



**For the
sustainable
use of wildlife**



**Conseil International de la Chasse et de la Conservation du Gibier
Internationaler Rat zur Erhaltung des Wildes und der Jagd
International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation
Международный Совет по Охоте и Охране Животного Мира**

AFRICAN INDABA
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The Elephants in the Room

Vernon Booth

Over the last few months there has been an enormous amount of debate surrounding sustainable use, wildlife trade, hunting and bans. There has also been a flurry of activity on the international stage of how to tackle the upsurge in illegal activities including crushing of ivory stocks and offers of huge amounts of money from the donor community to bolster law enforcement efforts. This will culminate in a high powered meeting to be held in Botswana in December to discuss what can be done to curb elephant poaching.

Feeding into this furnace have been strong opinions singing the praises of the recent closure of hunting in Botswana, and vociferous sentiments which describe the pros and cons of whether to trade in rhino horn and ivory products. All hollow victories.

For those who work in the wildlife arena on a day-to-day basis, the support for the removal of yet another tool from the suite that is used to support wildlife conservation outside of protected areas, like well regulated and supervised hunting, is depressing.

I do not attack the authors who do not support or are against hunting. Their articles and papers are well written and within the framework of their knowledge. Their conclusions are perfectly logical, given their protectionist outlook and their confessed or implicated hatred for sustainable utilisation. The trouble is that their focus is often too narrow, often blurred by emotions that hide the reality. The resulting picture therefore is only postcard size. They either choose to ignore the underlying causes which are the reasons why poaching thrives in rural Africa or try to cling to the *status quo*.

The reality is that despite the bravado in the media, the void left by the closure of hunting is, in all probability, not going to be filled by non-hunting tourist enterprises, at least not in the thousands of "miles and miles of African bush" that were once viable hunting concessions. These are deemed unattractive to the normal photo tourist (and unprofitable by the tourist companies). Instead indiscriminate poaching will replace legal and supervised hunting. Elephant poaching operations do not need high-tech back-up – mere poison attacks, as recently seen in Zimbabwe and Mozambique, and the ubiquitous AK47 work well enough in the African bush where governance is diminished. On the other side of the spectrum, the well-protected rhino populations in South Africa are under sophisticated high-tech attacks, and losses are exceeding all previously imagined.

Trade bans for ivory and horn will not stop this disastrous development: the economic incentives and rewards offered are far too tempting for the local poachers and their international masters-in-crime. Together, they fill the gap left by ineffective trading policies. Despite of the obvious failure of trade bans, most international animal welfare groups and quite a few serious conservationists feverishly lobby for their continuation.

The reality is that those people that live alongside elephants welcome the men who will provide them with cash to acquire motor bikes or smart phones. If the people who live alongside elephants don't get the cash through opportunities provided by regulated sustainable use, they probably and understandably will be prepared to sell information and offer otherwise assistance to those with sinister motives. Trying to suppress the demand for the paraphernalia of modern live in



Motorcycles and Smart Phones

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rural Africa within the existing policy framework is impossible. Those that advocate increasing the number of anti-poaching boots on the ground, strict law enforcement and stiff penalties in the fight against elephant poaching do not understand that this narrow focus does not offer solutions to fulfill the understandable economic desires of rural Africans. Therefore all these efforts combined will not only be unsustainable, but also ineffective. There will be many elephants in the room at the meeting in Botswana. It remains to be seen whether those that are involved can see the big picture on the wall instead of the postcard in their suit pocket.

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Shooting or Hunting: What is it to be?

Gerhard Damm and Peter Flack

More than a decade ago, representatives and leadership of organized professional hunting in South Africa condemned the practice of shooting canned lions in the country and they were in good company with practically all associations and clubs in Africa and around the world in agreement. We reported quite frequently on "canned shooting" issues and, when researching the subject, I found in [African Indaba Volume 4 # 5](#) (September 2006, page 9), the article "*The Shooting of Captive Bred Lions*" – the subtitle reading "*PHASA¹ Policy Statement issued May 2006*".

One phrase from this Statement deserves to be mentioned "*.... any member who may be involved in the shooting of captive bred lions is requested to refrain from such activities or resign (his/her) membership of PHASA. Furthermore, PHASA is going public with this stance. A letter will be sent out to the media....*". Reference was made to a PHASA Policy Statement of 1999, which reads under point 1 that "*PHASA hereby states categorically and unequivocally that it does not consider the practice of "canned lion shooting" to be a form of hunting*" and under point 4 that "*PHASA deems an animal to be canned, when that animal cannot sustain itself, breed freely and be hunted under the principles of fair chase*".

Now we heard that PHASA has made an about turn and adopted the position of the South African Predator Breeders' Association ([SAPA](#)) on this matter without alteration (African Indaba has a copy of the PHASA document dated 20.11.2013). What used to be canned lion shooting is now called "Hunting of Captive Bred Lions". Sounds better, doesn't it? But it still remains the same old

thing. It reminds me of the old Grouch Marx statement, "Of course I have principles. But if you don't like these, I have others!" Something like this must have been on the mind of those who elected to embrace the money-making machine of canned lion shooting as old school outfitters and professional hunters were apparently steamrollered by the vast majority of PHASA members who adopted the SAPA policy on lions. In this regard, we shouldn't forget the political support for this position by some of the Conservation/ Environmental departments in South Africa's nine provinces.

We often hear that the canned lion industry only exists because there is a high demand to shoot these poor beasts but you can probably also reverse this argument, at least to certain extent, if you look at the advertisements for lion "hunts" on the internet, which usually portrays a South

...PHASA has taken a very strong stand against the hunting of captive bred lions and we reject the hunting of any captive bred large predator under any conditions....We don't want canned lions! It discredits hunting and it serves no conservation purpose! ... (from a speech at the Limpopo Wildlife Exp, 2005)

Stewart Dorrington
PHASA President, 2005 - 2007

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African lion "hunt" as a breath-taking adventure. Another argument claims that *"the hunting [sic] of captive bred lions assists the conservation of wild lions by reducing hunting pressure on them"*.

Well, there is indeed a high demand for hunting a lion in the African wilderness. But lion hunting and their annual quotas are tightly regulated and controlled in all range countries which allow lion hunting. The quotas in these countries will always find eager hunters willing to pay the high prices for the privilege of hunting a wild lion; even if the chances of harvesting a mature male lion are 50/50 at best and not a few hunters go home empty-handed. This category of hunters will continue to hunt wild African lions and thus contribute to lion conservation in more than one way,

This cannot be said of the other type of "hunter" who opts for the "guaranteed" shooting of canned South African lions. Their money goes to the lion breeder and the professional hunter and not a cent finds its way into lion conservation. It is a well-established fact that this kind of lion breeding has no conservation value. If the argument of reduced hunting pressure on wild individuals by hunting captive bred animals has any validity, the question must be asked why do we not then hunt captive-bred large carnivores like grizzlies in North America or brown bears in Eurasia?

¹ PHASA = Professional Hunters Association of South Africa

WWF Recognizes Namibian Conservancies for Outstanding Conservation Achievements

Source: The Namibian

Chief Emeka Anyaoku, former President of WWF International presented the Namibian President, Hifikepunye Pohamba, with a WWF "Gift to the Earth Award" – the second the country has received in a ceremony on October 25th. The Gift to the Earth is WWF's most prestigious Award for governments, companies or public sector institutions. Over the past two decades, the people and government of Namibia have developed a communal conservancy movement, whereby local communities are fully involved in the ownership and management of their natural resources and wildlife – for the benefit of people and nature alike. "Namibia's achievements are impressive and inspiring," said Jim Leape, Director General of WWF International. "I congratulate President Pohamba, the Namibian government and support organizations, and all the dedicated local community members who have demonstrated the concept of people living in harmony with nature, WWF's global mission."

There are 79 communal conservancies – community wildlife management units – across Namibia, covering one fifth of the country's land and involving one in ten of its citizens. Wildlife populations in conservancies are recovering, providing the basis for successful environmentally responsible tourism ventures and the sustainable use of wildlife. The poaching of elephants and rhinos has also been dramatically reduced.

"The strong commitment to nature conservation of the Namibian Government and people is truly unique," said Jim Leape. "Namibia was the first country in Africa to enshrine conservation in its Constitution, and almost half of its land is under some form of conservation management." "Namibia's empowerment of rural communities to manage their wildlife resources – while providing incentives for them to do so – is visionary." Countries across Africa, Asia and Latin America are now studying the Namibian model of communal conservation to learn how they might apply it themselves.

This is the second important award, which recognizes the Namibian achievements. During the Conference of the Convention for Biological Diversity (CBD) in India in October 2012 the conservancies had received already the prestigious CIC Markhor Prize. It was given for the conservancies' contribution to biodiversity through sustainable use of wildlife including hunting. WWF does not mention anywhere that hunting tourism is the major economic driving force behind the success of the conservancy movement. Without hunting the conservancies would not have taken off economically.

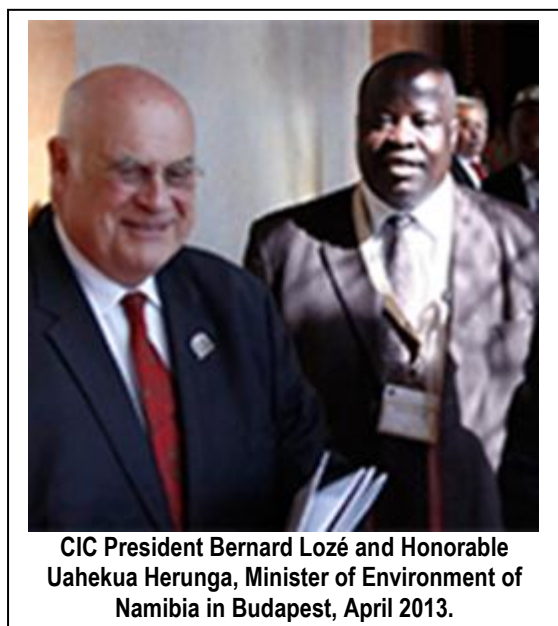
The Republic of Namibia Joins the CIC as State Member

CIC Press Release

The International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation CIC proudly announced that the Republic of Namibia has become a State Member of the CIC. The official declaration of the Namibian Government was sent to CIC President Bernard Lozé in October. The Republic of Namibia decided on the CIC membership after a high-level government mission participated in the 60th CIC General Assembly and the World Forum on Sustainable Hunting in Budapest, Hungary earlier this year. The Honorable Uahekua Herunga, Minister of Environment of Namibia, addressed the CIC General Assembly in the Hungarian Parliament. John Kasaona, a Namibian conservation champion of world-fame, inspired the audience with a captivating rendition of the conservation successes in his country.

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CIC President Bernard Lozé and Honorable Uahekua Herunga, Minister of Environment of Namibia in Budapest, April 2013.

This last October Bernard Lozé visited Namibia with CIC Director General, Tamás Marghescu, and President of the CIC Policy and Law Division, Jan Heino. The CIC delegation participated in the 19th Session of the [African Forestry and Wildlife Commission](#) of the *Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations* in Windhoek,

The Republic of Namibia is one of the leaders in sustainable wildlife management on the African continent. With about a third of its territory under conservation, and an extremely rich biodiversity, Namibia has always nurtured and balanced the protection and sustainable utilization of its wild resources. Its communal conservancy program has delivered outstanding conservation successes benefitting the environment, society and economy of the country. The exemplary cooperation of the private, public and community sector is a strong pillar of Namibia's conservation success.

