ROCHE BOIS - PIG BREEDING

(No. B/274) Mr J. C. Barbier (Fifth Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security whether, in regard to pig breeding in the region of Cocotterie, in Roche Bois, he will state if the relocation thereof to St Martin is being contemplated and, if so, indicate when.

Mr Seeruttun: Madam Speaker, I am informed that the site at St Martin is saturated and the existing waste disposal system does not allow for additional breeders to be accommodated there.

My Ministry is proposing to establish specific breeding zones across the island and once the land has been identified and all facilities set up, consideration will be given to the relocation of pig breeders operating outside St Martin and Bassin Requin.

Mr Barbier: Madam Speaker, this is not the first time I am raising this issue in this august Assembly and I was told some time back that once the site will be made available at St Martin, these breeders will move there. I am surprised today that there is no more land available. So, may I ask the hon. Minister to give a top priority to this problem? Today life is becoming very, very impossible in this area where the region is becoming more and more densely populated. May I ask the hon. Minister to give an urgency to this matter and to see to it that site be available for the transfer of pig breeding outside the residential zone?

Mr Seeruttun: Madam Speaker, I must inform the House that, following the outbreak of the disease of the African Swine Fever in the year 2007, those pig breeders who were in Roche Bois and in its vicinity were asked to be transferred to St Martin. There were 77 pig breeders and of those 77 pig breeders only 71 opted to move to St Martin and 6 were not keen to move to St Martin. To date only 26 have moved and are doing breeding activities at St Martin; the rest is still yet to be moved to St Martin. There is some resistance of some breeders to move to St Martin. But like I said of the 77 initially, 71 agreed to move to St Martin but they have not all moved over there yet. With regard to the new breeders who have come after that outbreak of the African Swine Fever, those new breeders won’t be considered to be moved to St Martin because that area is now already allocated to whoever was interested in that activity during the time that we set up that region for pig breeding purposes.

Madam Speaker: Yes, hon. Ameer Meea!

Mr Ameer Meea: Thank you, Madam Speaker, I am sure the hon. Minister is well aware that this relocation process has long been in the cards and couldn’t be performed yet for several reasons. Can I ask the hon. Minister if he could advise his officers to perform a new survey - an updated one - on the number of pig breeders actually in the Roche Bois region? Many of them have stopped their activities, but those of them who are still there are reluctant to move outside this region. As you know, it is a densely residential area; therefore, can I ask the hon. Minister if he could look urgently into the matter?
Mr Seeruttun: I will look into it, Madam Speaker.