A Word From The Editor
Gerhard R Damm

In November 2011 the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation CIC passed a recommendation on “Wildlife and Commercially-Bred Formerly Wild Animals” which had its roots in the IUCN’s mission “to influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable”. The CIC suggested that wildlife should experience its full life cycle without deliberate human intervention and, if such intervention be necessary, that custodial or manipulative management is limited.

Furthermore the CIC stipulates in its CIC Trophy Measuring Rules and Regulations that hunting involves the regulated harvest of individual wild living animals under free range conditions in a manner that conserves, protects and perpetuates the population-genetic characteristics of hunted wildlife populations ... [The CIC] recognizes that private or public ownership of land or game has lead in some instances to safeguarding wildlife within escape-proof fenced enclosures. Hunting in enclosures of adequate size can be conducted under Fair Chase conditions. Fair Chase conditions are given, if the hunted animal exists as a naturally interacting individual of a wild sustainable population within an ecologically functional system, where the spatial (territory and home range) and temporal (food, breeding and basic needs) requirements of the population of which that individual is a member are met. Nevertheless, the CIC score sheet for all trophies from animals living under escape-proof, fenced conditions must be clearly marked with “FENCED”.

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
Canned Killings And Other Unnatural Behavior In The Game Ranching Industry

Peter Flack

Why do I and my amateur and professional hunting friends detest the increasing number of incidents involving the killing of canned or put-and-take animals? Why do we also dislike so intensely the domestication of wildlife and the manipulation and intensive breeding of unnatural color variants and freaks?

In my case, the answer lies partly in the subjective reasons why I hunt. I hunt because it satisfies something deep within me. It is part of my culture, who I am, just as it has been part of the culture of other peoples such as the Bushmen, Pygmies and Inuit since time immemorial. Something that has been acquired and ingrained over the 200,000 years we have been recognizable as human beings on earth and during which time men were obliged to hunt to provide for and protect their families. If you think about it, agriculture was only invented about 10 000 years ago and, for many of us, the last five per cent of the time we have been on earth has not eradicated that which was inculcated over the previous 95 per cent.

As such, anyone or anything which threatens my right and/or ability to hunt legally, ethically and sustainably is a cause for grave concern as it attacks something of critical importance to me and, I believe, the country as a whole but more about that later.

Partly the answer lies in the manner in which I like to hunt. My favorite hunts are fair chase ones for wild, free ranging game animals in their natural habitats where they can feed themselves, breed naturally and escape their predators (of which I am one), in the way they have done for tens of thousands of years. I have also enjoyed hunting on big, fenced properties – those where you only see the fence when you arrive and leave through the front gate - and where the animals there are capable of and do, in fact, live as they would in their natural, free range habitats.

Therefore, for my friends and me, shooting an animal in a small paddock into which it has been recently released and where it has little or no chance of feeding itself, procreating and escaping its predators, can never be considered hunting. It may be culling, killing, slaughter or shooting but it can never be hunting. There is simply no hunting involved despite the fact that animal rightists and the uninformed or ill-informed insist on calling it “canned hunting”!

And I detest the fact that this type of thing gives animal rightists the ammunition to tar my friends and me with the same brush. After all, are we not also hunters?

When this disgusting practice is compounded by drugging the animal, domesticating it so that it loses its natural fear of man or depriving it of food and/or water so it remains at the only spot in the paddock where this has been provided, it merely exacerbates the reprehensibility of the act and those who have staged and orchestrated the slaughter. People who offer these canned or put-and-take experiences and those who knowingly partake, often justify it on the following grounds:

1. It saves an animal in the wild and therefore contributes to conservation.
2. The animals have lost their fear of human beings and are, therefore, more dangerous.
3. Conversely, because they have been drugged or are tethered by their hunger or thirst, they can be quickly found and safely approached on foot or in a vehicle and shot from close range. The end result is guaranteed.

4. It provides an affordable, legal experience as it is too expensive, difficult, dangerous, time-consuming to hunt these animals on a fair chase basis in their natural environment and one should not be deprived of this experience or, alternatively, are entitled to have this experience.

Firstly, conservation does not enter the picture. All the money goes to the people providing the animals and the “experience” and none of that is invested, directly or indirectly, in the conservation of wildlife or wildlife habitats. These animals have been bred for the sole purpose of being killed and there is little or no difference to this and an abattoir except the transport and killing methods. Secondly, those hunters who want the experience of a fair chase lion hunt, for example, will always want the genuine article and will not knowingly substitute the one for the other.

I keep on using this word “knowingly” because South Africa has the unfortunate and unenviable reputation of cheating more hunters more often than any other African country and it is clear that a number of overseas recreational trophy hunters have been duped into thinking they were participating in a fair chase hunt when this was not the case. It’s not that everyone in the South African hunting industry is a crook. Far from it. It just seems at times as if every crook is in the South African hunting industry.

Point two - I do not understand how danger provides justification for this disgusting practice. It is analogous to arguing that murder in Afghanistan is acceptable because it is dangerous to go there. The third point is so ridiculous that, although it is used as a marketing and sales tool by the purveyors of this immoral practice, I will not bother to address it. The last point is similar to arguing that everyone has the right to experience driving at over 300 kilometers per hour, therefore Formula One racing cars should be provided at a fraction of the cost to all those who have an interest in motorsport.

At the end of the day, however, can it not be argued that the opposition of my friends and me to these practices is based purely on a personal point of view? That everyone is entitled to his own opinion and that, as the constitution effectively guarantees the right of everyone to make a legal living, our objections have no more weight than the contrary view?