The CIC officially recognized Namibia's conservation endeavors in 2012 at the 11th Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity by awarding the [Markhor Prize](#) for its Community Based Natural Resources Management Programme. Namibia represents an example of a country

empowered by conscious and sustainable conservation practices. The CIC is very proud to welcome Namibia amongst its State Members!

CIC Markhor Award 2014 – Extended Deadline for Nominations

The CIC announced that in response to several incoming requests the deadline for nominations for the CIC Markhor Award has been extended to **31 January 2014** (download [Award Selection Criteria](#)).

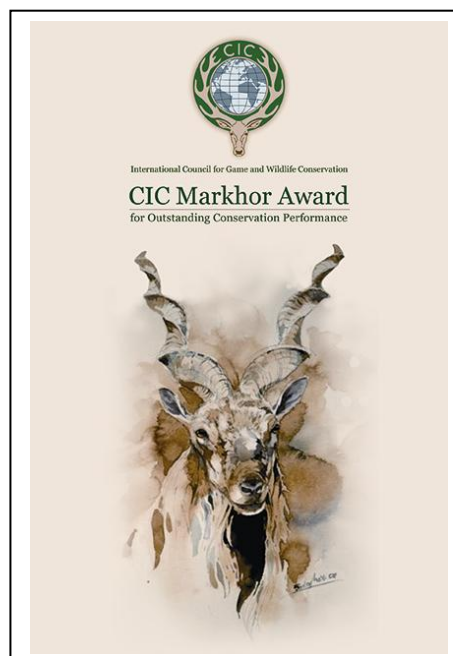
African Indaba readers are requested to spread the news about this opportunity. Let us celebrate those, who show to the world that sustainable hunting really is a conservation tool and a solution against species decline!

The CIC Markhor Award honors a conservation project of multinational relevance that links the conservation of biodiversity and human livelihoods through application of sustainable use principles. The Markhor Award is granted every two years at the occasion of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

Call for nominations: The last Markhor Award prize ceremony in 2012 in Hyderabad, India was a great achievement with a lot of positive publicity and feedback. The winner of the prize was announced by the Secretary General of the CBD. This high-level event was witnessed by the global leadership of conservation, highlighting sustainable use as the second pillar of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

Preparations are already under way for the 12th Conference of Parties to the CBD in PyeongChang, Republic of Korea, in October 2014. The CIC and its partners will organize at least a similar or even more prominent event to celebrate the 2014 Markhor Award.

The CIC needs your help in finding excellent candidates for the prize. Please see the eligibility criteria and consider if you have in mind an appropriate applicant and let the [CIC Headquarters](#) know about it with a short, maximum one page descriptive justification for the nomination.



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Germany Supports Conservation and Anti-Poaching

Rolf Baldus

Ten years after a massive German support program for the Selous Game Reserve in Tanzania has expired, the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) in Berlin has announced the start of a new one. Germany will also get engaged in wildlife conservation in other Tanzanian wildlife areas, in particular the Serengeti.

According to the Ministry the poaching crisis is threatening the continued existence of elephants and rhinos in the wild and also, as a result, the livelihoods of local people. For Tanzania and the other countries affected by poaching, one of their most important natural resources – the huge wilderness with its wealth of species – is at stake. With nature tourism as one of the country's biggest sources of foreign currency, Tanzania's economic development is also under threat.

"That is why poaching is also a development policy problem that calls for close cooperation between governments and civil society in order to find a solution," said Hans-Jürgen Beerfeltz, State Secretary at the BMZ. "In order to get on top of the enormous amount of poaching going on, the problem needs to be addressed at several levels," said the State Secretary. "First of all the local surveillance must be improved and the local people must be involved in the management of the protected areas. Secondly, a better check needs to be kept on the routes used to smuggle ivory and rhinoceros horn. And, thirdly, consumers need to be made more aware of what is at stake. We are now making an active contribution towards addressing the first issue, thus significantly increasing the likelihood for poachers that they will get caught. With these efforts we are supporting the country's legal system, strengthening Tanzania's economy and improving the security situation for all, including those living near the protected areas."

This support is part of a broad-based commitment by the German government to preserving biodiversity and fighting poaching. This commitment is being realized via the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and KfW Development Bank working in cooperation with local partners and civil society.

As a first step the BMZ is providing funds to facilitate the purchase of a surveillance aircraft with all the latest technology, which can be used by Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS) in Tanzania to patrol the protected areas from the air. A Cessna Enforcer, equipped with the latest surveillance technology, will be available in about eight months. It will be stationed in Tanzania and will be operated by the FZS in consultation with its Tanzanian partners. The FZS will also be responsible for the running costs. The FZS will make the aircraft available to Tanzania National Parks and the Wildlife Division. It will also be available for deployment in other countries if the authorities responsible for their protected areas request its use.

In addition presently some €23 million in development funding has been committed for the preservation of the Serengeti's unique ecosystem. Germany has supported other conservation initiatives in recent years. Major financial inputs were provided for example for the Peace Parks program in Southern Africa (Kavango Zambezi TFCA: €35.5 million, Great Limpopo TFCA: €33.9 million; Malawi-Zambia TFCA: €18 million; Training of scouts for KAZA and Great Limpopo: €10 million)..

Trophy Imports to Europe

Rolf Baldus

The World Conservation Monitoring Centre of the United Nations Environmental Program has prepared a study for the Scientific Review Group (SRG) of the European Commission titled "**Assessing potential impacts of trade in trophies imported for hunting purposes to the EU-27 on conservation status of Annex B species**". Recommendations from report:

Trophy hunting is often sustainable, as is evident for many of the case studies highlighted in this report, and it generally serves as a useful conservation tool. Against this backdrop, there is a basis for the current derogation for hunting trophies, as it removes unnecessary administrative burden and reduces the risk of over-regulating/banning trade in cases where, overall, trophy hunting is beneficial for wildlife conservation. There are however cases, such as some populations of Lion *Panthera leo* or Argali *Ovis ammon* for example, where serious concerns exist about the sustainability of trophy hunting. In these cases, and particularly where hunting trophies represent a substantial proportion of the trade, an assessment of hunting trophy imports may be warranted as part of a strategy to work with range States towards establishing appropriate management and sustainable use programs. The SRG may need the legislative support to identify these cases and subject them to appropriate EU import restrictions (e.g. SRG negative opinions), recognizing that trade in hunting trophies may in some cases merit different EU decisions than trade for other purposes.

It is therefore recommended that an amendment to the current derogation is made applicable only to species/country combinations where SRG concerns have been raised over the sustainability of trophy hunting. This should however not be restricted to a list of species for which concerns have been raised to date, but allow for species to be

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assessed as soon as concerns arise, without the requirement of an amendment of the Regulations. The SRG may want to explore whether Article 57.1 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 865/2006 could contain an additional condition to this effect, which specifies that the derogation only applies where no current suspension or negative opinion formed by the SRG are in place.

It is further suggested that the potential unintended negative effects of restrictions imposed on the import of hunting trophies are considered and, where possible, measures put in place to mitigate such effects, such as provision of technical and capacity support to range States. Consideration should also be given to extending the amendment to trophies traded for personal purposes to avoid the potential use of the latter purpose code as a regulatory loophole. The present draft Regulations refer to an import permit being required for the first introduction into the EU only, but it may be administratively clearer to refer to any introduction.

Reporting Member States should report hunting trophies in accordance with the Guidelines for the presentation and submission of CITES annual reports (CITES Notification No. 2011/019). In particular, all the parts that reasonably add up to one animal (e.g. horns, skull, cape, backskin, tail and feet) should be reported as one trophy when shipped together. The same rule applies where at least two trophy parts of an animal are shipped together (e.g. skin and skull). When any one of these parts are shipped alone, however, the trade should be recorded individually on permits (e.g. one skin).

Should stricter measures for hunting trophies be introduced, it would be advisable to monitor trade for personal purposes more closely, to identify any potential shifts in trade resulting from this change. Some hunting trophy items were reported as wild-taken from countries outside the known distribution range of the species concerned or relating to introduced populations. The SRG may therefore wish to seek a common approach to the use of source codes for mammal hunting trophies derived from game farms.

Download the complete document [here](#).

The Development of Modern Bow Hunting in South Africa

Stewart Dorrington

About three decades ago, bow hunting as a sport hunting activity was unheard of in South Africa. I myself had never heard of a compound bow, re-curve or long bow as recreational hunting tools. Hunting with a bow and arrow was prohibited by law in SA until the late 1980s. The compound bow was still relatively unknown in SA as a hunting weapon prior to this. However, the increasing popularity of bow hunting in the US gave cause to the authorities here to do their own investigations.

In 1985 the Natal Parks Board appointed 2 senior rangers to research bow hunting on South African game. Tony Tomkinson and Spud Ludbrook were given this task. They were well placed to do so as at that stage, the NPB had to cull many animals on an annual basis. They hunted and shot many animals with different bow draw weights as well as with different broad heads. Everything was recorded, from the impala to the buffalo they shot, as well as the effects of the different bows and arrows on these animals. Penetration through bone, angles and distances were all measured, compared and recorded. It was through their work that the guidelines for legal bow hunting was established in SA and still to this day, this research forms the basis of our comprehensive bow hunting policy in our nature conservation legislation.

Some interesting facts from this research which dispels some myths about bow hunting

- 29.7 seconds was the time taken to kill an animal with an arrow shot into the chest whereas with a 30-06 rifle the average time to death was 22.3 seconds
- The distance travelled before dropping was 100 meters with bow and 70 meters with rifle
- With an 80lb bow the average kill rate was 89% whereas with a rifle it was 92% (www.thearcher.com)

It was clear that the right bow in good hands was as efficient at killing an animal as a rifle. A razor sharp broadhead is the key to the bow and arrows humane and speedy kill. A sharp broadhead causes a clean wound, profuse bleeding or hemorrhaging and relatively little damage to the surrounding tissue (important when comes to recovery of wounded animals) whereas a rifle relies on hydrostatic shock, massive bone and tissue damage which kills the animal.

It was through this ground-breaking work that bow hunting was legalized in South Africa and later in Botswana, Zimbabwe and Namibia. Although hunting with a bow and arrow remains a restricted activity in the legislation, it can be conducted on a property with the necessary permits from the relevant Nature Conservation authorities. The landowner is given permission to conduct bow hunting on his property. The hunter does not need a license to hunt with a bow in South Africa. All bow hunting in South Africa takes place on private land. There is very little hunting on government and provincial reserves and very seldom do they allow bow hunting, especially where tourists visit.

Towards the end of the 1980's, bow hunting was still relatively unheard of in South Africa. However, it was popular in the USA and was rapidly growing in popularity. The demand from bow hunters in the USA led to some outfitters in South Africa to cater specifically to these bow hunters. This was the start of the bow hunting revolution in South Africa. It didn't take long for bows to start appearing in hunting and outdoor shops in South Africa. It was still a new form of hunting

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and most hunters had never even tried it, but it took hold on the hunting population and has grown tremendously in popularity in the last decade. It continues to grow today. Not only has bow hunting become popular with hunters, it has become increasingly popular with landowners.

There are numerous advantages of bowhunting over rifle hunting for the landowner and safari operator. It can generate more income from a given quota than can rifle hunting in that you can sell more hunting days. I soon discovered that the economics of bow hunting your own property far outweighed that of rifle hunting. As shot opportunities are fewer for bow hunters than rifle hunters, fewer animals were harvested per hunter and thus we sold more hunting days to take off the same quota of animals! On average a bow hunter was taking 6 animals in a 10-day hunt under natural conditions on our property, whereas a rifle hunter would take double that. If our annual harvest was 140 animals of varying species I could now book around 220 bow hunting days as opposed to around 120 rifle hunting days. At an average of \$350 per day the difference was an extra 100 days at \$350 or \$35 000, with not much increase in costs.

