A Word From The Editor
Gerhard R Damm

My co-editors and I have been overwhelmed with material during the past couple of months; in fact we received so many contributions, and also obtained permissions to republish a number of highly interesting articles that we finally decided to present you with two African Indaba issues in October. This issue 12-5-I will be followed by issue 12-5-II a few days after you received the email with this African Indaba. Watch your inbox!

The poaching pandemic in Africa remains on top of the agenda. Encouragingly the South African authorities apprehended a gang of 10 poachers a few days ago; one can only hope that the courts will act swiftly, convict the culprits and hand down exemplary sentences. Apparently, there are hopes that the principal defendant Hugo Ras will cooperate with authorities. The world will be watching. There remains much to be done, though, to stop the slaughter of rhinos in South Africa. You can get some in-depth information from a recently released report “The Viability of Legalizing Rhino Horn Trade in South Africa”, download the report now! Government and private sector need to finally pull at one end of the rope.

On a lighter note, Janine Maré of Africa Geographic online magazine presents us with a very well researched article on women in hunting, aptly titled “The Rise of the Huntress” culminating in an interview with Eva Shockey and Brittany Boddington.
CIC Africa Ambassador Dr. Ali Kaka Meets Hon. Jean Kapata In Lusaka

Gerhard R. Damm

Last August the CIC Ambassador to Africa, Dr. Ali Kaka, met with the Hon Jean Kapata, Minister of Tourism and Arts (MOTA) and with the Deputy Minister the Hon. Lawrence Evans, and the Permanent Secretary Mr. Steven Mwansa as well as several high ranking personalities from the ministry and ZAWA.

Dr. Kaka informed the Zambian party on current international developments in the area of **Sustainable use and Livelihoods** and handed over key CIC literature on legal issues and best practices from around the world. Summaries of the literature will be circulated in Government. The information came at an opportune moment when ZAWA is developing the new wildlife policy. Dr. Kaka has been requested to provide his expert comments on the draft on behalf of CIC when completed by the consultants.

Dr. Kaka’s dispositions and explanations – especially his critique regarding the restrictions on safari hunting still in place during the visit – helped the Honorable Minister in the private consultations with her Permanent Secretary Mr. Stephen Mwansa.

The next day Mr. Mwansa had a long final meeting with Zambian hunting groups, including PHAZ (Professional Hunters Association of Zambia), as the ending point of a long consultative process. A press conference was subsequently scheduled for August 21st. In the press conference, the journalists were addressed by the Honorable Minister, and the lifting of the suspension of safari hunting in 19 Game Management Areas (GMAs) was announced [Editor’s Note: Contrary to opportunistic anti-use propaganda, Zambia never banned safari hunting; legal hunting has been taking place on 8 GMAs and numerous private properties during January 2014 to August 2014. What anti-use activists called “hunting ban” was actually a moratorium on safari hunting in certain GMAs]. The Minister’s action is a strong signal that regulated safari hunting has a future in Zambia.

Following the appeal and request of the Hon. Minister and the Permanent Secretary to assist Government and ZAWA in the conservation of the wildlife and its habitat in Zambia, the CIC International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation, through Dr. Kaka and other internationally recognized CIC experts, will provide broad assistance relating to the establishment of sustainable and responsible hunting practices within a comprehensive legal framework.

Dr. Kaka reiterated that Zambia’s pride of having arguably some of the richest bio-diversity on the African continent deserves the co-operation and assistance of all hunter-conservationists; the CIC with its institutional and advocacy resources, and in cooperation with the Ministry and ZAWA, plans a series of follow-up visits in the near future.
KNP Anti-Poaching Chief Speaks
Gerhard Damm

Africa Geographic’s Scott Ramsay interviewed the anti-poaching chief of Kruger NP, Major-General Johan Jooste, in August. Here is a synopsis of the interview (download the full text here):

“Think Big, Start Small, Act Now” – this is how the 61-year-old ex-army general wants to tackle the poaching pandemic in South Africa’s flagship park and protect its rhinos. Jooste says that “we are fighting a war ... rangers are performing military roles to battle poachers; we have to militarize our ranger corps”. The manpower available to the general includes about 400 rangers, and about 150 other men, including special rangers, as well as an airwing with two helicopters, two fixed wing aircraft and two microlights, besides a small contingent of police and a joint command with an army company.” The general added that KNP currently deploys one ranger for every 50 km², but ideally one ranger should supervise ca 10 km².

“Most of the poachers – ca. 80% - come from Mozambique, and enter the park south of the Olifants River; they infiltrate at night, walking up to 25km into the park” said the general and estimated “that about a dozen groups of 3 poachers each (about 36 to 40 individuals) operate up to 4 or 5 days in KNP at any time, and about 3 groups enter and exit KNP every day.” According to Jooste, the poachers are aware that the anti-poaching units have to arrest them and are not allowed to kill them intentionally. “Shoot to kill will improve the units’ success rate but it won’t stop the poaching” added Jooste, “the poachers come into the park in such numbers that we can just not plug all the holes.”

Jooste said that the 3-men poaching groups are usually uneducated men in their 20s, recruited from poverty, with remarkable bushcraft – formidable opponents with no rules. The rifle handler is equipped with a .458 or .375 rifle, the navigator knows the park and guides the group and the third man carries the knives and axe, food and water. A group can earn more than ZAR100,000 for one excursion; sometimes they are paid per kilogram, so they can earn over ZAR200,000 for two or three days work. This contains some powerful social dynamism; the adjacent communities don’t own the park. It has never been theirs and people living there are asking “What do I get from that park? A few of my community work there, but most of us, what do we get?”

After taking up his assignment in 2013, Major General Jooste unified command structures and built intelligence networks; the units were equipped with technologies like detection and early-warning systems, fly-at-night capabilities, and designated protection zones were set up. Dog team units were deployed and will be expanded in the park and at the gates (one of the dogs as explosive detector to pick up ammunition or weaponry, the other is trained to pick up animal products, specifically rhino horn).

Efforts concentrate in the south which holds a quarter of the world’s rhino on 20% of the KNP surface area. Jooste said that his units need “to create a safe haven, a bastion, a fortress to make sure that we safeguard this core population”. A fortified, monitored fence will be erected in the south, on the east of the intensive protection zone, from the southern boundary of the park to a latitude north of Skukuza.

When poachers are caught police is called in and meticulous crime scene management provides proof in the court. With international organized crime backing the poachers, bail and legal defense is often provided, so careful management of the crime scene is essential. “We have a better conviction rate, the turn-around time is quicker, and the sentences are harsh”, said Jooste; “in 2013, we neutralized 133 poachers, of which 47 were killed. This year so far we have neutralized 76, of which about 20 have been killed.”
Although growth in poaching is slowing down, poaching is not decreasing and a national, regional and global solution is needed, of which demand reduction is critical as well as disrupting the networks and focus on nailing the Mozambican middlemen.

The general expressed his dissatisfaction that nothing is happening in Mozambique, whose citizens are making armed, illegal incursions into South Africa, and plundering the country’s resources. He said that “we know many of the “level 2” bosses, living in Massingir. 80% of the solution lies in taking these guys out. We will expect that soon we will have the ability to work with the Mozambican police to pursue the middlemen.” ... “We have good informer networks in Mozambique and a standing reward for information that leads to a conviction”, he added.

Commenting on the recent poaching of two elephant bulls in the north of KNP, the general mentioned that part of the solution lies in the holistic approach of regional asset protection by a regional, even a continental task force to protect rhinos, elephant and other animals. Importantly law-enforcement and intelligence networks are needed, demand has to be reduced and the syndicates must be nailed.

Jooste added that “we have to decide what we do with our current rhinos. We decided that relocating them is part of the solution and initially about 260 rhinos, but ultimately about 500 will be moved, in the short term mostly to private game reserves or state protected areas in the Northern Cape, but other countries are not excluded. The rhinos Kruger relocated to these places are not allowed to be hunted.” The revenue from selling these rhinos is about ZAR300,000 per animal and the funds are coming back to SANParks, and most of it will go to conservation, but Jooste’s anti-poaching team will benefit too.

Jooste also gave his personal opinion on legal rhino horn trade: “I’ve read so much about it, and I’m not sure what the long-term effect will be. Will legal trade help in the short-term, or will it put pressure on us in the long-term. Can it solve the problem? It’s very hard to tell so I’m not sure about trade. But on the other hand, what options do we have? This problem does not have a single, lasting solution. We need a set of solutions that evolves. There are no easy answers.”