I want to digress for a moment. Some years back, after two fruitless fair chase hunts for free range cheetah in Namibia, I booked a hunt on a property along the Limpopo River. What impressed me, initially, was the landowner’s statement that, “You should have a 50/50 chance. They are definitely here, but they come and go.” So I not only booked the two week hunt and paid my deposit but also booked a hunt for some of the small cats on his Free State property. About two weeks before the hunt I was called by one of his employees who informed me that, as his boss had sold the land along the Limpopo where I was due to hunt cheetah, I would not be able to hunt there. “Never mind” he said, “You can hunt cheetah on our Free State property.” In response to my immediate cancellation of the hunt - as I knew there were no free range cheetah in the Free State - he argued that the hunt would be completely legal. To bolster his argument he added, “An official from nature conservation will be there because we will be doing a lion hunt on Monday and your cheetah on Tuesday.” I patiently explained why this was completely unacceptable to me and drew his attention to my initial correspondence in which I stated it was a material term of the hunting contract that it be conducted both in accordance with the law and fair chase ethics. He eventually accepted my point of view but then said, “But what about the small cats? They are completely fair chase.”

My answer was what you would expect. I explained that I could not hunt with him or his outfitting company under any circumstances as it was clear, by his own admission, that they
conducted canned killing operations which, therefore, tainted whatever else they did. I could never be certain, therefore, whether the other “hunts” offered were not also canned killing operations and I was not prepared to take the risk. Bear with me if you will and I will try and explain the relevance of this experience later.

If you accept that the quiet conservation revolution which has swept across South Africa over the last 60 years or so has been funded almost exclusively by hunting as has been empirically established time and time again, then you should also accept that anything which damages or abuses hunting is going to have a negative effect on conservation in this country. I mean examine the issues, the numbers are clear. From three game ranches that existed in the 1960s, there are some 10,000 today. From the 557,000 game animals which existed in 1964, there are some 18.6 million today. From all but zero land under game in private hands then, some 21 million hectares or almost three times the land covered by all the national and provincial parks put together exists today. From all but zero money that was generated by hunting in the 1960s, nearly R2 billion is generated, directly and indirectly, for the economy by overseas recreational trophy hunters alone and most of it is spent in the poor rural areas where it is needed most.

In other words, as was demonstrated in the documentary, The South African Conservation Success Story, hunting has driven the biggest conservation movement this country has ever seen. Not only has this already provided tens of thousands of decent jobs in a growing “industry” but the movement has the capacity to provide opportunities for all in perpetuity and anyone or anything which puts this at risk should be cause for close scrutiny by everyone including the authorities given that there is so much at stake.

Let us pause there for a moment. CIC - the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation, one of, if not the, most prestigious hunting organization in Europe, with 38 country members and others including IUCN, CITES, TRAFFIC, FAO and the Boone and Crockett Club, recently passed a resolution confirming its support for fair chase hunting. The latter club is the most prestigious hunting organization in North America and, if members of these bodies feel as I and my friends do, they will not want to come and hunt in South Africa for fear of being tainted by the unsavory practices of a number of game ranchers who seem prepared to do anything for money, regardless of the consequences. Should this attitude become part and parcel of the rules and regulations of these bodies, we can expect a dramatic reduction in numbers of overseas recreational trophy hunters visiting the country and, as their contribution of some R2 billion per annum represents roughly a quarter of the entire revenue generated, directly and indirectly, by all hunting in this country, the effect of this on conservation will be catastrophic as many game ranches will go under and, in all likelihood, revert to crops or domestic livestock.

The breeding of animals for canned and put-and-take killing practices goes hand in hand with the manipulation and intensive breeding of unnatural color variants and freaks. This comparatively recent phenomenon has also been heavily criticized by overseas hunting and conservation bodies, not the least being CIC again. In 2006, the so-called Limassol resolution was passed by them, which stated that the CIC (1) condemns the unethical manipulation of game animals in order to produce trophies; (2) confirms its support for fair chase hunting and (3) urges all hunters and hunting associations to oppose such unethical, manipulative practices.” This was followed in 2011 by the much more comprehensive Wildlife and Commercially-Bred and Formerly Wild Animal Recommendation in which it opposed “artificial and unnatural manipulations of wildlife including the enhancement or alteration of a species’ genetic characteristics (e.g. pelage color, body size, horn or antler size”).

While many overseas recreational hunters have participated in the canned and put-and-take operations, knowingly and unknowingly, I am not aware of any hunter who has shot any of
these unnatural color variants or intentionally cross-bred freaks. To date, it would appear as if these animals are being sold from breeder to breeder and few, if any, from breeder to hunter and even here suspicion has been cast that in certain instances the record prices have not been paid. As many hunters, particularly those from North America, like to enter animals they hunt that qualify into the two main, international record books, Rowland Ward’s Records of Big Game and SCI’s Record Book of Big Game Animals, should either refuse to create categories for or allow the entry of these new animals, this would detract significantly from the attraction of these animals from a hunting perspective. In conversation with the owners of Rowland Ward, the oldest of the record books (1892), they stated categorically that they will neither create separate categories nor allow the entry of these animals. In response to my written queries, Chris Emery, the Chief Master Measurer of SCI wrote, “SCI’s Record Book Committee has no intention of accepting any color variations or unnatural crosses of species into the SCI Record Book and will not be creating any categories for these unnatural species.”