It lessens the need to travel as bow hunters requirements can more easily be met than rifle hunters. I had also found that I made more money hunting an impala on our own property than taking a client to hunt a buffalo or leopard elsewhere. Mostly one covers your costs and make a small profit when hunting out and having to pay concession fees, trophy fees, travelling fees etc The costs of such safaris is high but the profits are often small, especially in South Africa where you have to pay a private landowner.

There is less competition for clients: The rifle hunting market for plains game in South Africa was very competitive and few safari operators were fully booked. Bow hunting was a niche market and was marketed through different channels than SCI in the USA. Things have changed over the years and now bow hunting is marketed at all the main conventions in the USA and not only the bow hunting conventions. However, for many years it was easier for bow hunting only operators to book clients than it was for rifle hunting operators.

It improves trophy quality: Bowhunters are normally far less selective as to size of horns and trophy quality than rifle hunters. The bow hunters are generally far less discriminating and will in most cases harvest any mature male of a species that presents a killing shot opportunity. Even if they see a magnificent kudu in the veld, they cannot make it come to the blind nor can they get off the vehicle and simply shoot it at 150 yards. So those big kudu are always out there now and breeding. We have been doing bow hunting only for 15 years on our property and we still are taking off wild animals with a bow that would set the record books alight. A bow hunting property that is well managed will find it easier to maintain trophy quality on a sustainable basis than if the same quota was hunted annually with a rifle.

There is little disturbance: Another factor that we considered and liked is that bow hunting is silent and does not disturb the game much. This factor is especially relevant to those game ranchers that do photographic tourism and is another reason why bow hunting has become so popular amongst landowners too. The game remains accustomed to vehicles and do not associate them with hunters. Bow hunting and ecotourism are more compatible than rifle hunting and ecotourism. This has led to a growing supply of bow hunting destinations in South Africa to both the local hunters and international hunters.

Firearms Control Act (FCA): What further fuelled the bow hunting industry in South Africa was the implementation of our draconian "Firearms Control Act" or FCA. This act made owning a firearm an onerous task and obtaining licences became and remains a task of note. Many avid hunters in South Africa then explored bow hunting and many have become bow hunting enthusiasts. We now have bow shops all over the country, even in the small towns. No licences are required. Although there are minimum specifications for bows and arrows for differing species, the authorities lack the capacity to monitor the local market. It is up to the landowner to monitor what happens on his property and to his animals, and most landowners do so as it all has economic implications and he risks losses if he doesn't.

Wounded animals recover: There has been some criticism of bow hunting as the wounding rate is perceived to be higher than that of rifle hunting. The figures given in the research will show otherwise, that the wounding rate is comparable to rifle hunting. However, there is another side. The physical recovery of wounded animals is very high. If not fatally wounded, the animal usually makes a full recovery. An arrow does not cause the hydrostatic shock, nor the destructive bone and tissue damage that a bullet causes. The wound is usually clean as the broadhead blades are as sharp as razors and even slice through the ribs and smaller bones. The bone doesn't splinter into fragments and destroy tissue. The arrow usually falls out or snaps off immediately or shortly after impacting the animal. Many times we have shot animals years later and have recovered broadheads embedded and grown over in heavy bone, with the animal in full health and showing absolutely no ill effect of having been wounded. I imagine the recovery is also aided as the animal has not been severely stressed by the wound as many times the animals do not know where or what hit them, and even after an animal has been shot, the rest of the herd often mingles around not knowing what the fuss is all about.

Taking the above advantages into consideration, you can see why more and more landowners are offering bow hunting on their properties. It is a challenging and exciting form of hunting as one has to get so close to the prey. The number of local bow hunters in South Africa continues to grow year to year.

The bow does have some limitations. Around 20 years ago a moratorium was placed on hunting rhino with a bow. It was legal with the necessary permits, but it was discovered that the wounding rate was unacceptably high. There was little

objection from the landowners or hunting outfitters. In fact, no pachyderms may be legally hunted with a bow in South Africa. This comes from the recommendations of Tomkinson and Ludbrook back in 1985 and has never been challenged even though it is possible for a skilled and strong bowhunter to kill an elephant, rhino or hippo with a bow. The perceived likelihood of wounding remains unacceptably high.

Bow hunting in South Africa has evolved over the past 30 years, shaped by economic forces as well as social and political pressures and the parameters set by legislation. It has grown in popularity with local hunters as well as landowners and as a bow hunting destination for foreign bow hunters, primarily American, where bow hunting has been practiced for years. As long as hunting remains popular in South Africa, bow hunting will continue to grow as a challenging means of hunting.

It must also be mentioned that there is tremendous potential in Europe and elsewhere to grow this activity. It takes a change in mindset of those in charge of policy formulation, but with a bit of research and support, they can get all the information needed to justify this activity to the hunting fraternity as well as to the general public.

The information and statistics are all out there and it has all already been scrutinised in the USA and South Africa and passed the tests necessary to justify it as a legitimate form of hunting. It may also stimulate more people to become hunters, as it has done in South Africa.

Another reason to support bow hunting in Europe and other countries, is that it places another obstacle for the growing anti-hunting lobby to tackle. It is getting one back from them. We all know that the anti-hunting lobby is attempting to take down hunting bit by bit and if we give them more issues to deal with it will make their task of trying to stop hunting more difficult.

US Endangered Species Act: Southern White Rhino Listing

John J. Jackson, III www.conservationforce.org

On September 11, 2013, the US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) issued an "Interim Rule" listing of all southern white rhino (*Ceratotherium simum simum*) as threatened under the Endangered Species Act, ESA. 78 FR 55649. The listing was made effective immediately and without prior notice, or a call for comments. Comments are being accepted before the Interim Rule is made final, but the listing has the force of law now.

The Notice explains that the immediate "threatened" listing is made because of the similarity of appearance of the southern white rhino to those rhino that are listed as "endangered" under the ESA. All other rhino are already ESA listed. Treating the southern white rhino as threatened "will substantially facilitate law enforcement actions to protect and conserve all endangered rhino species." The agency reports that "[o]n January 17, 2012, the OLE (Office of Law Enforcement of USFWS) requested that the southern white rhino be listed as a threatened species based on the similarity of appearance provisions of section 4(e) of the Act and our (FWS) implementing regulations at 50 CFR 17.50." The agency explains that the immediate listing without prior notice, a comment period and re-noticing of the rule is because "persons could seek to take advantage of the regulatory loophole caused by the similarity of appearance with the southern white rhino before this impending regulation under the Act became effective... (and) the Service reasonably believes a spike in the illegal trade and poaching of endangered rhino species could occur with this delay." A USFWS press release the day before the official Federal Register Notice, further explained that the similarity of appearance "has allowed traffickers to mislabel the horns of other protected rhino species as white rhino horn in an effort to evade restrictions on sale and transport."

Both the press release of the agency and the Federal Register Notice state that import permits for hunting trophies will not be required. ("The threatened designation will not change current permitting requirements for sport-hunted trophies of southern white rhino," says the press release, and "Therefore, a sport-hunted trophy of southern white rhino, legally taken and exported from South Africa or Swaziland would not require a separate ESA regulatory permit to import it into the United States" says the FR Notice.) The USFWS cites Section 9(c)(2) of the ESA, which provides that "non-commercial importation into the United States of threatened species that are listed under CITES Appendix II...are presumed not to be in violation of any provision of the Act or any regulation under the Act..."

So it is proposing that no import permit will be required for the rhino from South Africa and Swaziland, but the interim rule is not yet a final rule. Import permits are already required for white rhino imported from elsewhere under CITES because they are on Appendix I, not Appendix II.

The threatened listing does immediately prohibit the sale of white rhino horn in interstate commerce. Readers don't want to get caught selling it interstate or attempting to sell it interstate without a permit. ("[t]his interim rule will...make it illegal for any person...to deliver, receive, carry, transport, or ship southern white rhino...in foreign or interstate commerce...; sell or offer for sale in interstate and foreign commerce any specimen of southern white rhino.") It remains to be seen what interstate commercial transactions will be issued permits.

The rhino is not being listed because of its own status. Southern white rhino are at record numbers despite escalating poaching of all rhino. A "growing market demand is fuelling a dramatic increase in rhino poaching" and a "transition from ordinary poachers to groups has created additional challenges for law enforcement personnel". In 1895 the southern white rhino was considered extinct until a small population of less than 20 was discovered in Natal, South Africa. The population has since been built to more than 20,160 in 2012. This is thanks not only to the efforts of the South African government, but also private landowners.

The USFWS states that "[p]rivate landowners have made a large contribution toward rhino conservation through private ownership and custodian agreements on behalf of range states, and account for almost 25 percent of the African rhino populations....Private owners contribute roughly 20,000 sq. km. (4,942,110 acres) of land toward rhino conservation efforts." The Notice emphasizes the importance of these privately-owned lands and that "[t]he possible loss of these privately-owned lands has the potential to result in overcrowding or higher population densities within protected areas...which are already under siege from poachers." This reasoning and the tenor of the whole listing suggests that import permits or other restrictions on white rhino trophy hunting are not in the plans. The white rhino benefits from trophy hunting and needs that added, legitimate value more than ever.

The Challenge of Regulating Private Wildlife Ranches for Conservation in South Africa

Cousins, J. A., J. P. Sadler, and J. Evans. 2010. The challenge of regulating private wildlife ranches for conservation in South Africa. *Ecology and Society* 15(2): 28 <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol15/iss2/art28/>

The authors address the new attempts at regulating wildlife ranches on private land in South Africa. Although positive conservation impacts can be attributed to private wildlife ranching, there are a number of ecological consequences that often arise as a result of economic priorities. They present and analyze new national regulations aimed at coordinating provincial legislation and guiding the wildlife industry in a more conservationist direction, and examine tensions that have arisen between different socio-political scales as a result. Data were obtained through a desk-based study of legal documents and interviews with key stakeholders. The new regulations begin to address international obligations and national policy on biodiversity conservation by potentially combating a number of specific ecological problems associated with wildlife ranching. However, in practice, the regulations are a significant source of tension among stakeholders and will be challenging to implement. A key issue is competing agendas between incentive-driven ranchers and conservationist aims. It may be that in addressing the ecological problems at the margin, the new regulations will encourage some ranchers to convert their land away from conservation friendly land use.

The Southern African Wildlife College and Professional Hunter Training

Cleve Chene

A survey conducted across a number of SADC countries by the Southern African Wildlife College in 2009-2010 to identify training needs delivered some surprises. Structured training for professional hunters was unexpectedly highlighted as one of the pressing needs.

This issue was investigated by the College and it was discovered in July 2011 that professional hunting Unit Standards had already been established by a Standards Generating Body (SGB) and registered with the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) but no accredited training institution had up until that time put together a program for professional hunting based on these Unit Standards. The College decided to compile a program and added to the SAQA program a number of additional subjects which it was felt were missing. There was some initial scepticism and opposition from some of the established hunting schools and associations in South Africa. To cut a long story short the Professional Hunting Association of South Africa (PHASA) now endorses the course and will be sponsoring a trophy to the top student.

Training material was put together and submitted to CATHSSETA for approval and accreditation which was forthcoming in March 2012. It was decided to present the course over 18 months followed by a six month internship with an approved outfitter making the course a total of two years duration.

The Southern African Wildlife College is an ideal venue for presenting a professional hunting course. It has an established record of providing quality training, has state of the art facilities and is situated in a "big 5" training area.

