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**VP Iyambo wants more Cuban aquaculture experts**

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Vice-President Dr Nickey Iyambo has implored the visiting Cuban Minister for Food and Industry, Maria del Carmen Concepcion, to provide Namibia with more aquaculture experts.

Iyambo made the call during Concepcion's courtesy call at the vice-president's office yesterday.

Currently there are three Cuban aquaculture experts in Namibia. Iyambo said the Namibia fresh water fish farming sector has the potential to alleviate poverty, enhance food security and create employment.

"Don't get false hopes for Namibia because you came during the rainy season," he said. He added that in the food sector, because of a general lack of rain, Namibia is also very much thinking of fresh water fisheries.

Concepcion has been in the country since last Friday.

During the courtesy call Concepcion was accompanied by her Namibian counterpart, the Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources Bernard Esau and Cuban ambassador to Namibia, Giraldo Mazola.

During her stay Concepcion visited Meatco, Namibia Breweries, Namport and Tunacor Fishing.

On his part, Minister Esau said that the collaboration between the two countries had come a long way since the time Namibia was fighting for liberation and independence.

Esau said there is a standing cooperation agreement between both governments, thus furthering Namibia's economic independence.

"As we speak there is a MoU between the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources in Namibia and the Ministry of Food and Industry in Cuba," he said.

According to him, the MoU identifies areas of cooperation such as aquaculture, training, exploitation of marine resources and enterprises cooperation.

Esau further announced that both countries agreed to establish a joint technical committee that will develop mechanisms which will ensure the attainment of agreed action points with respect to the aforementioned areas.

“Let me emphasize here that the mandate of the joint technical committee starts immediately from the day that the committee members are appointed and let there be no delay in that regard,” he said.

Meanwhile, another Cuban expert who arrived in Namibia last year in February is currently based at Epalela fish farm where he is continuing with the improvement of fish production. Staff members are now able to operate the fish feed machine and during the expert’s stay from 2013 to 2015 he supervised the production of 386 tons of fish feed.

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