Seeing as the huge prices paid for these animals by game ranchers and breeders can ultimately only be underpinned by what a hunter would pay to hunt them, if a majority of European hunters were to abstain from hunting them or, worse still, from hunting in South Africa at all, then this would be a major blow to any hope these breeders might have of generating a financial return on the high prices they have paid for these domesticated, freakish and manipulated animals. If this movement then to spread to North America via the Boone and Crockett Club and SCI, it would be the death knoll of this type of business, which would follow in the well-worn path of other pyramid schemes, not least the least being the tulip boom or mania in Holland.

In Charles MacKay’s book, Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds, he describes how many investors in tulip bulbs were ruined by the precipitous fall in prices and how Dutch commerce suffered a severe shock as a result. He defined the term, “tulip mania” as any large economic bubble when asset prices deviate from intrinsic value. During the tulip boom one bulb was exchanged for five hectares of land and the prices of others reached 10 times the annual income of a skilled craftsman or $300,000 in today’s money. While this is a far cry from the nearly $4 million paid for a buffalo bull last year, if you compare the relative sizes of the items in question, then the comparison becomes more understandable.

And who are these manipulators and breeders? Who is driving this new variation of what I perceive to be an old fashioned kubus (remember it?) or pyramid scheme? From what I can tell, a few rich businessmen and politicians with no discernible track record in conservation are the main protagonists and beneficiaries of this boom. How long can the current sky high game prices be self-sustaining and defy gravity? I do not know but I predict that, within ten years, the boom will have become a bust. It is always so. When things sound too good to be true it is usually because they are, particularly when so much time and effort is spent persuading the unwary and uneducated that this is the next best investment thing.

Partly the answer to the questions posed at the start lies in the objective reasons why I hunt. While I do not hunt solely in order to conserve wildlife and wildlife habitats, it is by far and away the most important of the objective reasons behind hunting. Having hunted for the last 59 years, in 17 African countries, on literally hundreds of safaris, for virtually all the game animals available on license, it is my confirmed and sincere belief and conviction that, without hunting, neither of these two key sustainable natural resources - which, if maintained, could provide opportunities for all on this continent in perpetuity - will survive in any significant form in 50 years’ time.

Those offering canned and put-and-take killings, those offering domesticated wildlife and manipulated, intensively bred, unnatural color variations and freaks for sale are putting hunting at risk and, by definition, conservation. No-one who cares for the conservation of wildlife and wildlife
habitats and all they have to offer the citizens of South Africa, can stand by idly and watch this happen so a few greedy people can make a short term profit, which benefits only them while being at such a high cost to the country.

Reluctant as I am to suggest that the government should become involved in any private sector initiative, is it not time that they follow CIC’s example and ban these reprehensible practices if they want hunting and conservation in this country to continue growing and provide opportunities for all.

This article first appeared in African Outfitter, a South African magazine aimed at the hunting outfitter and his clients as well as local hunters. We republished with the kind permission of African Outfitter and the author Peter Flack.

Opinion: Dr. Gerhard Verdoorn On Game Ranching In South Africa

It is of grave concern to myself and other conservationists and hunters to read the statements made on behalf of Wildlife Ranching South Africa (WRSA) at the recent Grassland Society of SA congress. The government (and de facto the state) has international and constitutional obligations to manage and conserve the country’s natural heritage on behalf of the nation – that includes myself, a huge number of hunters, an equally large number of non-hunting conservationists and the general population. What the WRSA fails to understand in this context – and that is evident from the statement that NEMBA [National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act] is a pain in the a*** – is that NEMBA was drafted by scientist and conservationist with the particular objective to achieve the country’s international and constitutional obligations regarding conservation. Within this legislative framework, the government and state has to put policy into effect to ensure the sustainability and long term future of the country’s natural biota and abiotota. Also pertinent in the legislative framework is the management of threats to biodiversity.

Unfortunately we all know that certain game ranchers have done things in the past and are doing things currently that threaten the genetic integrity as well as population health, and hence long term survival of species (I don’t refer to ungulates alone); the selective breeding of genetic misfits such as leucistic, melanistic and other color variants brought a new anti-predator mania that is damaging to the general ecology. The inflated monetary value of the genetic misfits generate a fear of these animals being predated upon as they should be, by predators. Intensive breeding in small camps have its own ecological impacts like changing plant ecology, resulting in over grazing just like in the good old cattle farming days. It is rather amusing that WRSA states that all game ranches are marginal in terms economic terms and have been converted into viable economic crop (it should have been game) farms. This is a blatant lie! The statement that the wildlife industry has restored genetic quality of South Africa’s wildlife is the biggest farce ever. Consult any population geneticist that is not in the pockets of the wildlife industry and the picture is clear: game ranch animals have a high inbreeding index. When it comes to selective breeding for excessive horn length or color variations the inbreeding index is even higher. It manifests in physiological and anatomical challenges for the animals; adaptability is one of the main concerns here.

Certain select members of WRSA are domesticating wildlife to the point that the country’s image abroad as a wildlife destination and hunting destination is rapidly deteriorating into that of a massive zoo with domesticated animals. Namibia is already capitalizing on this and offer foreigners the real African experience. WRSA should be very careful about the statements they make: they do...
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not even have 2,000 members of which not even ten percent participate in the intensive breeding and domestication of wildlife. Are they sure that the normal farmer with his wildlife that he sustains on well managed land often with cattle and small stock agree with what the intensive breeders do? Do they speak on behalf of all their members? According to my information definitely not! To call for a dedicated function to service a few hundred individuals who are playing havoc with wildlife is ludicrous. Must the entire nation now be held to ransom by these people? Lastly, one wonders where the government and state organs like SANBI [South African National Biodiversity Institute] are in terms of speaking out against the farce of a small select group within the wildlife industry? Wake up, government, you are not fulfilling your international obligations in terms of the Convention on Biodiversity and in terms of the Constitution!!