The College has a vision of a professional hunter which extends way beyond that which has persisted in South Africa for many years. A professional hunter should not be an individual that just takes out foreign clients to shoot trophy size animals for remuneration. The potential contribution towards conservation vested in a professional hunter is far greater than just this. With the proper training professional hunters can have meaningful input into wildlife and habitat management, anti-poaching operations, disease surveillance, and social upliftment of rural communities. The College strives to train professional hunters that are a blend of hunter, guide, wildlife manager, and conservationists with the latter being the most important. The quality and scope of training was to be significantly expanded. Another aim was to train and equip people of color with the skills necessary to enter and compete in the industry in which there has been little transformation of note.

The number of students per course is limited to around 12. The reasons for this are to be able to give individual attention to students and to keep the group size manageable during practical bush training.

The first course started in July 2012 with a group of 10 students – 2 white students and the remainder of color. It is now nearly 18 months down the line – students are busy writing their final exams this month (November 2013). Students also do the "official" 10 day hunting school course (presented by David Sutherland of Sutherland Hunting Academy) as part of the course so as to comply with current legislation.

A list of subjects covered by the students during the 18 months is shown on the side.

Although there is a significant academic component to the course



a lot of emphasis is placed on practical skills. Over the 18 month period in addition to class time each student amasses close on 500 "bush hours" of practical work. Regular practice hunts are conducted with the students making up a typical hunting party of trackers, client and PH. Plains and dangerous game are tracked, stalked,

approached, an individual selected, the client set up and shot placement indicated. Students practically build blinds and bait for leopard and lion. They assist in culling operations to gain practical shooting experience and are trained in the use of a variety of firearms and calibers (including black powder). In their final semester they do a reloading course. Students also do a full on bowhunting module.

SAWC Syllabus

Animal studies
Plant studies
Basic ecology
Ethology (Animal behaviour)
History of professional hunting
Hunting ethics
Role of hunting in conservation
Introduction to wildlife & vegetation management
Reptile studies
Bowhunting
Basic first aid
Arachnids, insects and myriapoda
Tracking skills (Basic)
Shot placement
Hunting law
Introduction to firearms and ballistics
Tracking skills (Intermediate)
Bird studies and bird hunting
Fish studies and sport angling
Hunting planning
Infrastructure maintenance
Trophy estimation and recording
Trophy management
Taxidermy
Meat processing
Human resource management
Catering & hospitality
Marketing & business management
SAQA Fundamental Unit Standards (English and Mathematics)
Firearms and ballistics (advanced)
Tracking skills (Advanced)
Hunting with a client
Provincial (hunting school) 10 day PH course
Wilderness first aid (Level 1 and 2)
Plan a dangerous game hunt
Pursue a dangerous game quarry
Survival and bush skills
4x4 driving skills
Occupational Health and Safety



Bowhunting Training

Foundational subjects include a history of professional hunting, hunting ethics, wildlife and vegetation management, reptile, bird, invertebrate and fish studies and the role of hunting in conservation. In addition the curriculum covers practical subjects such as skinning and caping, basic taxidermy work, freshwater angling, meat processing, conducting post mortems and disease identification, infrastructure management (vehicle maintenance and repair, welding, fencing, road maintenance, erosion prevention etc.), wilderness first aid (Level 1 & 2), trophy estimation and trophy management.

The hard skills are complemented by the “soft skills” which include learning how to market and run a hunting business, catering and hospitality management, complying with occupational health and safety

regulations and learning how to manage the staff component of a hunting operation. Students are thoroughly and comprehensively assessed writing more than 60 assessments and 28 practical evaluations. The standards are high and pass rates are expected to be low to moderate at best.

The course has received substantial financial foreign support and backing from Dallas Safari Club, Aimpoint, and Norma ammunition with additional aid coming from Safari Club International. Donor funding has made it possible to acquire training equipment for the course including firearms, archery equipment, rangefinders, binoculars, reloading equipment, 3D targets, a “charge” box for simulating animal charges, fishing gear, camera traps, leafy suit camouflage clothing, skinning knives and sharpeners, GPS's etc.

On the local front a full set of horns and animal skulls was kindly donated by Nico van Rooyen Taxidermy, and firearms from Parow Arms. The two top students are rewarded with a buffalo hunt from the Timbavati Private Nature Reserve. It would appear that the training of professional hunters in South Africa is on the cusp of change. The SA Wildlife College has accomplished what it set out to do and will hopefully continue making a meaningful contribution towards the training of “PH's” for the foreseeable future.

The Southern African Wildlife College has a new and updated website at www.wildlifecollege.org.za, jam-packed with information, user friendly and interactive. It's designed so that SAWC partners, supporters, donors, students, the media and individuals interested in the work of the College can access information and interact.

In any moment of decision, the best thing you can do is the right thing. The worst thing you can do is nothing

Theodore Roosevelt

Rhino Horn Use: Fact vs. Fiction

Jacques Olivier

All five of the world's diverse species of rhinoceros have been brought to the edge of extinction because of the demand for their distinctive horns either as a decorative material or as a product of perceived medicinal value.

As a traditional medicine, there is a demand for rhino horn across several Asian countries ranging from Malaysia and South Korea to India and China, to cure a variety of ailments. In Traditional Chinese Medicine, the horn, which is shaved or ground into a powder and dissolved in boiling water, is used to treat fever, rheumatism, gout, and other disorders. According to the 16th century Chinese pharmacist Li Shi Chen, the horn could also cure snakebites, hallucinations, typhoid, headaches, carbuncles, vomiting, food poisoning, and “devil possession.” It is not however, as commonly believed, prescribed as an aphrodisiac.

For hunter-conservationists and all people who are interested in the conservation, management and sustainable use of Africa's wild natural resources. African Indaba is the official CIC Newsletter on African affairs, with editorial independence. For more information about the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation CIC go to www.cic-wildlife.org



Traditional Oriental Medicine Shop

Historical mentions of other uses for rhino horn date back thousands of years. The ancient Persians of the 5th century BC thought that vessels carved from the horn could be used to detect poisoned liquids, causing bubbles in the presence of some poisons, a belief that persisted into the 18th and 19th centuries among the royal courts of Europe. Now, science is now stepping in to dispel some of the mystery and fiction surrounding the use of rhino horn.

It is believed that there may be some truth behind the rhino horn's ability to detect poisons that is linked to the composition of the horn. Rhino horns are composed largely of the protein keratin, also the chief component in hair, fingernails, and animal hooves. Many poisons are strongly alkaline (or basic), and may have reacted chemically with the keratin.

Unlike the horns of most animals, which have a bony core covered by a relatively thin layer of keratin, rhino horns are keratin all the way through, although the precise chemical composition of the keratin will vary depending on a

rhino's diet and geographic location. This fact has allowed ecologist Raj Amin of the Zoological Society of London and his colleagues to take "fingerprints" of horn samples and determine the animal populations they came from, which has helped law enforcement officials target and crack down on poaching.

Rhino horns are not, as once believed, made simply from a clump of compressed or modified hair. Recent studies by researchers at Ohio University using computerized tomography (CT) scans have shown that the horns are, in fact, similar in structure to horses' hooves, turtle beaks, and cockatoo bills. The studies also revealed that the centers of the horns have dense mineral deposits of calcium and melanin — a finding that may explain the curve and sharp tip of the horns. The calcium would strengthen the horn while the melanin would protect the core from being degraded by ultraviolet radiation from the sun. As the softer outer portion was worn away over time by the sun and typical rhino activities (bashing horns with other animals, or rubbing it on the ground), the inner core would be sharpened into a point (much like a wooden pencil).

Overall there isn't much evidence to support the plethora of claims about the healing properties of the horns. In 1990, researchers at Chinese University in Hong Kong found that large doses of rhino horn extract could slightly lower fever in rats (as could extracts from Saiga antelope and Water Buffalo horn), but the concentration of horn given by a traditional Chinese medicine specialist are many times lower than used in those experiments. In short, says Amin, you'd do just as well chewing on your fingernails.

Pioneering Research Reveals New Insights into the Consumers behind Rhino Poaching

Source: <http://www.traffic.org/home/2013/9/17/pioneering-research-reveals-new-insights-into-the-consumers.html>

The use of rhino horn as a symbol of status among wealthy urban Vietnamese has been identified as a major driver of the current rhino poaching crisis. Findings from consumer research – concluded earlier this year in Viet Nam – has added significantly to our understanding of why a growing economy and emergence of a middle class with disposable incomes, is pressuring African rhino populations. Funded by WWF South Africa (WWF-SA) and co-ordinated by TRAFFIC's Greater Mekong Program Office – this research surveyed 720 people in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. It found that the buyers and users of rhino horn primarily consider it a status symbol – often used to gift to family members, business colleagues or people in positions of authority. They also associate it with a feeling of 'peace of mind'.

"Rhino horn consumers are wealthy and powerful and as such are seen as influential people within Vietnamese society," says Dr Jo Shaw, WWF-SA's Rhino coordinator. She adds, "While their reasons for purchasing and consuming rhino horn are linked to an underlying belief in its medicinal properties there is a current trend of use to enhance social standing." Shaw further explains, "Research reveals that typical users of rhino horn are successful, well-educated men, over the age of 40 who live in Viet Nam's main urban centers. They value their luxury lifestyle, which is often based around meeting peer group pressures and tend to view animals as commodities to serve functional and income-generating purposes rather than feeling an emotional connection".

Perhaps the most significant finding is the fact that beyond current consumer groups lies a large "intender" group: people who are not currently buying or using rhino horn, but who expressed their intent to do so in future. Dr Naomi Doak of

TRAFFIC's Greater Mekong Program says, "Intenders want to become buyers and users of rhino horn as it is favored and valued by those they want to impress. They have already made a conscious decision to purchase rhino horn even though they know it is illegal."

Doak adds, "We need a combination of enhanced law enforcement and demand reduction campaigns to shift attitudes and behavior against the trend in rhino horn use within the growing middle-class in Viet Nam – without changing the situation in the end user market the pressure on rhinos will continue to inflate. Our new insights on what is driving demand will allow the most targeted and influential response to dissuade consumption".

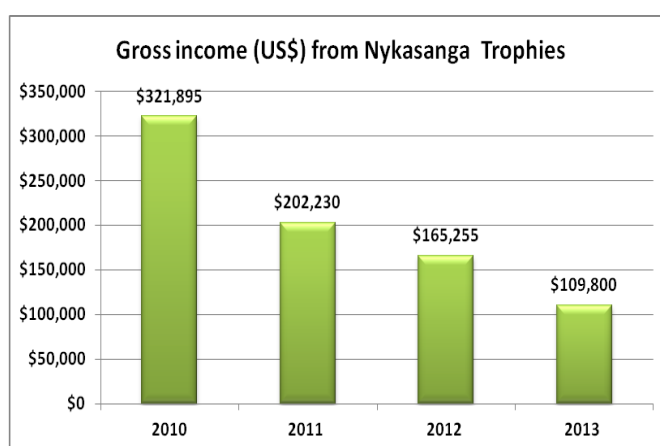
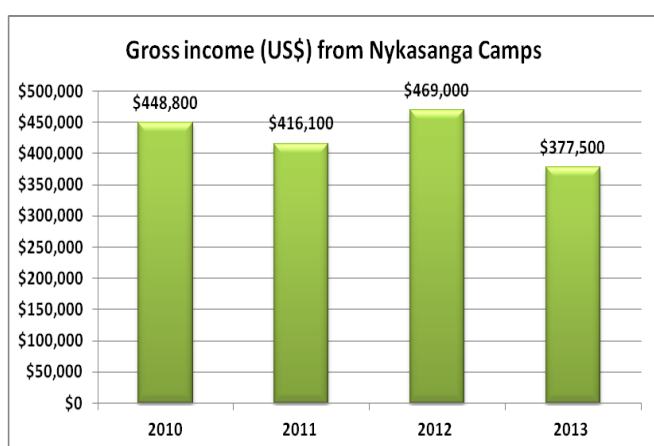
Dr Morné du Plessis, WWF-SA's CEO concludes, "Understanding and influencing the drivers of rhino horn demand in end-user markets - such as Viet Nam – forms a fundamental part of WWF-SA's five point strategic framework to address the dramatic increase in rhino poaching and combat the threat to rhinos. This pioneering consumer research will help us achieve these goals, as the fight against rhino poaching will ultimately be won in Asia, not Africa."