As long-term solutions Jooste offered two options: “Giving ownership of Africa’s parks to surrounding communities, so they take responsibility themselves for their wildlife, so they feel a strong sense of ownership in the wellbeing of their wildlife. And second, we have to reduce demand in Vietnam, Thailand and China.”

Scott Ramsay put a final question to Major General Jooste “Are you and your team in Kruger going to win this war? And received a short and simple answer: YES!

Scott Ramsay spends most of each year exploring Southern Africa’s protected areas, taking photographs and interviewing the experts who work in the protected areas. For more, go to www.yearinthewild.com or www.facebook.com/yearinthewild

Devastating Decline Of Forest Elephants In Central Africa


African forest elephants—taxonomically and functionally unique—are being poached at accelerating rates, but we lack range-wide information on the repercussions. Analysis of the largest survey dataset ever assembled for forest elephants (80 foot-surveys; covering 13,000 km; 91,600 person-
days of fieldwork) revealed that population size declined by ca. 62% between 2002–2011, and the taxon lost 30% of its geographical range. The population is now less than 10% of its potential size, occupying less than 25% of its potential range. High human population density, hunting intensity, absence of law enforcement, poor governance, and proximity to expanding infrastructure are the strongest predictors of decline. To save the remaining African forest elephants, illegal poaching for ivory and encroachment into core elephant habitat must be stopped. In addition, the international demand for ivory, which fuels illegal trade, must be dramatically reduced.

The Viability Of Legalizing Rhino Horn Trade In South Africa

Citation: Taylor, A., Brebner, K., Coetze, R., Davies-Mostert, H., Lindsey, P., Shaw, J. and ‘t Sas-Rolfes, M. (2014) The Viability of Legalizing Rhino Horn Trade in South Africa Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA), Pretoria, South Africa

South Africa is facing a major rhino-poaching crisis. If poaching continues to escalate, a tipping point may eventually be reached forcing the population into decline for the first time in 50-100 years reversing one of the greatest conservation success stories.

The trade-sceptics, i.e. most rhino range states outside southern Africa, many influential international NGO’s and a number of Parties to CITES are at loggerheads with the pro-trade lobby. Both trade or no trade scenarios carry risks that could negatively impact South Africa’s rhino populations. Taking into account the facts that the mechanisms for controlling a legal trade in South Africa are not yet in place, that the number of rhino horns in private stockpiles are uncertain, and that some private rhino owners are not yet compliant with permitting regulations, it is likely that lifting the moratorium at the present time will lead to laundering of illegal horn into legal stockpiles as well as smuggling of horn out of the country.

A secure, national electronic permitting system and rhino database for all permitting issues for live rhinos and rhino horn, including the marking and identification of horn using DNA profiling, and the full disclosure of horn stockpiles of private rhino owners must be operational at least one year before the 17th Conference of Parties that is due to be held in 2016. Many Parties to CITES are unlikely to vote in favor of lifting the international trade ban before this happens Economists must also decide on a system to control and regulate trade in rhino horn. This should be done for both national and international trade because legalizing international trade may turn out to be the only way to reduce poaching in the future if law enforcement continues to fail.

News From Kenya

Ali Kaka

Early this year, a concerted effort by a few conservation organization to sensitize the public about the alarming rate of poaching in the country culminated in a Press Conference led by Richard Leakey and his organization called Wildlife Direct during which he loudly proclaimed the situation as requiring declaration by the country’s President as a “National Disaster” and instituting emergency measures accorded to such a declaration.

The wildlife agency, KWS, was at the same time declared by the lobbyists as incompetent and too corrupt to deal with the crisis.
The response from the Ministry and KWS was swift and defensive. Without really giving substantial data to counter the accusations, the reaction was more about calling the organizations alarmists, insincere and motivated by self-gain. KWS went at length to show a trend of increase in enforcement activities and reduction in the rate of loss. Since then, interestingly there has been reduced reports on poaching! Notably, reports on arrests and seizures at points of entry/exit continue unabated.

On the plus side however, stern sentences have been passed by the Courts on some foreign nationals found with ivory, and some mysterious deaths of alleged known poaching masterminds which some have called extra judicial killings.

Sadly, it is no secret that KWS is undergoing some management challenges with uncertainty among the senior staff and lack of a substantive CEO and Board of Trustees whose terms expired early this year. To complicate things further, since last year there has been a proposal being tested to merge the Forest Service with KWS, something along the lines of the USA model of Fish and Wildlife. There has been strong opposition to this from the many conservation organisations in the country. While the alleged deadline has passed, there hasn’t been any official statement as to the status or decisions around this proposal yet.

Selous Elephant Emergency Project SEEP
Rolf D Baldus

Tanzania’s Selous Game Reserve – Africa’s oldest and largest protected area – and its surrounding ecosystem have lost an estimated two thirds of their elephants in just a few years, according to an aerial census conducted in late 2013. The Selous, once home to Africa’s second largest elephant population, has suffered such heavy ivory poaching that only an estimated 13,000 elephants remain.

The elephant-poaching epidemic continues to escalate across Africa, threatening the future of these magnificent animals. In 1976 an estimated 110,000 elephants inhabited the Selous ecosystem, an area of over 87,000 km² - twice the size of Switzerland. Tanzania’s President Jakaya Kikwete has warned that without action, we may face an even greater loss.

Due to its outstanding bio-diversity value the Selous has been a “World Heritage Site” since 1982. In its last meeting, and at the proposal of UNESCO and IUCN, the World Heritage Commission has declared the Selous a “World Heritage Site in Danger”.

Quelling the poaching crisis is crucial for conservation of the threatened wildlife, as well as for Tanzania’s economy. The Selous is one of the largest remaining wilderness areas in Africa and an important tourist destination. Protecting the natural resources of the Selous should therefore be a national and global priority.

The Selous was under a similar threat in the mid-eighties of the last century, when elephants had been greatly reduced by poaching. A joint project by the Tanzanian and German Governments managed to halt the trend and rehabilitate the reserve. Elephant numbers doubled again. What was achieved once can be repeated!
The German Government has responded to the current needs and has provided eight million Euros through the German Development Bank KfW for a major Selous project. Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS) will implement the reserve management component and has a long-term commitment to the conservation of the Selous ecosystem. This project will start in 2015. Nevertheless, the present crisis requires an immediate answer. While poaching continues, fortunately at a much reduced rate, it is now urgently needed to get the rangers back into the field and on patrol again, day and night, seven days a week and with a high level of dedication.

Several Partners have joined hands with the Selous Game Reserve and the Tanzanian Wildlife Division to react with immediate emergency assistance and bring the menace to a halt. This is the essence of the “Selous Elephant Emergency Project“ (SEEP). It is temporary in so far as it aims to close the gap in support.

Under the SEEP, the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development provides a considerable amount via GIZ. This will be complemented by FZS funds through the ‘Selous Security Plan’ and – to a lesser extent – CIC.

Supporters from the private sector have started to provide additional funds or equipment for free or at reduced costs. More partners are welcome to join the initiative. SEEP currently equips the rangers with uniforms, boots, communication equipment, torches and some vehicles for their anti-poaching work. SEEP also assists in management, training and rehabilitation of road equipment.

SEEP PARTNERS: Federal Government of Germany, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Selous Game Reserve/Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism (MNRT), Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS), International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC)

SEEP SUPPORTERS: Conservation Force, Shikar Safari Club International, Beho Beho/Selous, Hilleberg Tents/Sweden, Swarovski Optics, TAWISA.

Anti-Poaching In Zimbabwe
Trevor Lane (the original article was adapted by Gerhard Damm for African Indaba)

Two incidents in March highlight the value of trained, motivated staff. In the first incident, Lovison, Enock and and Majele, three dedicated and brave rangers from Robins Camp, who heard shots fired near to where they were on patrol on 5th March. They followed up, found an elephant bull with the ivory removed and then tracked the poaching gang, catching up with them in thick
bush, and initiating a contact at close range. They wounded and captured one poacher, and saw blood spoor from others before the gang crossed the nearby border into Botswana. Information from the wounded poacher indicated a group of twelve had crossed over from Zambia into the Zambezi NP, and had walked to Robins (6 days). The first and only elephant they had shot on this trip and the bull’s tusks weighed 88lbs and 62 lbs. News has since filtered back that 8 of the gang have made it back to Zambia – according to sources, they buried one fellow in the Park, another died and the “boss” with the heavy rifle ran off badly injured and has not been seen since!