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**Editor’s note:** Dr Verdoorn refers to Dr. Dry’s presentation at the Grassland Society which you can download [HERE](#). Two articles in Farmer’s Weekly dealt with the same topic – download the July article [HERE](#) and the September article [HERE](#). Dr Gerhard Verdoorn is a Chemistry Professor and a leading expert on raptors. He is also the Director of BirdLife South Africa, the Griffon Poison Information Centre and a Deputy President of the South African Hunters and Game Conservation Association.

**Opinion: N F Alberts On Game Breeding In South Africa**

I have written to the publication before about the alarming current state of affairs in the game ranching industry. It seems as if there is a feverish activity around the creation of as many mutant animals with abnormal horn size or coat color as possible. Where all these mutants suddenly come from boggles the mind, but it is certain that their numbers are increased as fast as possible to cash in on the fad. [Here] is a summary of my thoughts that I deem important and that needs urgent consideration by conservationists, authorities and other stake holders.

From a genetic point of view the current freedom of breeders to mix different genetic pools from populations that had been geographically removed by many thousands of kilometers is a serious threat to long term biodiversity. Certain subpopulations are unique in their ability to survive in marginal habitat and have evolved over thousands of years to succeed. The traits the breeders claim to “conserve” are exclusively phenotypical like hide color and horn size. It has absolutely nothing to do with the overall genetic make-up of a specimen and how it enables it to better survive in its habitat. White or black impalas are genetically weaker than their natural cousins and have therefore not multiplied to become the predominant color form in the wild. Now we take populations of these animals and multiply their numbers. I feel strongly that the conservation authorities failed in their duty to regulate the indiscriminate breeding of game. They should be the gate keepers of sustainable wild biodiversity and it is shocking to see how little is done to ensure that the genetics of wild populations of animals are protected.

Breeding mutant animals for bigger horn size and odd coat colors is no different to breeding plants with new and unique colored flowers. The evil in the game ranching though is that these animals are marketed as “wild” trophies. These rare specimens are kept under artificial conditions and habituated to humans. Even the normal colored specimens with massive horns bred in this fashion can never be entered into the trophy books. They simply do not fall into the same box as a
wild, free roaming specimen. Let’s use the flower analogy again to bring it into perspective. Some rare color hybrid of one of our aloes is created under controlled circumstances. Some bloke with enough money buys this and then submits this specimen as if he has discovered it in the wild. Sure enough the rare specimen has value in the industry but no one can register his/her name next to it in some trophy book stating that it has harvested a truly unique specimen of a species. Maybe it will be better to enter these artificial bred animals into the Guinness Book of Records. Or open up more categories in Rowland Ward and SCI for the other animals we are manipulating artificially like Brahman or Sussex cattle. Both can develop spectacular horns and have as much right to be in there as the game growing up on lucerne bales in a Bonnox enclosure. “Hunting” any of these animals is the true form of canned hunting and should never be allowed.

Because of this dilemma the trophy bodies like Rowland Ward and SCI should give their criteria a serious look. Maybe it is time for them to accredit only certain pieces of land they have inspected and found fit to the description of wilderness where free roaming trophies can be hunted. If the hunter can only enter animals hunted in these areas we will be moving closer to the crux of the matter and that is conservation of habitat. The only reason less and less major trophies are taken is because their natural habitat is diminished by the day. Breeding 50 inch buffalo bulls will never bring back the thickets and streams that now sport Tuscan villas in the bush. True conservation of the biodiversity starts with conserving the soil and plants that form the habitat of the animals we hunt.

NF Alberts is a long-time subscriber to African Indaba, email gurus@lantic.net

Not All In Favour Of Burning Rhino Horn
Gerhard Damm

Armed guards escorted officials marching 60 kilograms of rhino horns to a pyre for burning at Dvůr Králové Zoo in Czech Republic in the first public burning of rhino horns in Europe. The horns came from a government stockpile. The Czech Republic is often used as a transit point for smugglers of rhino horn. In 2013, officials seized two dozen white rhino horns and arrested 16 individuals for allegedly smuggling horns.

Ian Player, Iconic Rhino Conservationist who spearheaded Operation Rhino that saved the few remaining southern race of white rhino, slammed the recent Czech rhino horn burning supported amongst others by CITES Secretary General John Scanlon. In an interview with Rhino War News Focus, Player said “I was appalled to read of the actions of John Scanlon. CITES is now acting as prosecutor, judge and jury. But their actions are a serious insult to the rural black communities surrounding our parks. These unfortunate people live in dire poverty and with the limited legitimate sale of rhino horn could improve their living conditions and also set aside land for rhino to breed and increase. In case Mr Scanlon does not know it the rhino was saved in Southern Africa without any help from CITES and we need no lessons from any ill-considered actions on their part to try and tell us what we need to do. They are inflicting a serious blow to rhino conservation and have done CITES enormous harm. The Czech government can be forgiven for their ignorant action but Mr Scanlon will ultimately be held to account.”
Africa-Wide Elephant Census Underway
Gerhard R Damm

Investor and eco-philanthropist Paul G. Allen of Microsoft fame is advancing a major elephant conservation initiative in Africa to provide new information critical to the species’ future survival. The Great Elephant Census is the largest pan-Africa aerial survey since the 1970s and will be managed by Elephants Without Borders. Designed to provide accurate and up-to-date data about the number and distribution of African elephants by using standardized aerial surveys of tens of hundreds of thousands of square miles the organizers will have dozens of researchers capturing comprehensive observational data of elephants and elephant carcasses. The two-year census project, which kicked off in February 2014, will provide accurate data about the numbers and distribution of the African elephant population, including geographic range, forming an essential baseline that will benefit conservation efforts.