The Zambezi Valley Hunting Camp Auctions 2010-2013 in Zimbabwe

Vernon Booth

The data presented here originate from information provided by the auctioneer responsible for coordinating the Zambezi Valley Hunting Camps on behalf of the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Authority (ZPWA). These data have not been verified against the official results recorded by ZPWA or the auctioneer. The data presented here should therefore be considered as a guide to the prices paid and not as official documentation. The data presented may not be published in any format without the permission of the author (vernonrbooth@gmail.com) however the article may be referenced provided the source is fully acknowledged.

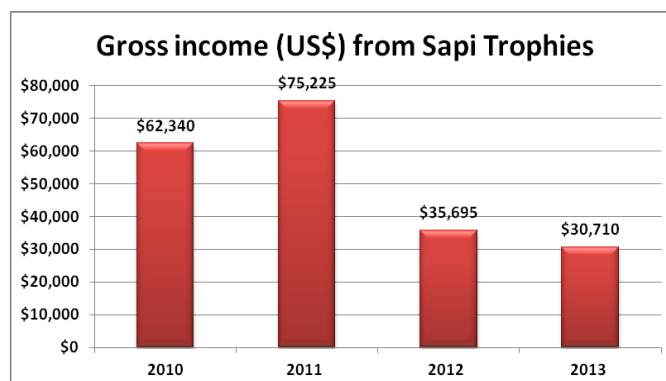
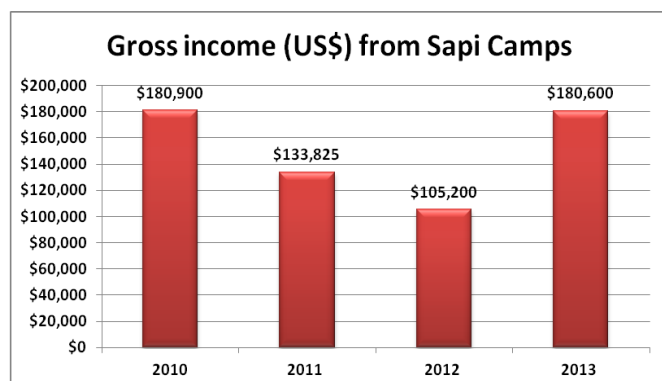
The Zambezi Valley Hunting Camps have been auctioned to the general public since 1997. In past years these were hotly contested by keen hunters from across the globe, including Zimbabwean citizens. More recently these auctions are attended largely by South African agents and bidders. Prior to 2009, all lots were sold in the Zimbabwe local currency but since then all lots are priced in United States dollars (US\$) following the "dollarization" of the Zimbabwe economy. All buyers were required to pay 15% VAT plus 4% administration charges on the sale of the lots. Hunting camps are offered in the Nykasanga and Sapi Hunting Areas. The camps are for a fixed period of either 10-day or 14-day periods beginning in May. A fixed quota of animals is allocated to each camp which usually includes one or more buffalo and impala. Successful bidders can bid on additional animals to boost the number of animals on quota. These include for example, elephant, leopard, crocodile and hippo.



The 42 camps are on offer in the Nykasanga Hunting Block provided 492 hunter days that generated approximately \$1,711,400 between 2010 and 2013. The number of 14-day camps in 2013 was reduced from 18 to 9 reducing the available hunter days to 366. This increased the average daily rate for these camps to US\$1,031/day but reduced the overall income to ZPWA. The 14-day camps (Chibonde and Mutoro) on average sold for \$11,506 - \$12,422 while the 10-day camps sold for \$8708 - \$11,304. Overall average daily rate paid for these big game camps varied from \$846 - \$1,031/day. The gross income generated from the sale of addition trophies has declined since 2010 by approximately 50%. This decline is a result of a combination of factors including reduced interest by buyers, reduced quotas, removal of

animals on offer and the non-sale of trophies that did not meet the reserve process. The overall income from the auction of the Nykasanga Camps and Trophies has declined from \$770,695 in 2010 to \$487,300 in 2013. This translates to approximately \$1,566/day in 2010 to \$1,289/day in 2012. The daily rate is slightly increased in 2013 as a result of there being 126 fewer hunter days.

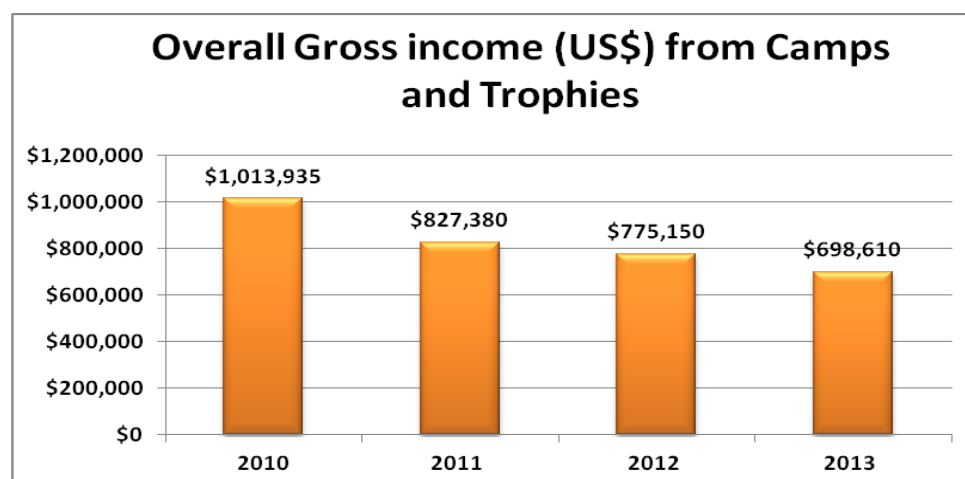
There were 21 camps on offer in the Sapi Hunting Block provided 266 hunter days that has generated approximately \$600,525 over the four years. Income for the Sapi camps has declined year-on-year from \$180,900 to \$105,000 in 2012 but recovered in 2013. On average the 14-day camps (Shomoshongo and Kamote) sold for \$5,871 – \$10,200 while the 10-day camps sold for \$3,833 – \$8,229. The overall daily rates for these big-game camps were \$395 – \$680/day which is approximately 50% of the value paid for the Nykasanga camps



The range and number of additional trophies on offer in Sapi is also less than that available in Nykasanga. In particular, key trophies such as lion, leopard or buffalo are not made available. In 2012 no additional elephant were included on the trophy quota but were re-instated in 2013. Plains game species such as waterbuck and bushbuck were not offered in 2013 nor were crocodile which have been popular in previous years. The unavailability of these trophies has impacted on the income generated for the ZPWA.

The overall income from the auction of the Sapi Camps and Trophies has declined from \$243,240 in 2010 to \$140,895 in 2012 but showed signs of recovery in 2013. This translates to approximately \$914/day in 2010 to \$530/day in 2012. This is considerably less than what was achieved for Nykasanga. The low return for Sapi suggests that the big game hunting on offer is either being undervalued by the market or there are other factors that are influencing the low prices.

Overall 758 hunter days are available from the 63 camps on offer. The price of 14-day camps (n=32) declined from \$10,372 to \$8,428 between 2010 and 2012. The price has remained at this level for 2013.



By contrast, the price of 10-day camps has remained relatively stable, peaking at \$10,229 on 2012 but dropping again in 2013. The gross income from the sale of trophies has declined from \$383,235 in 2010 to \$140,510 in 2012. This decline can be most likely attributed to a lack of interest

by the market combined with the reduction in the availability of key trophies such as lion, leopard, buffalo and elephant and the removal of plains game from the auction list.

Overall daily rate declined from \$1,338 in 2010 to \$1,023-\$1,105 between 2011 and 2013. These rates are generally lower than representative rates achieved by the private sector for big game hunting. Overall the income to ZPWA

has continued to decline year-on-year from \$1,013,935 in 2010 to \$698,610 in 2013. This represents a significant drop in income from these auctions for the organization.

The average price for elephant has remained static at ~\$15,000/trophy bull. Leopard and buffalo prices (~US\$6,000) have remained above the market price offered in the private sector. Lion are not offered regularly in this auction format. The price offered in 2013 (US\$20,000) is 50% of that offered in 2010. The overall estimated gross income generated from Nyakasanga and Sapi is down on what was achieved since 2007 (US\$1,274,288) and 2008 (US\$1,082,336). The auctions discontinued offering minor species such as porcupine, bushpig, jackal, baboon and serval in 2012 but re-introduced some of these animals in 2013.

The question being asked is whether the Zambezi Valley Auction Hunts are losing their luster, and hence income for the ZPWZ. The reasons for this are not immediately clear but no doubt could be identified through a survey of the clients that use this source of hunting.

Chinese Ivory Haul in Dar es Salaam

IPP Media

At a time when poaching has tremendously scaled up in the country, about 706 pieces of ivory, representing more than 200 tuskers killed, were found on November 2nd in Dar es Salaam at a residence of Chinese nationals. Three Chinese nationals are in custody in connection with haul weighing more than 1,800kg. The catch was hidden in shells of snails mixed with garlic. More Chinese are now sought by the Tanzanian police after the three suspects reportedly started to talk.

A detailed report made available to the Guardian newspaper in Dar es Salaam says China is deeply implicated in the wave of killing of elephants owing to its million dollar trade in ivory products. The report authored by the Tanzania Elephant Protection Society (TEPS) said rising economic relations between China and Tanzania fuel elephant killings in the country, calling for proper government intervention. The document underlined that though the Chinese investments were important in the country's economy and development, this shouldn't compromise the country's natural wildlife conservation efforts. (See: <http://www.tanzaniaelephantprotectionsociety.org/>)

Natural Resources and Tourism Minister, Ambassador Khamis Kagasheki, dismissed suggestions that the ongoing anti-poaching operation "Tokomeza" would be halted over allegations of human rights' abuses made in parliament last week. It had also been criticized that the focus of the operation was misguided towards pastoralists and that VIPs and political heavyweights masterminding poaching were spared.



Minister Kagasheki looks in disbelief at 1.8 tons of ivory impounded at a house in Dar es Salaam. Source:

Hwange National Park Elephant Poisoning Report 1

Trevor Lane, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe

There has been a lot of hype, wild speculation, and exaggerated stories on the issue of the poisoning of the elephant. There are some points I would like to raise on this and other issues, and set the record straight:

1. The total number of elephant poisoned stands at 103: 84 at Makona/Jozivanini, 8 in Ngamo Forest and 11 at Guvalala. This is the final count of an extensive aerial survey conducted by WEZ (Wildlife and Environmental Society of Zimbabwe) in conjunction with Parks. This bears out the figure reported by Parks, and can be taken as a true reflection, give or take a few.
2. The Minister, Saviour Kasukuwere and the Parks staff need to be commended on their reaction - strong and uncompromising, and they have been very transparent and did not try to conceal anything. Sentencing has been swift and satisfactory - one poacher arrested on a Sunday got 15 years on the following Wednesday! A very strong message has been sent out!
3. The Minister has also set up an advisory trust of respected and well known conservationists and businessmen to advise and help in Hwange, and the results are already coming in - vehicles donated etc. Strict controls being introduced on equipment.