On the 21st March, three Forestry rangers in the Panda Masuie Forest (Zambezi National Park) picked up the tracks of a gang of Zambian elephant poachers. At the park boundary they were joined by three scouts from the Zambezi Camp, led by Senior Ranger Simon Muchibaya. The following day, the team caught up with the Zambians and opened up on an armed poacher they spotted. In the ensuing melee, the main poacher was killed and his weapon recovered, while a porter was wounded and captured, and the rest of the gang fled, leaving everything behind. The deceased poacher was a gang kingpin with a long history of poaching elephant. A total of 37 tusks were recovered with a total weight of 692kg (average of 18.7kg or 41lbs per tusk). The Zambians are only targeting the bulls with larger tusks. A great effort by Senior Ranger S. Muchibaya, Rangers B. Mpunzi, and E. Sibanda, and Forestry Rangers F. Mutsvangwa, F. Chiremba, and M. Mutshongwe.

Whose Elephants Are They? Strengthening Community-Based Conservation And Communities’ Ownership Rights For Elephants In Africa
Marco Pani

At CITES CoP16 (2013), debates concerning the African Elephant focused only on two issues: a) demand reduction for ivory in consumer States, and b) law enforcement. The trend continued at the IUCN Elephant Summit 2013 and at the London Conference on the Illegal Wildlife Trade 2014, where detailed actions were agreed on law enforcement and demand reduction for wildlife products, but only vague and general statements were made on local communities’ involvement. Further initiatives like President Obama’s Executive Order - Combating Wildlife Trafficking and the related Federal Advisory Council on Wildlife Trafficking, The European Union approach to combat wildlife trafficking, the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime, and the new UN Office on Drug and Crime anti–wildlife trafficking program, emphasize enforcement of anti-poaching and anti-trafficking laws.

These are important initiatives, but their reach is somehow limited because they target effects rather than causes that create illegal use of wildlife. Combating illegal wildlife trade should only be considered as a component of integrated programs that consider the social, economic, ecological and institutional contexts in which unsustainable use of wildlife occurs. The Guardian reported from the London Conference “…It is hard to think of a more desperate failure of world government.. The survival of wild animals depends entirely on those among whom they live... Unless
local people want to save them, they will be poached to the point where just a few remain in fortified reserves.”

The current debate on the illegal trade in ivory and rhino horn has obscured the real threat to wildlife that is, the loss of natural habitat and wildlife through conversion of habitat to farming and livestock. This has implications for far more species than just elephant and rhino. If the natural habitat is lost and more land is converted entirely to farming then we will lose a large number of species in communal lands.

A recent briefing paper of the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), remarks that the current emphasis on law enforcement and demand reduction neglects the role of effective incentives in achieving sustainable use for conservation and local development.

Poverty remains the first and foremost important cause of poaching in sub-Saharan Africa, where according to the World Bank an average of nearly 50% of the population live on slightly more than one dollar a day. In a case–study of poaching in the Serengeti, Tanzania, poverty and an income shortfall were the most mentioned factors that led an individual to poach (Knapp, E. J. 2012).

Furthermore, although pursuing and even killing poachers may seem useful; this brings the loss of human lives to a secondary stage in respect to wildlife. We must not forget that most of the time, and especially in Africa, these people (the poachers) are human beings trying to obtain income for their families. If you, I, or anyone reading this paper were in the poachers’ places - likely living on one US dollar a day and having to feed a family – I am sure that we would be willing to take the same risks! I am not condoning poaching, but understanding the real causes is of paramount importance.

Although paragraph 17 of the document ‘Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants’ (CoP16 Doc. 53.1) states: “Human infant mortality in and around MIKE sites, which is used as a proxy for poverty at the site level, is the single strongest site-level correlate of PIKE (Proportion of Illegally Killed Elephants), with sites suffering from higher levels of poverty experiencing higher levels of elephant poaching”, no debate took place at CITES CoP16 on such a significant cause of poaching. Even the MIKE program, which, since 2001 has cost more than 20 million US dollars, has not provided, according to some experts, the expected results in assisting the countries to fight poaching. It can be argued, therefore, that the poaching increase of the last few years is more supply-driven than it is demand-driven, or that supply-driven factors are more important to tackle than demand-driven ones.

Challender and McMillan wrote: “The decision to reduce the complex social, cultural, and economic nature of wildlife trade into a simple law enforcement problem fails to address the underlying drivers of poaching and trade. It also lacks legitimacy in source countries where it typically translates into disincentives for rural people to conserve wildlife and conflicts with local livelihood strategies, traditional practices, and cultural norms.”

In order to rectify this situation, it is crucial to bring the issue of benefits accruing to local communities through legal use of wildlife back to the forefront of the international agenda and to start immediate work at national levels. There is a vast recent literature on Community-based Conservation in Africa (see for example Roe D., Nelson, F., Sandbrook, C. 2009, Child, B. 2003, Nelson, F. and Agrawal, A. 2008, Taylor, R., 2001, Torquebiau E. & Taylor R.D. 2009) and a Resolution adopted at the IUCN World Conservation Congress of 2012 may provide guidance.

For example, the so called “CITES success” for vicuña in South America in reality has been a success generated through a combination of the recognition of communities’ ownership rights and industry participation. Many people do not know that the key game changer in vicuña conservation in Peru, that holds the great majority of the species across its whole range, was a Legislative Decree of 1993, the year before CITES CoP9, that gave the custody and rights of exploitation of all of the vicuna populations located on their lands to rural communities in the Peruvian Andes (thanks to the
above, the vicuna population in Peru has increased from 20,000 vicunas of 1991, to more than 200,000 today).

This move, suggested by a handful of conservationists, including Obdulio Menghi (at that time Scientific Coordinator of the CITES Secretariat), a lawyer representing the Peruvian communities and myself, coupled with the investments made by the textile industry, generated the conservation success. Without the granting of a sort of “ownership” right to the rural Andean communities, poaching would have prevailed and the vicuñas would have been on the brink of extinction. I remember quite well (I was a member of the delegation of Italy at CITES CoP9) the strong opposition of animal welfare groups for this move. They were advocating only stronger law enforcement as a solution, and claiming that legal trade in wool would decimate the vicuña! Can the vicuña case be a lesson for the African Elephant or rhinos, especially in southern and parts of East Africa? The answer is yes - provided that governments implement or devise policies enabling, *inter alia*, the granting of ownership rights to local communities through for example specific contractual measures or other sorts of custodianship.

The devolution of ownership of wildlife to communities to allow direct receipt of benefits from consumptive and non-consumptive use (note that communities appear to have few direct benefits from the multi-million dollar tourism industry) can provide crucial incentives for sustainable wildlife management. The fact that many countries have not fully devolved authority or ownership rights to communities but have maintained State ownership over wildlife is a major obstacle to achieve effective wildlife conservation over huge wild areas. The present situation, where only demand reduction and law enforcement are debated as a solution to poaching, is a continuation of the failure *vis-à-vis* Elephant conservation that has led to an increase in poaching, due mainly to the fact that communities are removed from the resources and also that they cannot benefit from them as a result of CITES rulings. In addition, their voice is unheard at CITES meetings.

The decision made at the 14th Conference of the Parties to CITES (CoP14) in 2007 where, in exchange for withdrawing opposition to authorization for four southern African countries to sell raw ivory to Japan and China in 2008, trade opponents obtained an agreement that no future sales could be made by those countries before 2017, has been voiced as one of the main causes of the current poaching explosion in Africa. It is even clear from MIKE and ETIS figures that after CoP14 the rate of poaching began to increase. As Stiles (2012) suggested, “The inconvenient truth is that the CITES ivory trade ban and the 2007 and 2010 CITES CoP votes to cut off legal raw ivory supplies are the real causes of the recent elephant holocaust, not the red herring 1999 and 2008 ivory sales authorized by CITES.”

The biggest political weapon in the hands of African countries, if they hope to have a chance in the fight against poaching, is to ensure not only that the local communities receive benefits from any legal sustainable use of elephants, but to also empower them to make this happen. Poverty reduction through legal sustainable wildlife utilization should become a top priority objective of many countries - and this should be strongly advocated in CITES debates. The sustainable use of elephants and the benefits that return to local communities go beyond a trade (or no trade) agreement such as CITES; sustainable use is mainly a development issue where conservation is a complement to development, and UN agencies, such as FAO and UNDP, should increase their efforts towards an integrated approach to improve community livelihoods through sustainable wildlife utilization.