In many countries, surveys have not been flown in as many as 10 years, and without this data, it is challenging to assess the current state of elephant populations. Additionally, the existing data isn’t well organized. The database from the new census will provide valuable information to governments, scientists and NGOs so they can make smart decisions on how to manage elephant populations. In the first year, elephants and other large herbivores in more than 18 countries will be surveyed. Non-governmental organizations like the IUCN African Elephant Specialist Group, African Parks, Frankfurt Zoological Society, the Wildlife Conservation Society, Save the Elephants and others will participate. The surveys in Angola, Botswana, Chad, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe will account for about 80% of the savanna elephant range and roughly 90% of Africa’s savanna elephants. In the second year (ca. mid-2015), the data will be analyzed and published and made available to academics, NGOs and governments.

Elephants Without Borders (EWB) conceptualized and will conduct the survey in close collaboration with in-country conservation organizations and governments. Based in Botswana, EWB is led by Dr. Mike Chase as principal researcher leading and coordinating the massive initiative. Chase has been studying the ecology of elephants in Botswana for nearly 15 years, received a doctorate specifically in elephant ecology.

The surveys will also provide experience on how to integrate new technologies which can improve on established aerial survey methods and allow for enhanced data gathering. Leveraging cutting-edge technology to gather data that can enhance research is a key attribute of Paul Allen’s initiatives. The elephant census continues Allen’s history of supporting global initiatives with the potential to catalyze research and solutions that accelerate progress on both scientific and social fronts. Allen’s strong ties to Africa include his investment of more than $10 million since 2008 to help support wildlife and landscape conservation efforts, and community and economic development projects.

A Journey Through The Ages From Artemis To Katniss
Georgina Lockwood, Africa Geographic

Like the African lioness, the Egyptian huntresses had a strong feline identity. Sekhmet was depicted as a lioness and regarded as one of the most fearless hunters in the realm, and the female Pharaoh Hatshepsut was often alluded to as a powerful huntress.
It is from ancient Greece that the bow gets its feminine touch: Artemis, known as Diana in Roman mythology, is the virgin goddess of childbirth and hunting. She is a true child of the forest. Atalanta was a mortal heroin in Greek mythology. Her strong physical prowess meant she could wrestle and run better than any man. She was deadly with a bow and arrow, until Zeus turned her into a lion.

The upper class women of the middle ages had ample time to hunt as they had many servants to attend to their chores and children. Wolves, dear and boar were the sought-after quarry. Weapons of war such as cudgels were often used for hunting. Much like men, women also relied on dogs, hawks, falcons and horses for hunting.

If a women’s place is next to her husband, then that applied to hunting in Europe. Affluent European women, such as the ladies of King Louis XIV’s court, often hunted alongside their men. European women were required to ride side-saddle. Catherine de Medici, married to King Henry of France, was instrumental in side-saddle improvements allowing women to hunt with less risk of injury and the freedom to focus on the hunt itself.

It was not until the crowning of Queen Elizabeth 1st that hunting became a classy pastime in Britain. A passionate rider and hunter, it is recorded that Elizabeth cut the throats of the deer she shot. Hunting was far more leisurely and time intensive in the Golden Age and was a way for royals to keep in touch with the land and the people. In the 1600s, Queen Anne of Denmark hunted alongside her husband King James of England. The couple revived an interest in fox hunting which carried all the way through to the saddle-sore women in Jilly Cooper novels. Women of nobility can be seen leading the hunt in the tapestries of the 18th century. Even Marie-Antoinette had time to hunt when she was not eating cake.

George Washington’s wife, Martha (1731- 1802), hunted with both of her husbands in the US. In fact she started hunting from a young age and it appears the Wild West left a lot of room for Calamity Janes. Annie Oakley (1860 -1926) was a child of poverty who started hunting to feed her family. Her dead aim got her a role in Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show. Her most famous tricks included splitting playing cards using a .22 caliber rifle. Women on the wild frontier of the United States played an essential role in the beginnings of women’s rights movements.

In 1947 DC Comics published The Huntress, a popular comic series about a leather-strapped gal whose weapon was a crossbow. DC comics continued to print The Huntress in various shapes and forms, changing the character from villain to superhero. The story evolved in the 1960s when it was revealed that The Huntress is the daughter of Batman and Cat Woman.

In 1998 the National Wild Turkey Federations confirmed that women aren’t only stuffing Thanks-Giving turkeys, but hunting and killing them too. In 1999, just over a year after establishing the Women in the Outdoors organization, the number of their female hunting members exceeded 10 000.

Today, gender roles are changing as far north as the permafrost lines. Inuit women are spending more hours hunting caribou and seals, and fishing in kayaks. They have even admitted to killing “prized” polar bears.

In 2007 Kate Middleton was caught donning camo with her pearl earrings on a deer hunting trip with Prince William. In 2010 Sarah Palin, politician turned reality TV star, features alongside her family in her own show Sarah Palin’s Alaska which proves to be a little wilder, and colder, than the Kardashians. Episodes are filled with hunting, fishing and camping in which Palin and her daughters take part. In 2012 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation reported that the women hunters numbered 1.5 million, a 25% increase in 5 years.
Hollywood hit the bulls-eye when it featured a string of Diana–inspired bow hunting women such as Guinevere in King Arthur (2004) played by Keira Knightly; the half-naked blue alien in Avatar (2009); the assassin Hanna in 2011; the virginal Katniss Everdin in the Hunger Games (2012) and the fiery Princess Merida in Brave (2012). There has also been a surge in reality TV shows on the Outdoor Channel and the Sportsman Channel with huntresses in Archer’s Choice (2001), Triple MAG (2010), Whitetail Freaks (2010) and Dressed to Kill (2012).

