and provincial levels. The plan will address the social, economic, and environmental objectives for the sustainable growth and development of the agricultural sector.

Spatial Agricultural Plans specific to each local municipality will be crafted through extensive participation from the farming community, civil society, community organisations, and the wider public.

The preservation, development, and sustainable utilisation of agricultural land hold immense significance in safeguarding food security. However, this pursuit must be undertaken with a comprehensive approach that acknowledges and balances the diverse needs of society, without unjustly denying the landless masses their rightful access to liveable and expansive land.

The EFF supports policy which emphasises a balanced distribution and use of all types of land. This distribution and use should be adequately spread between land identified for residential, industrial, commercial as well as for religious and spiritual needs and purposes of the people.

The EFF fervently urges the citizens of South Africa to actively participate in these PDAL hearings and vehemently oppose the passing of this bill. It is imperative that we steadfastly uphold our commitment to land occupation and the pursuit of expropriation without compensation.

**ISSUED BY THE ECONOMIC FREEDOM FIGHTERS**

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