The issues of benefit sharing and governance by local communities emerged at the Tanzanian Wildlife Conference to Stop Wildlife Crime and Advance Wildlife Conservation: A Call to Action. This Conference, organized by the Tanzanian Government with UNDP and the US-based ICCF Foundation, was held in Dar es Salaam on 9 and 10 May 2014, bringing together key stakeholders to
suggest appropriate actions and sustainable funding mechanisms to curb the poaching of elephants and the illegal ivory trade. Having attended this well organized and pragmatic Conference, I would like to stress the importance of the fight against poverty and the improvement of governance as the two main areas that need to be tackled in order to combat poaching.

As Rowan Martin (1997 – p.79) suggested, the greatest threat to conservation of biological diversity in many countries comes from competing forms of land use, which in many cases lead to overexploitation of wild resources. Ownership and rights of access to resources, legislation and economic incentives should be complementary in creating a climate which is favorable for sustaining wild animals and their habitats. The foundation of sustainable use of wildlife is this: users are more likely to conserve resources when it is in their interest to do so.

In a very recent and interesting article in Science Magazine (Wildlife decline and social conflict), the authors, recognizing wildlife decline “as a source of social conflict rather than a symptom”, wrote: “Reducing or preventing wildlife conflict by strengthening local resource tenure has broad application but requires strong governance and an international commitment to recognize user rights…Similarly, policies aimed at addressing wildlife decline must consider the social context of wildlife use and the feedbacks between wildlife scarcity and social conflict. Leadership must move beyond superficial reactions to elephant and rhino poaching and consider the complicated fate of the billions of people who rely on our planet’s rapidly disappearing wildlife for food and income.”

The actual poaching crisis is nothing new. The fact that militia groups are selling ivory in exchange for weapons is an old story in Africa. What is new is that animal welfare groups seem to have monopolized the world media and politics. If you compare the statements of some animal-welfare groups at CITES CoP14 in 2007 “Parties should put ivory beyond economic use” with the declaration of the London Conference, you will find the same language. A coincidence? I do not think so.

Western politicians are in desperate need of visibility and media coverage and the animal welfare groups are offering it to them on a golden platter. The real debate on poverty, sustainable use and development is not capturing the media, and the politicians are seeking “correctness”. But is it correct to have tens of thousands of people still migrating from Africa to Europe to escape death and starvation? Or to fence enormous areas, translocating the villagers and persecuting the local people, as human rights groups have reported from Botswana?

Botswana, home to the largest elephant population in Africa, and once at the forefront of sustainable use, took the decision to ban elephant hunting. Not on scientific grounds, as their elephant population is growing. On what grounds? We do not know. But what we do know is that, as predicted, the hunting ban is driving the communities who depend on wildlife use into poverty, reducing their income by a substantial amount. And recently, the US Fish and Wildlife Service suspended the import of elephant trophies from Tanzania and Zimbabwe.

You do not have to be a nuclear scientist to understand that the ultimate effect of both decisions will be an increase in poaching, because of the lack of revenues in an already economically depressed situation. If local communities are repeatedly kept out of the system and are deprived from the revenues they obtain from trophy hunting, they may turn a blind eye to poaching or, driven by poverty, may even be recruited into poaching gangs.

More importantly, it should be understood that a well-regulated trophy hunting system can help to maintain elephant numbers whilst also raising revenues to fund elephant conservation programs and benefit local communities, who share 80% of the species’ range. Given that habitat loss contributes significantly to elephant population decline, it is essential to encourage coexistence between elephants and local communities: elephants are generally unpopular because they damage crops and threaten lives.
Sport hunters have a major responsibility towards the species they pursue and perhaps the time has come for a hunters’ strategy on wildlife conservation in Africa. A call for hunting organizations and operators to join forces and identify what unites them is necessary and timely. Hunters have a vast knowledge of wildlife conservation needs and an independently guided scientific, economic and social strategy on sport hunting in Africa is long overdue.

A recent USAID press release states: “USAID Invests Over $210 Million To End Wildlife Trafficking And Support Conservation With First Biodiversity Policy” - notes: “In Namibia, for example, the poaching of wildlife went unchecked. For 15 years, USAID invested in community conservancies, where local communities were given rights to manage and benefit from their wildlife through activities such as ecotourism. Today in Namibia, wildlife is an economic engine for growth. One out of eight Namibians is a member of a conservancy, which turns additional profits each year. Moreover, wildlife populations in Namibia are rebounding and continue to thrive, and—despite a poaching crisis in other parts of Africa—there is almost no recorded poaching in Namibian conservancies.”

This is a very positive outcome of practical sustainable wildlife use through communities’ involvement. USAID has a long-standing and vast experience in CBNRM in Africa and is one of the most active international donor agencies in this field. Is there a communication problem between USFWS and USAID? Some statements made by USFWS in its recent suspension of import of elephant trophies from Tanzania and Zimbabwe, such as those on Wildlife Management Areas in Tanzania and CAMPFIRE in Zimbabwe, are not taking in account USAID’s work in these two countries. In addition, Namibia’s success is also due to the fact that communities are retaining nearly 100% of the incomes derived from trophy hunting - not the lower percentages of 20% in Mozambique and 50% in Zambia.

In a report published in the Guardian newspaper, a Tanzanian villager is quoted as saying: “The elephants are now more important than we the people. Since I was born, I haven’t seen any economic benefit from the elephants in our village. We are the ones who pay everything for our development. The animals are there but they don’t pay taxes, they don’t farm yet they are more important than us. Surely, I wish them all dead.” Those familiar with rural Africa will know that this is a widespread feeling in areas where elephants and people share the land, and where the people get no benefits from elephants. In the absence of economic benefits accruing from the elephant, negative attitudes towards the elephant will heighten and may place the elephant population under risk of increased poaching, which may reverse the progress made by many countries to date. To compensate for the direct costs associated with living alongside elephants, which include crop damage, injury and loss of human life, the elephant must yield economic returns to the landholders.

We must admit that hunting and trade bans and ivory destruction are not the solution; burning such an important economic asset, while thousands of people are starving, is a sort of crime – as is considered burning bank-notes in many countries -, a kind of soul cleansing for demonstrated inaction. It will only make wild elephants more attractive to poachers. The countries where hunting has been banned have suffered more wildlife declines than countries where hunting is still permitted (Pack S., Golden R., Walker A., Surridge M., Mawdsley J. 2013).

Animal welfare NGO’s and now even legitimate conservation ones are claiming that destroying ivory stockpiles deters poachers and smugglers, but there is the no evidence to justify these claiming. Police and law enforcement agencies around the world are incinerating huge amounts of drugs and narcotics on a nearly daily basis. Has the narcotics smuggling and trafficking decrease because of these destructions? No.

The voices of African communities sharing their land with the African Elephant are seldom heard at CITES meetings. A notable exception was the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties held in Harare (Zimbabwe) in 1997 where the southern African communities were well represented.
As a result of this active representation, some African Elephant populations were transferred to CITES Appendix II, which paved the way for the first “one-off” ivory sale to Japan, which has been so misrepresented by animal welfare NGOs.

Outside Africa, the presence of Canada’s Inuit Communities at the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (Bangkok, 2013) was crucial in defeating a proposal to list the Polar Bear in Appendix I. The communities had an opportunity to explain to the international community about their culture and livelihood-dependence on proper wildlife management.

In recent years, there have been significant advances in international thinking and action on indigenous issues and rights, including the landmark adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007 and a Fact Sheet provides an overview of the United Nations human rights system and the rights of indigenous peoples. For example, the Convention on Biological Diversity with COP Decision V/16 recognized the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB) as an advisory body.

A notable organization working for local and indigenous communities is the ICCA Consortium, an international association dedicated to promoting the appropriate recognition of and support to ICCAs (Indigenous Peoples’ and Community Conserved Areas and Territories) in the regional, national and global arena.

It is therefore crucial to guarantee a greater presence of local communities to International Conferences, and in particular to CITES Conferences of the Parties, in order to advance the conservation of the Elephant and other African wildlife. A possible way to resolve the increase in poaching would be to introduce into CITES a Decision that would give Indigenous People Organizations and Community-based Organizations an advisory role in the decision making process. This decision could have an incredibly positive effect on the conservation not only of the African Elephant but also of all wildlife. Decision-making mechanisms at the international level need to take into account the needs of people sharing the land and obtaining their livelihoods from wildlife, and nobody is in a better position than the communities to advocate their needs. It is time to think about human welfare as the solution to conservation and development. Local communities and indigenous people worldwide are a real force for conservation and the basis for finding solutions to this complex issue. We live in a society in which very seldom the cry of poor people is heard.