Most recently, Melissa Bachman and Kendall Jones upset the status quo when images of them posing with their lion kills spread across social media garnering scathing commentary and negative publicity from an animal-loving world. Similar negative publicity meant Belgium teenager Axelle Despiegelaere was dismissed from a L’Oreal modelling contract in 2014 when her hunting images surfaced online.

No matter how many women have hunted throughout history, or how much momentum the feminist movement has gained, it seems the huntress will be a controversial figure of fascination for a long time to come.

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Can Elephants Survive a Continued Ivory Trade Ban?
Daniel Stiles

I live much of the time in a grass-thatched cottage on a wildlife conservancy in Kenya. I have a view of Mount Kenya out front and the Abedares in back. Just off my large compound is a clearing in the bush that used to be a water reservoir, before the earth dam broke. Now dry, except for a small stream that runs through it, the grass, water, and minerals in the patches of bare soil attract almost daily visits from elephants, white and black rhinos, and all manner of other wildlife.

When I watch the elephant families frolic in the clearing, and see their tusks, I find it hard to imagine that anyone could be so cold-blooded as to kill these magnificent creatures for what are simply long teeth. The elephants use them to good effect as they dig out a wallow in the deeply incised stream. I care a lot about elephants. It makes me extremely angry that people kill them for their ivory. But it also frustrates me when I see apparently well-meaning campaigns aimed at policies and actions that will only increase elephant poaching for ivory.

I am convinced that attempts to completely restrict all ivory sales, both domestic and international, and the campaign to destroy all ivory stockpiles—even the historical collection kept by the British royal family—are backfiring tragically on elephants. Already these restrictions have resulted in skyrocketing ivory prices, which along with other factors has spurred an elephant-killing spree. Sadly, as long as these factors remain in place, this will continue.

What Does Empirical Evidence Say?
I believe in empirical evidence to test policies and actions. The policy to test since 1990 is the ban on the international trade in ivory. Elephant poaching did decrease in some places after the ban, but it carried on as usual in others, and in parts of Southeast Asia it actually increased, with Vietnam, Laos, and Myanmar losing two-thirds of their elephant populations in the decade after the ban.
In the early years after the ban, ivory market activity and raw ivory prices dropped almost everywhere data are available. It appeared that the ban was initially successful in reducing illegal ivory trading. I thought myself that this was the case until I analyzed what had actually occurred leading up to and following the 1990 ban implementation.

Hong Kong and Japan in the 1980s were the biggest importers and manufacturers of raw ivory. They were probably also the biggest buyers of poached tusks. As calls for more controls on ivory trade escalated in the 1980s, and CITES imposed a quota system on raw ivory exports, elephant poaching increased. With increased poaching, calls began for a total ban on ivory trade from Africa, which could be achieved by listing the African elephant on CITES Appendix I.

No one, to my knowledge, has ever truly determined the drivers of the increased poaching. Not enough research was conducted on ivory markets in the 1980s to be certain, but reports of huge raw ivory stockpiles in Hong Kong in 1989 (665 tons) and Japan (unquantified, but in the 1980s more than 2,500 tons were imported) lead to one conclusion: They were stockpiling. Why? Because a future supply of ivory was uncertain, and increasingly it looked like a ban was on the way.

If high consumer demand had been the cause of the increased poaching, the stockpiles would not have existed. The raw ivory would have been processed. Tragically, the rising calls for an ivory trade ban increased poaching because East Asian dealers and factories decided to stockpile for future use. The two fed each other in a positive feedback loop—increased poaching, increased calls for control, leading to more poaching to stockpile, ad infinitum until the ban.

After the CITES ban, demand fell in the West owing to all the negative publicity related to buying ivory that accompanied the run-up to the ban. East Asia’s largest ivory export market withered. East Asia was left with huge ivory stockpiles and falling demand. Prices fell, ivory market activity slumped. The ban seemed to be working.

Lack of Foresight

The period 1990-92 was critical for planning for future predictable occurrences. One: As the stockpiles dwindled, East Asian ivory factories would eventually begin looking for new raw ivory. Two: By 1990, the economic reforms made by China’s “paramount leader” Deng Xiaooping were well apparent. China would become an important part of the ivory demand equation. Three: With the trade ban in place, the ivory could only be obtained from poaching.

If conservationists had been proactive, they would have planned for these three predictable occurrences, but they did not. Esmond Martin and I carried out a series of ivory investigations in Africa and Asia between 1999 and 2003. We noted, “... in parts of Central and West Africa there appears to have been a slow revival since the mid-1990s.” In South East Asia we found, in part, “Unfortunately, it appears that demand for ivory has remained steady or increased in some places in Asia since the mid-1990s, stimulating elephant poaching.”

However, after the CITES-authorized 1999 sales from southern Africa to Japan, the ivory market decline continued in China, Taiwan, and Japan. All the indicators—ivory prices, numbers of factories, craftsmen, outlets, etc.—had dropped from pre-1989 levels.

“These statistics illustrate very well indeed that the ivory industry of Japan since the late 1980s has experienced a massive decline,” and “probably the most surprising finding of this survey was the unexpectedly small size of the local market in China,” said Martin and Stiles in 2003: The Ivory Markets of East Asia report.
In spite of hard evidence to the contrary, the Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) continues to claim that the 1999 sale stimulated demand and “substantially compromised its [the ban’s] integrity, effectiveness, and enforceability,” according to Allan Thornton in Russo’s essay.