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4. The Guvalala poaching lead to the arrest of a well-known elephant and rhino poacher, who has been politically protected in the past. He has fingered his Chinese middleman under interrogation. We wait to see what materializes in this case!
5. I find it unfortunate that the media has made headlines out of wildly exaggerated stories of the number of dead elephant, with no bearing on what is the reality on the ground. They tend to quote an unreliable source out of Harare, known for wildly sensational stories and Parks bashing, which generally have little relevance to the truth. This is where the 300 poisoned elephants suddenly came from! I feel the media should make a greater effort to report factually, and use more reliable sources.
6. There was also a sensationalized incident of a Parks scout being sentenced to death. The point here was that this was not an anti-poaching field operation, but the suspected unarmed poacher was shot (10 shots) in his own house while trying to escape a beating during interrogation. The team then left the body behind and fled - not exactly straight forward.
7. Zimbabwe still has a shoot to kill policy for armed poachers, and this has been reinforced by the Minister. But it is not an open ticket to shoot anyone suspected of poaching. All royal game and elephant poaching offences now have a mandatory 9 year sentence - one poacher just received 9 year for a pangolin.

Parks now have a very open and refreshing attitude, and they recognize the need for outside support and assistance although we realise they are not without their problems!. There are a lot of people and organizations working on the ground with Parks for the future of our wildlife in Zimbabwe. We need to be positive and straightforward, but do not need negativity.

Hwange National Park Elephant Poisoning Report 2

Colin Gillies, Matabeleland Branch, Wildlife and Environment Zimbabwe pbirch@yoafrica.com

Following on from my first report, we were then approached by Parks to assist in confirming what they thought had taken place in the Park Area, regards the elephant poisoning, the previous flights being concentrated mainly in the Forestry areas adjacent to the park, with these areas being done at Forestry's request. Once again Pat Cox didn't hesitate to offer his aircraft and expertise to take on the 2nd survey of the area this time concentrating on as much of the Park area as we could.

At our initial briefing with Parks it was very clear that reports emulating from various sources about the number of elephants lost were of great concern to them and we were requested to fly an assess as accurately as possible exactly how many carcasses were evident. The first flight covered the Central South and South West areas of the Park boarding the Tsholotsho communal land and Botswana border. This is an extremely remote area of the Park, access by road is not easy, and there is very little development, and as a result of this and with limited resources Parks have been unable to police this area as they would have liked, and they acknowledge this. The result being that 84 carcasses were located in this area.

The following surveys moved northwards into the central area, flying the Park east to west and then further north covering the Sinamatella, and Robin's area. There were no further carcasses located in these areas. However we still have a fairly large section of Park to check, namely the Main Camp, and Ngamo sector in the east of the Park, and in the west the Dandari, Shakwankie, Shapi, and the remainder of the Dizivanni sector, and on his return to Harare Pat was immediately contacted by the Minister Savoir Kasukuwere who requested we return as soon as possible to check these areas so ensuring that the entire Park has been covered, and this is scheduled to take place shortly.

Although we haven't covered the whole Park as yet, we have covered the areas considered by National Parks to be the priority areas and the most sensitive in aspect of the poaching problem. This obviously doesn't mean that there may not be any other problems areas but hopefully far less probable. So based on the areas that we have flown and surveyed we are confident that there have not been any more than 120 elephant lost, and this compares favourably with what Parks have reported, and while this is serious we feel the figures quoted by other sources are totally incorrect and exaggerated.

Hopefully I have been able to convey briefly to you what's been going on, I personally feel the situation is now looking a lot better but we must not lose sight of the fact, vigilance in the future is of paramount importance we are dealing with evil sinister people who must be made accountable at all costs, if there is to be any long term future for our wildlife. We have been very impressed with the very open and refreshing attitude received from Parks and the Minister; it has been a pleasure operating with them and is confident that, we can overcome the current problems. It should be noted that the Minister has also set up an advisory trust of respected and well known conservationist businessmen to help and advice in Hwange, with the results already been seen with 5 of 8 new Landrovers designated for Hwange having arrived last Saturday.

Statistics regarding areas covered and distances flown to date: FORESTRY (area covered 2,965 km², Distance flown 2,187km); HWANGE NATIONAL PARK (Area covered 7,230km² approximately 49.22% of the Park, distance flown

3,027km, total hours flown including flying time to and from Harare 35.2 hours). Total cost of aircraft sponsored at these hours US\$8,615.00 (Our thanks once again to Pat Cox and Ericom Communications for their outstanding support. Without this support none of this would have been possible). I hope you find this report of interest and will keep you informed of any future surveys and developments.

Kenya: Elephant count records steady rise in numbers

Written by Kevin Wafula

Provisional results for the just-ended joint Kenya -Tanzania census for elephants and other large mammals in Amboseli ecosystem shows a remarkable recovery from massive deaths occasioned by the devastating drought between 2008 and 2010.

http://www.africasciencenews.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=980:elephant-count-records-steady-rise-in-numbers-&catid=52:environment&Itemid=115

A total of 1193 elephants were counted this year compared to a similar dry season in October 2010 count of 1065, a 12 per cent increase. In April this year, the wet season count found 1930 elephants compared to 1420 in April 2010, a 35 per cent increase. Final results of the one-week census, which ended at the weekend, will be released in about three months. This dry season count marked the fourth joint such exercise between Kenyan and Tanzanian wildlife authorities since 2010 when the collaboration started. Both dry and wet season counts have shown that the ecosystem's elephant population is stable and growing.

KWS Director Mr William Kiprono, who presided over the census closing ceremony, said: "Amboseli is one of our success stories and we owe it to the local community, which has warded off possible poachers." The Ksh12 million-census was collaboration between the two countries and their agencies; the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute (TAWIRI), Wildlife Division of Tanzania (WD) Ngorongoro Conservation Area and Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA). The bulk of the funding for the census was provided by the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), which also facilitated the cross-border work.

The exercise was also supported by other conservation non-governmental organizations (NGOs) notably Amboseli Trust for Elephants, David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, Marwell Wildlife, Mwaluganje Elephant Sanctuary, private sponsors and members of the local community. The aerial census sought to establish the landscape's wildlife population abundance, trends and distribution. The results are expected to enhance knowledge on the relation between wildlife, habitat and human impacts while at the same fostering cross-border collaboration on wildlife monitoring and management between the two East African countries.

Ms Fiesta Warinwa, AWF Country Director, said plans were underway for similar cross-border counts in Serengeti/Maasai Mara and Tsavo/Mkomazi. She praised the local community of the Amboseli and West Kilimanjaro Ecosystem for warding off poachers but noted that the greatest challenge in Amboseli was loss of space for wildlife. Habitat fragmentation and land conversion as a result of land sub-division have become the biggest threats to wildlife. These were followed by habitat degradation especially through charcoal burning and draining of wetlands for agriculture.

Dr. Maurus Msuha, a Principal Research Officer, Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute (TAWIRI) said human population increase and adverse effects of climate change were also becoming key threats to the ecosystem. Mr Lekishon Kenana, a Kenya Wildlife Service Senior Scientist, said data collected had been crucial in mapping out wildlife dispersal areas and migratory corridors.

"For us to have a win-win situation is, let's plan for wildlife, and we plan for people as well. There is some space that is not useful for wildlife, we can do developments there. And in the real critical areas, that are important for wildlife, we should preserve," he said.

The count comes after a similar wet count done earlier in April this year. It is the practice of Kenya Wildlife Service and Tanzania wildlife authorities to conduct both a wet and a dry aerial census every three years in the Amboseli West Kilimanjaro and Magadi Natron cross border Landscape.

The exercise seeks to safeguard the vast ecosystem that is threatened by human influence that includes pastoral activities, crop farming and proliferation of charcoal burning. This in a huge way affects wildlife dispersal and a huge concern to the future of the area for wildlife conservation. The information gathered from the census will be also used for planning and preparing park & conservation areas management for possible wildlife security and human-wildlife conflict eventualities in any ecosystem. In addition, wildlife census information is also used to advise communities on areas that sustain high number of wildlife species and are potential sites for establishment of community conservancies and ecotourism projects.

The operational base for the census was at Ol Tukai Lodge in Amboseli National Park and the data collected included large mammal counts as well as observations on habitat conditions, water distribution, livestock numbers, human settlement patterns, illegal activities, and other attributes associated with land use changes in the ecosystem.

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The Amboseli-West Kilimanjaro and Magadi -Natron cross- border landscape comprise various ecologically important areas in Kenya and Tanzania. The census covered 25,623 km² including 9,214 km² of the Amboseli area, 6348 km² of the Namanga-Magadi areas in south-western Kenya and 3,013 km² of the West Kilimanjaro and 7,047 km² of the Natron areas in North Tanzania.

From the last survey report, the elephant population in the area has been relatively stable, with 1,087 individuals counted in the year 2000; 1,090 in 2002 and 967 in 2007 compared to the year 2010 population of 1,266. In the April 2013 census the elephant population was 1930 in the survey area.

There was a dramatic decline in the number of large herbivore species between the years 2007 and 2010 due to the prolonged drought of 2007-2009: wildebeest declined by about 83 per cent from 18,538 to 3,098; zebras declined by about 71 per cent from 15,328 to 4,432; and buffalos declined by about 61 per cent from 588 to 231 in the Amboseli area. However, there was noticeable population recovery for several species as revealed by the April count. There was a general increase in the number of large herbivores between the years 2010 and 2013.

Elephant population increased from 1420 to 1,930 while elephant carcass ratio declined from 3.7% to 1.8%. Wildebeest increased by over 100% from 7,240 to 14,728. Similarly, zebra numbers more than doubled from 13,740 to 29,867 while buffalo population increased by about 72% from 334 to 575. These populations' increases can be attributed largely to the recovery of the populations after the severe drought experienced in the area between 2007 and 2009 and to a lesser extent the increase in survey area more specifically for elephants.

Tanzania: Elephant Census in Selous Game Reserve

Rolf Baldus

In October Tanzania's Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism (MNRT) has conducted an elephant survey of the Selous Ecosystem with the help of local and international experts. The agencies involved included: Wildlife Division (WD), Tanzania Wildlife & Research Institute (TAWIRI), Tanzania National Parks Authority (TANAPA), GIZ (German Development Cooperation), Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS), Save the Elephants and the African Elephant Specialist Group of IUCN. This broad participation was meant to facilitate finance and logistics and to safeguard the strict application of objective scientific methods. The census was generally regarded as a critical step towards improving Tanzania's resource protection and anti-poaching efforts countrywide and to gain a better understanding of the current threats to the country's elephant populations. Official results are so far not yet available, however some politicians have leaked out a figure of 15000 elephants in the ecosystem. If this is correct, this would mean a reduction of elephants by more than three quarters in recent years. Whatever the data are correct (it is hoped that the official data will be published in the very near future), it will reveal a dramatic loss of elephants. The main poaching seems to have taken place during the last few years and not so much in recent times.

For the time being Benson Kibonde, a long-time former Selous Project Manager, has been reemployed. Mr. Kibonde has an excellent reputation, as it was he who oversaw the rehabilitation of the Reserve and maintained good management between 1994 and 2008. The Tanzanian Government has meanwhile also reintroduced the Selous retention scheme, which has improved the financial situation.

Regrettably the planned aerial survey of the neighbouring Niassa National Reserve and the Quirimbas National Park in Mozambique was cancelled as a result of delays in securing the necessary avgas. According to reliable sources elephant poaching in these protected areas is "out of control". The lower jaws recovered from the approximately 90 elephant poached in the Park this year are shown in the photo opposite. Elephants of all ages were shot, including young that carried no ivory.