In the end, it is also important to put ideology aside in the Elephant debate and to listen to the African people for the solutions they want to implement. Solutions that should be driven by Africa and not imported, imposed or bought. And finally, to find an appropriate ownership mechanism for Elephants and wildlife in Africa that benefits those who live with them.

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Marco Pani is an international consultant with nearly 30 years of experience in wildlife conservation and trade, with past experiences as Director of TRAFFIC Europe Italy’s Office, as Associate Enforcement Officer in the CITES Secretariat in Geneva and as staff in the Italian Ministry of Environment. He is a member of the CEESP/SSC Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialist Group (SULi) and Crocodile Specialist Groups of IUCN, Vice President of IWMC-World Conservation Trust and Advisor to Conservation Force.
A Socio-Economic Review Of Hunting In Africa

SCI Foundation initiated a new study on the socio-economics of hunting in Africa. The report will collect numerical evidence of the benefits that sustainable hunting provides. The study is a follow-up to SCI’s 12th annual African Wildlife Consultative Forum, which took place last November in Zambia. Southwick Associates, a consulting company specializing in natural resource and environmental economics, will lead the data collection and reporting. Participants of African Wildlife Consultative Forum (AWCF), including representatives of government and the professional hunting industry, are helping compile information.

The Southwick Associates study will be submitted for peer review to ensure it meets the highest standard of professionalism. This study is of particular importance, as some organizations question the impact and importance of hunting to conservation and local communities. They often promote other non-consumptive options as a better alternative and make biased comparisons to hunting economics.

The study initiated by SCI Foundation will certainly contribute valuable data to the discussion.

Poaching Is Asian-Run And Africa-Based

2014 TRAFFIC Report on Illegal Rhino Horn and Ivory Trade

Illegal rhino horn trade has reached the highest levels since the early 1990s, and illegal trade in ivory increased by nearly 300 percent from 1998 to 2011, according to a new report that was prepared by the wildlife monitoring network TRAFFIC. Seizure data indicate that “the fundamental trade dynamic now lies between Africa and Asia,” according to the report. In China and Thailand, elephant ivory is fashioned into jewelry and carved into other decorative items, while wealthy consumers in Vietnam use rhino horn as a drug which they mistakenly believe cures hangovers and detoxifies the body. Rhinos and elephants are under serious poaching pressure throughout Africa, with even previously safe populations collapsing: Central Africa’s forest elephants have been reduced by an estimated 76 percent over the past 12 years while in Tanzania’s Selous Game Reserve, elephant numbers have fallen from 70,000 in 2007 to only 13,000 by late 2013.

A record 1004 rhinos were poached in 2013 in South Africa alone—a stark contrast to the 13 animals poached there in 2007 before the latest crisis began. Record quantities of ivory were seized worldwide between 2011 and 2013, with an alarming increase in the frequency of large-scale ivory seizures (500 kg or more) since 2000. Preliminary data already show more large-scale ivory seizures in 2013 than in the previous 25 years. Although incomplete, 2013 raw data already represent the greatest quantity of ivory in these seizures in more than 25 years.

Both rhino horn and ivory trafficking are believed to function as Asian-run, African-based operations, with the syndicates increasingly relying on sophisticated technology to run their operations. In order to disrupt and apprehend the individuals behind them, the global response needs to be equally sophisticated.

Rising Murder Toll Of Park Rangers Calls For Tougher Laws

IUCN News

IUCN, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, and the International Ranger Federation (IRF) call for a toughened stance against wildlife crime globally. 56 rangers have lost their lives in the line of duty in the last 12 months, 29 of whom have been killed by poachers. Last year’s death toll has reached 102, with poachers and militia responsible for 69 of those deaths. The figures represent only the confirmed deaths from some 35 countries that voluntarily report to the IRF, the actual number of rangers killed in the line of duty worldwide could be two to three times higher.

Almost 60% of all rangers killed this year are from Asia, with the majority of those from India. India, Thailand, Kenya and the Democratic Republic of the Congo have seen the sharpest increase in ranger deaths. In DRC’s Virunga National Park alone, some 140 rangers have been killed in the last 15 years. IRF and its charity arm The Thin Green Line Foundation offer equipment and training to rangers and support the families of those who have lost their lives.

The extent and impact of illegal wildlife trade and new approaches to combat it, including effective enforcement strategies to combat wildlife poaching and associated crime, will be discussed at the IUCN World Parks Congress 2014 taking place from 12 to 19 November in Sydney, Australia. A series of prime-time debates at the IUCN World Parks Congress in Sydney, the World Leaders’ Dialogues, will include a session called “The Nature of Crime”, which will discuss effective enforcement strategies to combat wildlife poaching and associated crime.

The Rise Of The Huntress: A Commentary On The Rising Popularity Of Hunting Among Women

Janine Maré, Africa Geographic

While working at Africa Geographic I have been privy to every side of the hunting debate. Though no-one in the office hunts, and many of us have moral and evidence-based objections to trophy hunting in particular, there are times when we can understand the merits of some forms of hunting.

Leading conservationists have shown how hunting, if managed correctly, can indeed benefit communities and wildlife populations in areas where tourism does not appear to be a viable option. And I can understand why people hunt – the thrill of the chase, a sense of accomplishment, satisfying a primal urge that exists in us all, or to harvest a natural food source. In a Hollywood-esque moment I can even picture myself clad in tight camo, weaving my way through the forest undergrowth, bow and arrow poised while my hair blows in the wind. But that is where my fantasy ends, because looking into the eyes of a magnificent creature, and then killing it, doesn’t fit into my movie.

But in an effort to understand women hunters I decided to explore their history and rationale. From women who hunt for food, to those who hunt for the thrill and the trophy, each is truly different; each forms part of the history of the huntress and lends insight into who she is today.

The idea of the huntress is nothing new. In classical times, the goddess of the hunt (Diana to the Romans and Artemis to the Greeks) was not only lauded for her prowess with a bow, but also for her beauty, fertility and vulnerability. Throughout history prominent women have stood alongside male hunters, equipped with bows or high powered rifles. Elizabeth I of England was a keen hunter.
in the 1500’s, as were the ladies of Louis XIV’s court and Queen Anne of Denmark in the 1600’s; George Washington’s wife, Martha, in the 1700’s, and so on right up to Sarah Palin, who proudly demonstrates her hunting skills to – perhaps – bolster her image in the rough world of American politics.

To some it may seem that these women fall into affluent societal groups where animal life seems to hold less value, and hunting is an entertaining sport. But many of the women involved in hunting throughout history are seen as bold, brave figures who stood for freedom in an oppressive age, fended for otherwise forsaken families, and lent gravitas to feminist movements and women’s rights – and did so with grace and aplomb.

Some women rose to prominence by hunting for necessity. Take Annie Oakley for example. Among many others of her time, she started hunting as a young girl to provide for her family during tough times. And this holds true in the USA even today. Surveys show that the number of women hunting has risen from roughly 1.2 million between 1996 and 2006 to 1.5 million in 2011. Richard Aiken, Natural Resource Economist at US Fish and Wildlife states, “We are not sure why there was such an increase, but our educated guess is it had to do with the low ebb in the economy. Unemployed and underemployed people had more time to hunt.” And, on the other side of the world, women of the Australia’s Aboriginal Martu tribes hunt extensively – mostly, smaller animals that are shared with children and other women to maintain cooperative relationships.

If there ever was a lull in women’s hunting it was when men were hunting one another. In her book, Heart Shots, Women Write about Hunting, Dr. Mary Zeiss Stange writes that American women were often featured in hunting publications like Forest and Stream before World War II, but during the war they assumed more traditional roles, nurturing roles.

But the sexuality of the Diana/Artemis hunting goddess is a familiar archetype in popular culture. Examples include the 1947 release of the sexy DC Comic, The Huntress, followed by the self-sacrificing, rebellious bow hunter Katniss Everdeen in The Hunger Games, and the new-style Disney princesses. Unlike the sweet, subservient Cinderella and other traditional damsels in distress, these strong, taciturn women, like Princess Merida in Brave, have more time for a bow and arrow than a man.