Esmond Martin and I could find no signs of this. We wrote: “Ivory industry business personnel in China, Hong Kong and Taiwan did not believe that the 1999 southern African ivory auctions had a significant effect on either internal or external ivory demand.”

If CITES Parties and conservationists had seized the opportunity to establish a well-designed legal raw ivory trade regime in the early 1990s when demand was low, the poaching rise we have witnessed over the past 20 years could have been avoided.

The Real Cause of Rising Demand in China

The credo of the ivory ban proponents has been that the 2008 CITES-approved ivory sale to Japan and China was the cause of the spike in consumer demand, which set off the current elephant poaching crisis. The insinuation was that a regular legal ivory trade would be even more disastrous.

Esmond Martin and Lucy Vigne assessed Japan’s ivory market in late 2009 and concluded that “The golden days of ivory carving in Japan have ended.” The market had continued its precipitous downward spiral seen in 2002. There were fewer carvers, outlets, and items seen for sale.

These findings did not prevent EIA’s Allan Thornton proclaiming falsely in Russo’s article that “Japan is back in the ivory business,” implying it had been reinvigorated because of the 2008 sales.

However, consumer demand for ivory did rise in China, beginning in about 2004 and surging in 2006. It took a Chinese student researcher from Yale University to discover what prompted the rise in ivory interest in China. Yufang Gao spent two days visiting with me in Kenya and explaining his ideas, which I found original and stimulating.

Gao was not satisfied with the common explanation that the rise in ivory demand was driven by the CITES approved one-off sale in 2008. He learned that in 2002 the Chinese government started to put traditional culture preservation on the agenda, and in 2005 the government launched a number of initiatives in association with UNESCO’s Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

In 2006 ivory carving was designated as a national intangible cultural heritage. This State recognition enhanced the cultural value of ivory carving, raising its value and desirability in the eyes of the public.

From 2002 to 2006 the Chinese government promoted ivory carving as intangible cultural heritage, raising its value and desirability in the eyes of the public. Photograph by Daniel Stiles
Ivory started to enter the art market. Along with ancient Chinese paintings, jades, and porcelains, carved ivory was touted as a profitable investment. Media coverage about the astronomical prices of auctioned ivory greatly boosted the perceived economic value of ivory products, new or old, which led to an explosion of ivory demand.

Ivory art for investment took off in 2009 and peaked at the end of 2011, mirroring elephant poaching data produced by the Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) program. It was these cultural and investment factors, and not the 2008 one-off ivory sale, which stimulated consumer interest in worked ivory in China. “The 2008 CITES one-off sale stimulating demand in China is a myth created by Westerners,” Gao told me.

**Consumer Demand Falls—Elephant Poaching Rates Go Up?**

Recent information suggests that consumer demand has been falling since 2012, supported by research carried out in China by Kirsten Conrad and Brendan Moyle in 2013 and 2014. “The factories are actually using up tusks slower than the total allocations (13.78 tons out of 18). If demand had taken off in the way many are claiming, then we’d expect to see these numbers trending up to match,” said Brendan Moyle. Some factories were even selling raw ivory because they didn’t need it.

If the investment craze for carved ivory was tapering off, why was elephant poaching still going full speed ahead? It was not only Chinese consumer interest in carved ivory that sparked the poaching crisis beginning in 2008-09. Investors, a.k.a. speculators, also became interested in raw ivory—tusks. After anti-trade NGOs succeeded in forcing a nine-year moratorium on proposals for future legal ivory sales from southern Africa at the CITES Conference of the Parties in 2007, unscrupulous ivory dealers saw that there was even more money to be made from poached tusks, because uncertainty of supply fuels speculation.

CITES, thanks to anti-trade NGOs, had provided traffickers with a windfall. Just as China ivory factories thought that they would be receiving a continued supply of legal tusks through repeated CITES-approved sales, their hopes were dashed.

We are now back to a situation somewhat like the 1980s, where East Asian dealers and factories are buying all the poached ivory they can. The positive feedback loop, with calls for more restrictions leading to more stockpiling and more poaching, are once again feeding one another. But instead of Hong Kong and Japan, now it’s China that is buying most poached ivory. And instead of stockpiling ivory for future use, some of the biggest buyers are hoarding tusks for future sale, when they expect to make a killing as increasing tusk scarcity continues to force prices ever higher.

The “Stop Ivory” campaign, which aims to close all ivory markets and destroy all stockpiles, is creating a perception of ivory scarcity. The well-publicized new round of ivory stockpile destructions beginning in Kenya in 2011 and running up to the present in the Philippines, the USA, China, Hong Kong, and other places has turned perception into reality. Close to 70 tons of ivory has been destroyed, equaling the legal annual quota in China over 12 years.
The Price of Illegal Raw Ivory in China Has Skyrocketed

Martin and Vigne went to China in late 2010, and again in May 2014, and found that “The average price paid by craftsmen or factory owners, for good quality, privately-owned 1-4 kg elephant tusks in Beijing in early 2014 was $2,100 per kilogram [$955 per pound]. The average price for similar tusks in 2010 was $750 per kg [$341 per pound].”

Speculators are attracted to a 280 percent return on investment in less than four years. If the ivory is purchased in Africa, profits are much higher. Chinese ivory traffickers are flocking to the Zambian countryside, Dar es-Salaam, Kinshasa, and dozens of other places in Africa where tusks can be bought from poachers and middlemen for as little as $50 per kilogram. What speculator can resist buying a commodity at $50 a kilogram and selling it for $2,100 a kilogram? That’s a 4,200 percent profit! In reality, of course, with all of the expenses and an average buying price of about $150 a kilogram, profit might be “only” 1,000 percent.