A sample of the 90 lower jaws recovered from elephants of all ages poached in the Quirimbas National Park, Mozambique in 2013

South Africa: Game Price Stampede

Stafford Thomas, Financial Mail, 16 August 2013

SA'S wildlife industry is seeing a boom in prices paid for superior breeding animals — but it is a boom subject to deeply divided opinions among game experts. Setting record prices has become the norm for SA's wildlife industry in its quest for the ultimate best of breed and big financial rewards. These high prices account for a large part of the sales at wildlife auctions rising from R60m in 2006 to R864m in 2012, a trend, game-breeding players predict will continue. At the forefront of soaring prices are what Wildlife Ranching SA (WRSA) terms "rare species". These include buffalo, sable antelope, roan antelope and Livingstone eland, which accounted for a combined R689m (80%) of sales in 2012. Average price rises since 2006 ranged from 270% for roan to 670% for buffalo.

The stakes are high. Annual returns on investment of 80% or more are feasible from top breeding animals, even assuming prices remain unchanged, says Norman Adami, SA Breweries executive chairman, game farmer and WRSA marketing director. Game breeder Bernard Groenewald sums up the sector's optimism. "There will be market fluctuations and prices will go up and down, but the bubble will never burst," Groenewald told delegates to the 2013 WRSA congress. "The high demand for superior genetics will always ensure a premium for top breeders." Adami adds: "Top-quality genetics command a high premium." Prices of top-quality breeding animals are around 30 times those of their standard counterparts and the gap is widening, he says. "The rise in prices is more than sustainable," says Jacques Malan, a game farmer and former WRSA president. Malan holds the record for the highest price yet obtained by a breeder: R26m for Horison, a buffalo bull. Sold in 2012 to a syndicate of three buyers, Horison smashed the previous record for a buffalo bull of R18m, set in 2011. He dwarfed the 2005 record of R165000. "They should make their money back [on Horison] in three years," says Gert Dry, a former WRSA president.

The goal is to breed animals with horn sizes sported by animals largely wiped out by indiscriminate hunting, primarily in the 19th century, says Neil Swart, a Vleissentraal game auctioneer. "Not long ago a sable bull with 34-inch horns was regarded as big," says Swart. "In 2012 we had the first 50-inch sable bull and it sold for R12,25m. This year we have two 50-inch sable bulls." The importance of horn size is evident in a record R1,65m for a nyala bull sold this year. It smashed the record, R83000, set in 2012, thanks to its horn length of almost 35 inches. "The previous record was 33 inches for a nyala shot in 2009," says Swart. Even Horison's record is on shaky ground. His horn spread (width) of almost 51,5 inches is not enough to match the 53 inches of a buffalo bull to be offered at the Thabo Thula auction later this year, says Swart.

Adami believes the focus on breeding the best specimens places SA in a powerful position in the global ecotourism market. "A growing middle class in the developed world and especially in developing markets will continue to create a growing demand for wildlife experiences," says Adami. "In turn, this will create demand for greater numbers of magnificent specimens of the rare African species." SA, he says, is uniquely positioned to support this demand. "It is because we run our ranches with increasingly superior animals from the most attractive species."



But not all wildlife experts are convinced rising prices for top breeding game are sustainable. "In the end it depends on what hunters are prepared to pay," says Peter Flack, a wildlife author, hunter, conservationist and trustee of the Southern Africa chapter of the World Wide Fund for Nature. Foreign and local hunters directly and indirectly generated R6,2bn in revenue in 2010, environmental affairs minister Edna Molewa noted in her 2013/2014 budget vote speech. Hunting, says Flack, is the backbone of SA's wildlife industry and underpinned its recovery from the brink of disaster 50 years ago, when there were just over 550000 head of game, including those in national and provincial parks. Today there

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are more than 18m head of game on more than 12000 game farms alone. "I can see a case for paying R1,65m for a nyala," says Flack. Nyala, together with roan and sable, is one of the "glamour" hunting species. "I am more concerned about buffalo prices," says Flack. "There are still a lot of places in Africa where they can be hunted. Prize buffalo are still readily available in other parts of Africa. Buffalo have not been shot out in Africa, nor have the body and horn sizes deteriorated."

SA-based International Council for Game & Wildlife Conservation (CIC) executive Gerhard Damm agrees. Posing a rhetorical question, he asks: "Why come to SA when you can hunt a trophy-size buffalo for US\$20000 elsewhere in Africa?"

Subject of even hotter debate is a more recent addition of color variants to WRSA's list of rare species. Growing in number, they include black impala, gold wildebeest and king wildebeest. Prices are impressive. Topping the list is a king wildebeest sold for R5,1m, the fourth-highest price achieved at a game auction. In sixth position is a gold wildebeest, sold for more than R1,8m. Flack is not impressed. "They are creating brand new unnatural freaks," he says. "In my 53 years of hunting I have never heard of anyone who has seen one in the wild. It does nothing for game conservation."

Damm is also opposed to color variants. "It is like breeding new varieties of cattle or dogs," says Damm. "The CIC passed a resolution two years ago declaring color variants a manipulation of wild game that should not be hunted." There is another risk, warns Damm. "If color variants were to escape, it could have a serious impact on normal game," he says. The risk is now the subject of a study by the University of Stellenbosch, commissioned by the SA National Biodiversity Institute.

Adami springs to the defense of color variants. "Color variants are not freaks and are not bred through genetic engineering," he says. "White lion, for example, are found in the wild." Adami also believes if color variants were to mingle with normal colored game of the same species there would be no impact. This, he says, is because the gene producing color variants is a recessive gene. Malan is equally in favor of color variants. "We are not creating something new," says Malan. "In the old days [color variants] had no value and were shot out. This is why no-one has heard of them." In addition to white lion, he points to the rare king cheetah as another variant (in terms of markings) found in the wild. Where there is no controversy is the game industry's potential to help ensure food security. "SA is scratching the surface of its venison production potential," says Adami. "New Zealand produces 50 times as much venison as SA."

Based on a 2012 estimate by Camdeboo Meat Processors MD Piet Neethling, SA's venison market is worth just R300m-R400m annually while springbok, the primary venison export, earns SA a mere R60m-R70m. SA's imports of red and white meat are running at about R4bn/year.

Wildlife comes with a big advantage: it thrives in arid areas unsuitable for conventional stock farming. "Game farms occupy 20mha of previously unproductive land," says Adami. Springbok, impala and wildebeest are also prolific breeders. "Their numbers grow at between 25% and 35% annually," says Flack.

Venison production also holds great empowerment potential. "There is 12mha of overgrazed communal land that can be used for sustainable game farming," says Adami. Used productively, the land could support a big meat processing industry owned and run by rural communities, he adds. "The game industry's vision is totally aligned with government's growth strategy," says Adami. "There is no reason it cannot grow from being a R10bn/year industry into a R100bn/year industry."

Peter Flack's Response to the Financial Mail Article

Peter Flack 23. August 2013

I refer to your article, Game price stampede, in the 15 August issue. While I have managed our family game ranch for 20 years and been a partner in a safari outfitter for 12, I have had no interest, direct or indirect, for the last three years in any game ranching or hunting operation, although I remain passionate about hunting and the conservation of our wildlife and wildlife habitats. The same cannot be said for Messrs. Adami, Malan, Grobbelaar and company, however, all of whom have vested interests in breeding and/or selling "wildlife" and whose statements in the above article are disingenuous at best and misleading at worst. In this regard, I advise as follows, namely:

1. The current market for intensively bred wild animals with very big horns and, more specifically, buffalo, sable, roan and Livingstone's eland, as well as unnatural color variants, has all the hallmarks of a pyramid scheme.
2. In other words, just like the tulip boom in Holland or the sour milk scheme in South Africa, when the number of breeders willing to pay these prices dries up, people will lose money, while those who set the ball rolling will have laughed all the way to the bank.
3. This may explain some of the rumors applicable to the huge auction prices being paid for some of these animals, for example, that in some cases money does not change hands and the bids are rigged to create interest in and demonstrate the worth of participating in these schemes. It may also explain unsubstantiated statements that an 80% return on investments is possible and that the high game prices are sustainable in this business. As the old axiom states, "When things sound too good to be true, they usually are."

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4. These breeding schemes have nothing to do with “global eco-tourism” or “the growing demand for wildlife experiences.” They are designed to attract trophy hunters. Quite simply, it is the price breeders believe that trophy hunters will pay to hunt these animals that underpins their schemes. And this is where they have within them the seeds of their own destruction.
5. Most overseas trophy hunters come from North America (and they are the ones, for the most part, who spend the money hunting trophy animals with big horns), as opposed to local hunters, the majority of whom are after meat. The Boone and Crockett Club is the most prestigious North American hunting and conservation association and does not allow any animal shot behind a high fence to be entered in its record book. Should a member be found to have done so, all his entries are expunged from the record book and he is disqualified as a member.
6. Increasingly, overseas trophy hunters are being influenced by this Club and others like it and want to experience a genuine, ethical hunt in the free range, wildlife habitat expanses of Africa and are reluctant to expose themselves to the ridicule of their peers and hunting associations by being involved, knowingly or unknowingly, in killing intensively bred, domesticated, once wild animals in “canned” or “put-and-take”, small, high fenced enclosures, which is what many of these breeders and their clients offer because, having paid these huge sums (where they have, in fact, been paid), they cannot run the risk of leaving the animals free to roam and live a natural life where they feed themselves, reproduce naturally and can escape their predators.
7. Frequently the word, “rare” is used to describe these intensively bred animals. This is nonsense. Buffalo, sable, roan and eland can be found in numbers in the wild and/or on private game ranches in at least nine countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and every year new entries of these species are added to the top 100 in the major record books. In addition, as many hunters will confirm, while it is always satisfying to hunt a big, old, challenging male, out of the breeding cycle, with heavy and long horns, the overall hunting experience, if anything, is more important.
8. The competitive prices offered by safari outfitters in these various countries will limit the prices chargeable to end users here, namely, the hunters of these animals.
9. The increasing trend of deliberately breeding ever more unnatural color variants or freaks has no justification. It does absolutely nothing for the conservation of wildlife or wildlife habitats. To say that these animals existed in the wild but were shot out because they had no value, is beyond misleading. I do not know of anyone who has ever seen a gold wildebeest, black impala or yellow blesbok (to quote but three of the increasing number of freaks that are being artificially engineered), anywhere in the wild.
10. I do not know of any hunter who would want to hunt one of these domesticated freaks and I predict that other major hunting and conservation associations around the world will follow the lead of the prestigious European hunting and conservation association, CIC – The International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation who passed a resolution two years ago opposing, “artificial and unnatural manipulation of wild life”; excluding “all “trophies” of the animals so manipulated from being scored” and, “urging all CIC members to abstain from “hunting” manipulated animals.” As this development spreads among hunting and conservation associations it will be the death knell for those hoping to profit from these schemes.
11. Lastly, the real threat posed by these breeders is to hunting in general in South Africa. If our country acquires the reputation of THE destination for “canned” and/or “put-and-take” hunting of domesticated wildlife and unnatural freaks, not only may record books create separate categories for, or refuse to register, game hunted here but many overseas recreational hunters will stay away for fear of being tainted. Together this will make us less marketable and put at risk a growing multi-billion rand industry providing tens of thousands of jobs primarily in rural areas.