Whether it’s the influence these characters have had on real life, or that real life trends have inspired these characters, it is true that hunting, and particularly archery, have become increasingly popular with the fairer sex. In 2013, Jay McAninch, president and CEO of the US-based Archery Trade Association, stated that one third of all archery participants were women.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service reported a 25% increase in the number of women that hunted between 2006 and 2011, making up 11% of the total US hunting population, and the Pennsylvania Game Commission found a 20% increase in the number of female hunters between 2009 and 2012. Roberta Owens, the membership manager for the Dallas Safari Club, told me that 25% of their members are female. And it’s not just the US that’s seen an increase in women hunting. Enter Japan’s new hunting buzzword, kari-gaaru, which means “hunting girls”. According to Japan’s Environment Ministry the number of women in the hunting industry grew significantly during the first decade of the 21st Century, despite the overall number of hunters decreasing over these years.

But this trend is nothing new. In his 1877 book Fox-hound, forest, and prairie, Captain Pennell Elmhirst wrote, “It will, I think, be admitted by everyone that the number of ladies who hunt now is at least tenfold as compared with a dozen years ago.”

The increase in women who hunt has led to the establishment of a number of organizations, such as the US-based Women in the Outdoors, which had over 10 000 members little more than a year after opening in 1998. A 2012 report from this organization stated that, “women have become the fastest-growing segment of the hunting and shooting community.”

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
A number of companies now offer women-only hunting classes and trips. One such is Charmaine van Vuuren’s Woman Hunt SA, which began operating in 2013. Van Vuuren says that her company is “also involved in transformation, training of black professional hunters. In the intake for this year [2014] there were three black ladies who had undergone training and were successful in graduating as professional hunters, a first for the industry.”

Ladies’ hunting gear is now widely available with pink arrows, bow strings and camouflage coming out as firm favorites. Just look at the website Women Hunt Too, where you can buy a camo tee that boldly states, I don’t wear bows... I shoot them! One statement I found from a former Mississippi State University student sums it up, “I love my bow. It’s camouflage and has all sorts of pink accessories on it. There are all sorts of colors. You can definitely make bow hunting girly.” A quick Google search will give a girl insights on how to make beer-basted rabbit or springbok pie, while articles like 10 ways to decorate with antlers lie within the same blog as bridal shower ideas and wedding details.

As the above blogs and recipes demonstrate, it’s not all rough and tumble in the world of the huntress. There is something about a girl who can take care of herself that is undeniably appealing, but an air of femininity and vulnerability still underscores the huntress.

As per the hunting goddesses and Annie Oakleys of this world, and the Martu women who focus their hunts around community and children, fertility and family still seems to play a big role, particularly with subsistence hunters. And this filters down to mainstream movies like The Hunger Games, in which Katniss hunts to provide for her family, but still has respect for the natural world and an empathetic side with which girls all over the world identify.

Interestingly, a 2007 poll by Field and Stream showed that 25% of women hunters had hunted while pregnant. One particular writer on the site Muley Madness went as far as to comment that “the cutest thing” he had ever seen was his “wife, seven and a half months pregnant, strolling up a hill packing her Remington .308 with a big ol’ smile on her face.”

Author of “Call to the Mild: Learning to Hunt My Own Dinner”, Lily Raff McCaulou, mentions family as integral part of the hunt, “To hunt and butcher an animal is to recognize that meat is not some abstract form of protein that springs into existence tightly wrapped in cellophane and styrofoam. Meat is life. So I seek out recipes that make the most of it. I cook it with care. I share with friends and family. I make sure every bite gets enjoyed.”

Marilyn Kite, Wyoming’s first female state Supreme Court justice, and an instrumental player in the Wyoming’s inaugural Women’s Antelope Hunt says it’s a sense of fellowship that has women dreaming of the hunt, “We’ve found it to be just great recreation, lots of fun, and the camaraderie of it is why you do it, really.”

Tiffany Lakosky of the hunting/outdoor travel TV show, Crush with Lee and Tiffany, echoes these statements in a National Geographic article, “Women are realizing how much fun hunting is and how close it can actually bring them in their relationships with their families.”

Social media and American TV channels are plastered with women like Tiffany leading hunting shows with titles like Dressed to Kill, Whitetail Freaks and Winchester’s Deadly Passion, while Sarah Palin’s Alaska sees “the first lady of the outdoors” enjoying some mother-daughter bonding over a spot of hunting and fishing.

A sense of bonding and affinity for family don’t seem to be the only draw card with trophy hunting becoming a new realm of the huntress. Some outspoken female hunters, such as Kendall Jones and Melissa Bachman, who bare perfect dentition as they pose smiling with fresh lion carcasses on social media sites, have become household names, but also the whipping girls of anti-hunting lobbyists. Jones stated in a recent interview with First for Hunters, “I find it odd that only women have been targeted by these organizations. Why would these huge, powerful organizations
go after me, a woman, a minority in the hunting community and attack me with their anti-hunting rhetoric? I am not the first to go on African safaris yet these groups attack me nonetheless.”

On the other hand, for women like Kendall, it seems any publicity is good publicity. Despite having to remove some of her hunting images from her Facebook fan page as requested by the social media giant itself, she has shot to fame garnering over 685 000 likes on her page since she launched it in February this year.

On the rise of powerful huntresses in the media, Larysa Switlyk, host of Larysa Unleashed on the Sportsman Channel and Destination America, says, “It is a great thing because it is breaking the stereotypes on woman and showing the world we can hunt just as good or even sometimes better than men! Also, it is making it more acceptable to the general population that doesn’t understand hunting.”

With movie hits like Hunger Games, shooting a bow now becomes cool and sparks an interest in girls to try hunting. Switlyk herself only started hunting at age 22 and, unlike many other female hunters, was not introduced to hunting by male family members despite having three older brothers. In fact no-one else in her family hunts and they were the first to criticize her when she took up hunting.

Brenda Valentine, spokesperson for the National Wild Turkey Federation in the United States put it all into perspective in a National Geographic article, “Across the board, women are more independent than they’ve ever been, and they realize they are capable of hunting.”

And Mikayla Lewis, a 15 year-old huntress from Oregon, told CNN why it is that young girls look up to media-born hunting characters as role models, “Katniss is a good representation of female hunters. We’re not what you expect. We can be pretty just like any other girl, even if we’re not afraid to get dirty.”

Perhaps we have come full circle to the goddess we worshipped in ancient times, a sensuous, strong woman who flirted and manipulated her way into our lives. It seems today’s huntresses still hold the same appeal, no matter if they hunt for food or for fun. Love her for the woman she represents and the ideals she fights for, or hate her for the same reason. Either way, it seems the huntress is here to stay.

_Africa Geographic_ asked a pair of huntresses why they hunt, what their thoughts are on woman in hunting and what conservation value they see in hunting a vulnerable species.

**EVA SHOCKEY (ES)** is the daughter of Jim Shockey – hunter, writer, photographer and guide who owns his own hunting adventure company. Eva is the co-host of Jim Shockey’s Hunting Adventures and a representative of the Outdoor Channel.

**BRITTANY BODDINGTON (BB)** is the daughter of hunter and journalist Craig Boddington. Brittany herself is a writer, hunter and was the first woman to ever appear on the cover of Petersons Hunting Magazine. She is also a frequent guest host on Petersen’s Hunting Adventures, previous host on _The American Huntress TV show_ and is currently collaborating with her father for _The Boddington Experience_ for 2015.

_Africa Geographic (AG): Why and when did you start hunting?_  
**ES:** I have gone out hunting, camping and hiking with my dad my entire life but I never actually shot an animal until I was 20. My mom was a professional ballet-jazz dancer and my dad was the hunter of the family. It took me awhile to realize that I could still be a lady like my mom and also love to hunt.
BB: My dad started hunting (in) Africa when he was very young ... I was excited to see the magical place that he had always told me stories about but I was not interested in hunting. .. My graduation present was a trip to Africa. In the weeks leading up to the trip I started to research Africa. I eventually started looking into the hunting side of African tourism and I fell in love. I loved the idea of being out in the bush in the middle of nowhere, the excitement of sneaking through the brush with animals all around. I asked my dad to teach me how to shoot. He was shocked! I had always been against hunting, I never wanted to talk with him about it and I carefully avoided telling my friends that my dad was a hunter. The sudden turn around caught him off guard... That safari was unforgettable and since then I have been back over a dozen times.

AG: Why do you hunt?
ES: I am motivated by the healthy, organic wild game meat I get out of a hunt. I grew up eating moose and deer meat and now I have a hard time buying beef from the grocery store. My favorite hunt to go on is a moose hunt up in the Yukon with my dad ... We are in the middle of the wild lands in the most beautiful place on earth with some of the most magnificent animals, and to top it off, I get to share it with my dad! Heaven!
BB: I love to hunt because I feel that it connects me with nature and I get very primal enjoyment of harvesting my own food. I love to hunt in Africa, that is where I started hunting and it will always hold a special place in my heart.