News from Africa

South Africa

The Zululand Anti-Poaching Wing (ZAP- Wing) pioneers the use of aviation in rhino anti-poaching operations in 24 formal game reserves, numerous smaller game farms and community-owned game reserves (+300,000 ha) hosting Northern KZN biggest rhino populations (ca. 3,000 white and black rhino). A Cheetah light sport aircraft with a dedicated pilot undertakes daily aerial patrols helicopter patrols over Hluhluwe-iMfolozi were re-established. Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife and the private conservation community agreed to amalgamate their aerial surveillance operations in northern KZN. In March 2013 KZN Provincial Treasury started funding two helicopters for Ezemvelo to extend aerial operations to every game reserve in this high-risk region.

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South Africa

On 10 September South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) announced that they have started to poison their rhino horn with a chemical cocktail that is claimed not to cause intentional deaths of consumers. Horns are now extremely toxic and consumption will cause 'serious' sickness. Part of the chemical cocktail is a bright red dye to warn people. The cost of poisoning Ezemvelo rhino horns is being sponsored by Peace Parks Foundation,

South Africa

The Department of Environmental Affairs had made a public call for the registration of all rhino-related funders and anti-poaching ventures to register by 30 September 2013 as part of the creation of a national database of organizations involved in the industry so as to primarily allow for monitoring of fund raising operations, activities and uses of the funds raised. The initiative aims at ridding the sector of illegitimate and ill-intended operations and to ensure greater legitimacy of organizations and individuals involved in rhino anti-poaching projects. The establishment of a national database, and a credible national financing mechanism for rhino anti-poaching, were agreed to by government and rhino stakeholders during a public engagement in July 2013 since numerous industry role-players raised concerns about the legitimacy of organizations involved in fighting rhino poaching, and some of the projects, particularly fundraising. In an effort to coordinate anti-poaching initiatives and in response to the recommendation of the Rhino Issue Management (RIM) process, the Department is planning to establish a National Rhino Fund in consultation with the National Treasury and other affected role players. The Fund will support interventions directed to rhino poaching. The National Rhino Fund will result in the consolidation of all funding requirements and ensure that funding is distributed successfully to state- and privately-owned rhino anti-poaching initiatives, including conservation, safety and security, skills development and research.

South Africa

The Standing Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA) ordered the Provincial Treasury take over the finances of Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife after a qualified audit opinion for the fifth consecutive year. Ezemvelo leaders had told SCOPA Ezemvelo had taken action against the previous chief finance officer. Ezemvelo manages more than 100 game and nature reserves and receives an annual subsidy of more than R500m (US\$ 50m). Ezemvelo raised R190m (US\$19m) of its own revenue from tourist accommodation, hunting, game sales and other services, but salary costs accounted for more than R517m (US\$ 52m) of total expenditure (Sources: The Mercury, Oct. 22nd and The Witness, Oct. 21st).

South Africa/Viet Nam

Vietnamese zoos are aggressively importing South African rhino and other wildlife. Vietnam's last native rhino was killed in 2010, and since then the nation has been importing them from South African game reserves – allegedly for educational purposes. "There are 26 rhino in Vietnam. They are all legally imported from South Africa," said Nguyen Quan of the Vietnam Wildlife Crime Unit.

South Africa/Viet Nam

Government official Tuan Nhan acknowledged in September after a Vietnamese Delegation visited South Africa that Vietnam is one of the top three consumers of rhino horn. Vietnamese celebrity Xuan Bac said he was horrified when he smelled a rotting rhino carcass in South Africa. The delegates promised to do their best to influence policy changes and public opinion about rhino horn consumption.

Democratic Republic of Congo

The 13,700 km² Okapi Wildlife Reserve in Epulu, a World Heritage Site, was set up in 1992 in order to protect one of the world's most important populations of okapis (*Okapia johnstoni*). On June 24th 2012, MaiMai Simba rebels, led by an elephant poacher known as Morgan, launched a devastating attack on the Reserve headquarters in response to a crackdown on poaching and illegal mining in the park, leaving buildings burned, equipment destroyed, and six people dead including two rangers. The militia also killed the 14 captive okapis at the headquarters. Over a year later security and peace has begun to return to Epulu, with the armed militias being run out of the Okapi Wildlife Reserve, according to renowned conservationist John Lukas. Working with okapi protection for 25 years, Lukas is head of the [Okapi Conservation Project \(OCP\)](#), which was instrumental in founding the park and helps manage the protected area along with the Institute in the Congo for Conservation of Nature (ICCN). According to Lukas, the reserve holds a population of about 3,000 okapis.

Mozambique

The planned aerial survey of the Niassa National Reserve and Quirimbas National Park in neighboring Mozambique was cancelled as a result of delays in securing the necessary avgas. According to reliable sources elephant poaching in these protected areas is "out of control". The lower jaws of approximately 90 elephant poached in the Park have been recovered. Elephants of all ages were shot, including young that carried no ivory (African Indaba Editor).

Mozambique

Lion populations have risen by around 60 percent in just seven years in Niassa National Reserve say researchers Colleen and Keith Begg who run the Niassa Carnivore Project (NCP). In order to safeguard Niassa's lions, the Begg's work with the people of the Reserve and partner with communities to build predator-proof livestock pens and mitigate poaching including the use of snares (which often unintentionally catches predators like lions). "I think we should never forget or minimize the high costs that local communities have to bear when living in close proximity to dangerous animals like lions and elephants," Colleen Begg said. "The costs may be too high in some areas and we will need to be pragmatic and agree that not all lion populations can be saved. A lion attack is a horrific event that is never forgotten and losing livestock is like losing your savings. In some areas, we can get it to work but it depends on the numbers—how many lions, how much natural prey and how many people." The Begg's have been working in Niassa Reserve in collaboration with the Mozambican Reserve Management Authority and Ministry of Tourism since 2003. They survey the lion population every 3-4 years across the whole Reserve and also monitor lions in an intensive study area of 600 km². Over this period the lion population in Niassa Reserve has increased from between 600-800 lions in 2005, to 1,000-1,200 lions in 2012. This makes Niassa National Reserve a stronghold for lion conservation in Africa and one of less than 10 areas in Africa that still have more than 1,000 lions. Begg also mentioned that according to their estimate more than 40 lions a year are killed in the snares deployed for bushmeat.

Viet Nam

On April 4, Customs officers at Noi Bai International Airport confiscated 26 kg ivory products hidden in checked luggage on a flight originating in Qatar. The 27-year-old subject is awaiting prosecution (Case ref. 4780/ENV). On May 4, authorities at Noi Bai International Airport seized 19 pieces of rhino horn from three subjects on a flight from Qatar, transiting in Bangkok. Later, in early June, authorities confiscated three pieces of rhino horn from another subject whose flight route was also from Qatar through Bangkok (Case ref. 4920 and 5003/ENV). ENV Wildlife Crime Unit, Education for Nature - Vietnam (ENV)

Europe

European CITES Agencies and health authorities worry about the African bush meat illegally reaching European markets through the airports in Paris, London and Brussels; such meat is also entering Switzerland, Germany and other countries. Recipients are mainly the African immigrant communities. The dried and often semi-rotten meat comes from antelopes, apes, monkeys, cane rats, elephant, lions and other species. Swiss scientists are presently preparing a DNA-data base in order to facilitate the identification. A French study in 2010 estimated that 270 tons are smuggled each year into Charles de Gaulle airport alone.

USA

CITES has announced that the United States would crush and destroy 5.4 tonnes of impounded ivory. The material included raw and carved ivory which was seized by the authorities over the past 25 years. The actions are part of a coordinated effort by the Government to implement [President Barack Obama's Executive Order of Combating Wildlife Trafficking](#).

The Dama Gazelle (*Nanger dama*)

SCF Sandscript, Oct. 2013

The dama gazelle is one of the world's rarest and most endangered antelopes (IUCN Red List status: Critically Endangered). Formerly common across its grassland habitats of the Sahelian zone of Africa, it now only exists in a small handful of tiny, isolated populations in Niger and Chad. With overhunting by far the major cause for its demise, the Dama gazelle is also prone to encroachment of its preferred habitats by livestock development and agriculture, as well by severe drought and desertification. In all, there are probably no more than 300 Dama gazelles in the wild today. The Sahara Conservation Fund has been working to conserve the gazelle for several years and the need for more nonintrusive ways of monitoring the presence and distribution of this highly vulnerable species are urgently required to formulate viable management plans.

In 2010, the Mohammed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund generously awarded SCF \$26,200 for the purchase and deployment of a grid of camera traps to help monitor and manage a significant population of the dama gazelle in Niger's newly created Termit and Tin Toumma National Nature Reserve.

Hunters from the local population of Toubou pastoralists have been the gazelles' main threat, with animals being shot opportunistically in ones and twos. Work with the herders and their leaders are, however, having a positive impact. Recognizing the value of working closely with the local people to conserve the gazelle, the Saint Louis Zoo WildCare



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Institute recently donated \$10,000 to employ community game guards with a Dama gazelle-specific mandate to work with the local community. The two guards were recruited from among the local Toubou people to help SCF in its efforts to raise awareness locally about the plight of the Dama gazelle and serve as both ambassadors and protectors for the dama conservation effort. The guards provide a vital link between SCF and the local people and their activities include assisting in the installation and maintenance of the camera trap grids.

Democratic Republic of the Congo: Okapi threatened

The Okapi – a national symbol of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, also known as the “forest giraffe” is now on the brink of extinction, according to the latest update of The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. IUCN reports serious declines in the population of the Okapi (*Okapia johnstoni*), a close relative of the giraffe, unique to the rainforests of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The species is now Endangered, only one step away from the highest risk of extinction, with numbers dwindling across its range. Poaching and habitat loss, as well as the presence of rebels, elephant poachers and illegal miners, are the principal threats to its survival.

“The Okapi is revered in Congo as a national symbol – it even features on the Congolese franc banknotes,” says Dr Noëlle Kümpel, Co-Chair of the IUCN SSC Giraffe and Okapi Specialist Group. “Sadly, DRC has been caught up in civil conflict and ravaged by poverty for nearly two decades, leading to widespread degradation of Okapi habitat and hunting for its meat and skin. Supporting government efforts to tackle the civil conflict and extreme poverty in the region are critical to securing its survival.”



High-Level Panel Calls for UN Action against Illicit Wildlife Trade

A High-Level Panel held during the 68th Session of the UN General Assembly has called for UN action against illegal wildlife trade. The event, **'Poaching and Illicit Wildlife Trafficking: A Multidimensional Crime and a Growing Challenge to the International Community'**, took place on 26 September 2013, and was convened by the Governments of Gabon and Germany. Illicit wildlife trafficking is increasingly conducted by sophisticated criminal networks, and is estimated to total US \$19 billion per year, making it the fourth biggest illegal trade worldwide after drugs, arms and human beings. The event follows a recent resolution by the UN Crime Commission making illicit wildlife trafficking a serious crime.

Speaking at the event, President of Gabon, Ali Bongo Ondimba, remarked that “Illicit wildlife crime is no longer a simple environmental problem. It is a transnational crime and a threat to peace and security on our continent.” He called for the appointment of a special UN envoy on wildlife crime and for an UN resolution, with support from Germany and the UK. The President of Tanzania, Jakaya Kikwete, called on the international community to curb demand by closing markets. Other panelists included: German Foreign Minister, Guido Westerwelle; Deputy Secretary-General of the UN, Jan Eliasson; and Director General of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), James Leape. The Executive Director of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Yury Fedotov, and the Secretary-General of the Economic Community of Central Africa States (ECCAS), Ahmad Allam-Mi, also spoke. The Secretary-General of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), John Scanlon, moderated the discussion. Ministers and other high-level representatives from Chad, Columbia, Thailand, the UK and the US attended the event.

**THE AFRICAN INDABA TEAM WISHES ALL
READERS A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY
NEW YEAR.**



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