AG: What are your thoughts on women in hunting?
ES: I love hunting with other women! It brings such a different element to a hunt and I still get caught off-guard when I am surrounded by other girls who have the same passion and love for hunting as I do – it makes me so happy! I went on an all-girls hunt in Alaska for reindeer a few years ago and it was one of the most enjoyable hunts I’ve ever been on. The increase in female hunters over the last few years is HUGE! When I used to attend hunting shows when I was young, my mom and I would often be two of the only females in the entire place. Now when I go to hunting events, it’s nearly split 50-50 between men and women. My favourite part of my job is meeting female hunters and encouraging them to keep hunting!

The industry is adapting and is making room for female hunters. There are products specifically made for women now, like bows and guns... There are hunting TV shows hosted by women and hunting products endorsed by women and mainstream celebrity females announcing to the world that they are proud hunters... It’s a good way to get kids involved with hunting, it’s fun to spend time with wives/girlfriends/sisters/mothers out in the woods – the hunting demographic has changed for the better and the industry is continuing to adapt to these changes.

I am very active on Facebook and that’s mostly because I know there are women who keep up with my page and go from non-hunters to “well if she can hunt, then I can hunt” and sooner or later, they go on their first hunt. I hear this often and it makes me so happy and proud that these women believe in themselves and have changed their mind about how they thought of hunting in the past. The more accessible women hunters are, the better for the growth of women hunters.

BB: I love to hunt with other women. I live in Los Angeles which is not a hunting friendly area and yet several of my friends from LA have become avid huntresses. There has been a major boom in the number of women hunting in the last decade. I think women are doing a lot of sports that were previously male dominated. The world has changed and women are just as capable and sometimes even better hunters than men... Hunting is a wonderful activity for families and it teaches strength, patience, respect and responsibility.
I’m very proud of the way women have risen in modern media. There are several notable huntresses that have made themselves known and are striving to educate the public on hunting and conservation. It is unfortunate that they get attacked in the media. The anti-hunting media has focused its attacks on female hunters... I can only assume that they see us as weak targets because we are female. They obviously don’t know any female hunters because weak is not a term I could ever associate with any of the ladies I know.

AG: Many conservationists question the conservation value of the hunting of wild free roaming animals in Africa. Focusing on lions, the species is under threat (wild population 23,000-39,000 from 76,000 in 1980), the meat is not sought after by local communities, there are excellent predator/human conflict strategies in place in many areas and only 3-5% of hunting revenue actually does trickle down to the relevant communities (source: Economists at Large: The $200m Question). What then is the value to lion conservation of the trophy hunting of free roaming wild lions?

ES: I will refrain from commenting on the question.

BB: Having never hunted a lion and being unfamiliar with the statistics you mentioned I would prefer to stay out of that conversation.

The original article with illustrations was first published on the Africa Geographic Online Magazine – we are indebted to Africa Geographic Magazine for the kind permission to re-publish this article in African Indaba. Africa Geographic Magazine is a weekly magazine of African wildlife, people and travel. Content is provided to Africa Geographic by many people, both professional and amateur, and via traditional and social channels. In the interest of bringing you the full picture AG permits as broad a spectrum of content as possible, although we and our team don’t necessarily agree with opinions expressed. Any Africa Geographic team member that comments on AG and other social media channels does so in their own capacity and not with Africa Geographic sanction, unless otherwise stated by Africa Geographic.

News From And About Africa

Botswana

Africa’s last hunting Bushmen have given formal notice of their intention to sue Government over its "unlawful and unconstitutional" attempts to starve them off their ancestral land in Central Kalahari Game Reserve. In 2006, Botswana’s High Court ruled that the Bushmen have the right to live, and hunt there. Despite the ruling, not a single hunting license has been issued to them. A Bushman spokesperson said, "President Ian Khama and his brother Tshekedi decided to ban hunting without consulting us. It was a calculated move to starve us out of CKGR."

Botswana

Ngamiland MP Arone asked Government in August to lift the blanket hunting ban since the banning decision was not done in good faith and the community not consulted. The community did not agree with the Government’s assertion that “trophy hunting has led to the decline of wildlife species”. The ban has however led to the collapse of many development trusts under CBNRM for lack of income. Maun West MP Moremi added that the Okavango Research Institute noted that the government’s decision to ban hunting was not science-based but political. Minister Tshekedi Khama
rejected the statements and mentioned that there was a decline in wildebeest and springbok [Editor’s Note: Botswana is not known as a country where many springbok and wildebeest are harvested by visiting hunters].

**Cameroon**

On September 1st the ivory of around 100 elephants (197 tusks) was seized at a local checkpoint near Yaoundé. The offenders escaped. The tusks are believed to be from the southern part of Cameroon, around the border to Gabon.

**Kenya**

163 UN member states met in Nairobi last June for the UN Environment Assembly. Poaching and the illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products was one of the central topics. In a resolution the Assembly expressed its deep concern about the increasing scale of illegal trade in wildlife and its products, including trophies, and its adverse economic, social and environmental impacts. The Assembly encouraged its members to join this fight, mobilize the necessary resources and show a policy of zero tolerance towards all illegal activities, including corruption associated with the illegal trade in wildlife. The Assembly explicitly stressed its respect for the legal and sustainable trade in wildlife products. According to the international terminology this includes legal hunting trophies. Countries were called upon to protect such trade. The resolution also calls for the full engagement of the communities in and adjacent to wildlife habitats as active partners in conservation and sustainable use and enhances communities’ rights and capacity to manage and benefit from wildlife.

**Mozambique**

Organized crime syndicates are slaughtering between 1,500 and 1,800 elephants a year in the southern African country. During a two-day meeting of Mozambican officials, law enforcement agents and diplomatists in the capital, Maputo, Carlos Pareira, an adviser to WCS, informed participants of the worsening situation in Niassa GR, where “in the first two weeks of September alone we counted 22 elephants that had been killed.” Mozambique has previously been criticized by CITES as one of the world’s worst failures in combating poaching and threatened with sanctions. A new law passed in June and going into effect at the end of 2014 toughens penalties for poaching, including hefty fines and jail terms of up to 12 years.

**Mozambique**

6 suspected poachers were arrested on Sept. 7 in a joint operation of police and game scouts. 12 tusks and 2 rifles were confiscated. Officials estimated that this group has killed 39 elephants in 2014.

**South Africa**

SA National Parks and SA Police Service came under fire for inefficiency and mismanagement in the fight against rhino poaching. Lawyers involved in anti-rhino poaching initiatives at the Kruger NP have submitted a complaint against SANParks to the Department of Environmental Affairs and the Public Protector requesting a thorough probe of the reasons for the increase in poaching despite the presence of the military and anti-poaching technology (Source Beeld).

**South Africa**

SANParks tried to use a gagging order to plug leaks about boni awarded to Bryn Pyne-James who raises money to help in the war against rhino poachers. Pyne-James, who earned nearly R3m
for 11 months’ work, is paid a basic monthly salary of R95,000. He apparently was awarded five “merit bonuses” between June 2013 and April this year, amounting to R1.4m. A SANParks spokesperson said that a detailed review of the utilization of all sponsorship funds and the respective governance is currently under way (Source Sunday Times).

South Africa

Lions and tigers from Port Elizabeth’s Seaview Predator Park are being sold to game farms known for canned shooting and the exporting of animal bones. One of the farms has been linked to Laos-based Xaysavang Network, described as one of the most prolific international wildlife trafficking syndicates in operation. Eastern Cape Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism MEC Sakhumzi Somyo confirmed that the park has sent 22 lions to Cradock hunting reserve Tam Safaris since 2008. Two tigers have been sent from the park to the country’s leading bone exporter, Letsatsi la Africa, since 2008 (Source The Times).

South Africa

The SA Police Service’s role in combating poaching, particularly in its intelligence gathering mechanisms, has been called into question. More than 3,394 rhino have been killed in SA since 2008, Democratic Alliance MP Teri Stander said during a parliamentary debate showing a list of 72 names of suspected poachers known to the authorities. “Why is it that I can have a list of 72 suspected poachers in my hands, but not one of these have been properly investigated let alone convicted?” she said. Inkatha Freedom Party MP Judith Nkomo said there was no central database or system which tracks and co-ordinates anti-poaching efforts nationally (Source BDLive).

South Africa

A high-powered high-tech, gunfire-detection system is being piloted in SA’s flagship Kruger NP in order to fight rhino poaching. ShotSpotter, a product of the California company SST Inc. has previously been used in crime-ridden urban US neighborhoods to alert police to gun fire. In SA it has already yielded the arrests of an undisclosed number of poachers this year (Source The Guardian).

South Africa

The highest penalty imposed in SA for the illegal possession of ivory has been handed down in the Khayelitsha Magistrate’s Court. Cheng Jie Liang – a Chinese national who has been living in SA since 2003 – has been sentenced 10 years’ jail and R5m fine for possessing one ton of elephant tusks. He was told 3 years of his jail sentence would be suspended – provided he paid the fine within a year (Source Cape Times).

South Africa

An amount of R8 m from the Asset Forfeiture Unit was handed to SANParks as part of criminal proceedings against a member of a poaching syndicate who was arrested during the course of the year, Environmental Affairs Minister Edna Molewa told Parliament. The funds will go into the national conservation agency’s budget and be utilized in the ongoing battle against rhino poachers. The Minister also allocated R103 million from the departmental budget over the next two financial years for “the sole purpose of combatting rhino poaching”.

South Sudan

The conflict is having serious effects on elephant populations which reportedly declined over the years of the civil war from more than 80,000 in the 1960s-70s to an estimated 5,000 in 2013. The
remaining elephants are under threat from South Sudanese Armed groups (SPLA), LRA and criminal gangs. The power struggle between President Salva Kiir and forces loyal to Riek Machar also had devastating humanitarian consequences and is further reducing the options of sustainable wildlife tourism.

Zambia

Zambian Wildlife Authority (ZAWA) reported the suspected poisoning of 2 male elephants, found dead outside Mosi-Oa-Tunya NP. ZAWA officers extracted material to confirm the cause and exactly what herbicides were used. In previous cases, Carbofuran, a toxic chemical to poison water bodies was used. In 2013 poisoning was recorded from North Luangwa where the total number of poached elephants stood at 49, and 300 vultures that were found at the Elephant carcasses.

Zimbabwe

The African Wildlife Conservation Fund reports a very successful African wild dog denning season in the Zimbabwean lowveld, with never-before-recorded packs located and photographed in Gonarezhou National Park.

Rhino Poaching Kingpin Hugo Ras And Accomplices Arrested
Gerhard R Damm

HAWKS head Lieutenant General Anwa Dramat told MPs in the South African Parliament on September 19th that a suspected rhino poaching kingpin could be nabbed soon, however without going into details.

On September 19th the HAWKS announced that 10 people were arrested in four South African provinces in connection with rhino poaching and related crimes. The environmental affairs and home affairs departments, police detectives, crime intelligence, the Forensic Science Laboratory, the National Prosecuting Authority, the Veterinary Council of SA, and Protea Coin Security were involved in the operation.

Alleged rhino poaching kingpin Hugo Ras, a former professional hunter and hunting safari operator, who was believed to have managed the syndicate’s activities for nearly five years, was arrested in the Pretoria North Magistrate's Court while appearing on a separate rhino poaching case; the nine others were arrested simultaneously in Polokwane in Limpopo, Ficksburg in the Free State, Potchefstroom in North West, and in Montana, Mamelodi and Kameeldrift in Gauteng.

Some of the arrested are repeat offenders. The police apprehended Hugo’s brother-in-law, Abraham Smit, who allegedly has been on the run for more than 3 years and is wanted by Interpol and FBI; Anton Ras (brother of Hugo), HAWKS Warrant Officer Willie Oosthuizen, Christoffel Scheepers, Joseph Wilkinson, an attorney from Pretoria, Trudie Ras (Hugo’s wife), Jacobus (Bonnie) Steyn, a pilot from Ficksburg, Willem van Jaarsveld and Mandla Magagula. They face 318 charges, including poaching of rhino, selling of rhino horn, racketeering, theft, fraud, and malicious damage to property, money laundering, intimidation, and the illegal possession of firearms.
Hugo Ras and several other suspects were ordered to remain in custody until a hearing on October 8th. During the hearing it appeared as if Hugo Ras, Oosthuizen, Magagula and Scheepers may apply for bail when they appear again in November. Syndicate suspect Joseph Wilkinson will appear before the Palm Ridge Magistrates’ Court on October 9th to apply for leave to appeal. Anton Ras’ lawyer said that his client was very ill and will be awaiting medical results before going ahead with bail application. Abraham Smit, Trudie Ras, Bonnie Steyn and Willem van Jaarsveld were denied bail by Pretoria Chief Magistrate Desmond Nair on October 3rd after Magistrate Desmond Nair said the state had “massive evidence”, the suspects may interfere with witnesses, adding that the suspects could be flight risks.

The group was allegedly involved in killing 22 rhino and mutilating two others between 2008 and 2012. The state has said it has over 150 witnesses who will lead evidence that the group can be linked to a total of 84 rhino horns that were poached or stolen as well as proving links to international trafficking markets including Vietnam and China.

"We have been circling around them for some time, in collaboration with other role players, to enable us to root out their activities,” Lieutenant General Anwa Dramat said.

Book Review: On Safari – With Africa’s German-speaking Hunters, From Alvensleben To Zwilling By Rolf D. Baldus and Werner Schmitz

Finally a book on the lives and adventures of some famous and not-so-famous German, Austrian and Swiss hunters edited by Rolf D. Baldus and Werner Schmitz with contributions from a dozen authors, including Fiona Capstick and African Hunting Gazette editor Brooke Chilvers-Lubin and an array of excellent period black and white photos.

Germany’s colonial adventure in Africa lasted only a few decades starting with the 1894 Congo-Conference in Berlin during the “Scramble for Africa” and ending in 1918 with the Armistice in Europe. Rolf Baldus and Werner Schmitz collected information for more than five years and researched and identified over 200 hunting figures from Germany, Austria and Switzerland, who had penned down their adventures, or were mentioned by other authors. The two editors, with the help of 12 co-authors compiled 23 full-length stories. The book also contains the first comprehensive list of biographies and bibliographies of German-speaking 203 Africa hunters and huntresses, although probably many a manuscript has been lost in the bush or eaten by termites, as Baldus stated.

The stories represent a colorful mix of motives,
necessities, desires, passions, imperatives, or just coincidences for why people hunted in Africa. The early 19th century explorers hunted to feed their large caravans. Others hunted to collect specimens for natural history museums; some used research purely as an excuse to travel and hunt. Later it became chic for the rich and the nobility to go on safari to Africa; there was also the usual lot of settlers, ivory hunters, sportsmen, colonial administrators, and officers of the Schutztruppe, who hunted. A few made it to fame as professional hunters.

Amongst the better known are personalities like Alfred Brehm (1829–1884), author of the multi-volume Brehm’s Life of Animals, Hermann von Wissmann (1853–1905), later governor of German East Africa, a keen hunter and father of the Selous Game Reserve, was the first to cross Africa from West to East on foot. Carl Georg Schillings (1865–1921), naturalist, hunter and photographer, was widely known for his bestseller With Flashlight and Rifle, referred to by Teddy Roosevelt when he prepared his own safari. Schillings was also one of the earliest proponents of “sustainable use” and saw it as the task of true hunters to engage in the survival of game.

Amongst the huntresses, Swiss national Vivienne de Watteville (1900 –1957) made an epic foot safari into the interior with her father and Margarete Trappe (1884–1957) turned into a well-known and gritty PH.

Turning to professional hunters, Paul Huebner, a former Nairobi Municipal Commissioner, was inside a Uganda Railway wagon near Tsavo waiting with two others for a man-eating lion. Instead of being shot, the lion jumped into the wagon and got away with one of the hunters. Ernst Alexander Zwilling (1904–1990) started his PH career in Cameroon then moving to Kenya and Uganda. Werner von Alvensleben (1913–1998), a former SS member, started Safarilandia in Mozambique after he escaped from internment in Rhodesia at the outbreak of World War II and apparently spied for the United States according to OSS files. Anno Hecker (born 1928), taught at the Mweka College of African Wildlife Management. Other PHs include Count Meran (born 1924), and the flamboyant playboy Count “Alfie” Auersperg; Robert von Reitnauer (born 1933) and several Namibians of German descent. Hunting tourists like industrialist Karl Friedrich Flick (1927–2006), and long-servings Bavarian conservative state-premier, Franz Josef Strauß (1915–1988) are also mentioned.

If you have even a slight grasp of German, this is a worthwhile book to add to your library.