The opportunity for enormous profits has prompted high-level African politicians, military officers, and police commanders to muscle into the trafficking networks. Corruption of the kind described by Liz Bennett in her recent essay in Conservation Biology is now common. The corruption is a result of the CITES ivory trade ban and is strengthened by the campaign to “Stop Ivory.”

We need to appreciate that the high poaching rates and corrupt ivory trafficking networks described by Bennett were created under an ivory ban regime. The two one-off sales were blips that had little effect, as both the Elephant Trade Information (ETIS) and MIKE concluded after extensive analysis. I concluded the same when analyzing the 1999 one-off sale. Even with the downturn in consumer demand for carved ivory in China, the increased speculator demand for raw ivory is driving horrifying rates of elephant poaching.

Tom Milliken, who manages ETIS, was recently quoted as saying, “Just looking at large-scale ivory seizures, 2013 represents the highest quantity of ivory seized in 25 years of data going back to 1989.” More than 51 metric tons (57 U.S. tons) of ivory were seized in 2013! This is empirical evidence that the CITES ivory ban and stockpile destruction are bad policy.

What Is the Solution?

Empirical evidence does not suggest that more of the same would be successful in reducing poaching. I agree with Albert Einstein, “Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.” If China could receive 40-50 tons and Japan 10-15 tons of legal raw ivory annually, the speculators would be put out of business, most ivory factory owners would cease buying poached tusks, raw ivory prices would plummet, and elephant poaching would become much less profitable, greatly reducing the incentive to poach. Uncertainty and speculation would cease.

This quantity of ivory could be supplied from a combination of existing African stockpiles, natural elephant mortality and “problem” animal control. Many people are unaware that large numbers of elephants are killed legally every year in human-elephant conflict situations. Not a single elephant life would have to be sacrificed for this legal, regulated trade.

Elephant killing would not cease entirely, because there are other drivers such as human-elephant conflict, meat, and African ivory markets. But even a 50 percent reduction in poaching rates would be worth it. Is the goal to stop elephant killing, or stop ivory? I’m for the first one.

With Legal Raw Ivory Trade, Elephants Can Thrive.

There are measures that can be taken to avoid corruption and laundering of the type described in Elizabeth Bennett’s Conservation Biology essay. She described the problems associated
with the current illegal system and applied them to an assumed legal ivory trade. Her assumptions were faulty. The legal system would need to achieve three essential outcomes:

1) ivory factory owners no longer buy poached tusks,
2) ivory consumer demand is driven down to meet available legal supply, and
3) the current black market ivory factories and outlets in China are either brought into the legal system or put out of business.

I mention only China in outcome 3 because China is the elephant in the room, so to speak. With 1.4 billion people and an economy that will soon be the largest in the world, coupled with a cultural desire for ivory, the Chinese control the fate of elephants. If these three outcomes can be achieved, all of the concerns about corruption and leakage of illegal ivory into the legal supply chain outlined in Bennett’s essay can be avoided. I will explain why.

Ivory factory owners, whether they be a State Owned Enterprise (SOE) in China or privately owned, have the same basic objectives—make a profit and stay in business. If a legal business achieves those two objectives better than an illegal one, the rational owner or manager will choose the legal option. So if legal raw ivory can be provided in sufficient quantity at predictable times at an acceptable price, there will be no incentive to buy higher risk illegal ivory.

In addition, there are advantages that legal raw ivory in China offers: It is much cheaper than illegal, and legal supply is predictable, while illegal supply because of seizures is not. The only reason an illegal market operates at all is the lack of sufficient legal supply, which is controlled by the government at 5-6 tons a year.

If 40-50 tons of legal raw ivory could be supplied a year, all of the currently illegal factories could be drawn into the legal system by the offer of low-risk, high-gain legal ivory. They would not need to buy illegal ivory, eliminating the motivation to launder (i.e. buy illegal and mix with the legal).

The reduction in demand for illegal ivory would drive its price down to a level that would become unattractive for most traffickers, which would lower poaching and quash speculative buying and stockpiling. Who would stockpile a commodity whose price is falling?

Currently, the Chinese government is selling legal raw ivory at about $600 a kilogram on average to registered ivory factories, according to Moyle and Conrad. Illegal factories are paying an average of $2,100 a kilogram according to Martin and Vigne, and Gao found that secondary raw ivory dealing on the Internet reached prices up to $2,800 a kilogram. What factory owner in his or her right mind would buy poached tusks at those prices if legal ones were available at $600/kg?

Consumer demand can be driven down in two ways, one of them already succeeding in China and Japan—price. The main reason consumer demand started falling in 2012 in China is that carved ivory prices reached a limit few consumers were willing to pay. I believe this was intentional in the legal market and coincidentally necessary in the illegal market.

Because of the very small quotas of raw ivory rationed to legal factories, they opted to produce low quantity, high quality, high price items—mainly elaborate figurines, carved or polished tusks, and extravagant composite pieces. Only the wealthy could afford to buy them. The huge profit per item compensated for the low volume.

The illegal market sector is forced to charge higher prices than in 2010 because the raw ivory they use has gone up in cost so much recently, currently to more than $2,000 a kilogram. Because they have to sell in high volume, they manufacture mostly the smaller, less expensive items such as diminutive, lower quality figurines, jewelry, name seal blanks, chopsticks, and other knick-knacks. They are not able to produce the high quality items the legal sector does because, with a few exceptions perhaps, the master craftsmen work in the legal sector. It is Versace versus Wal-Mart
applied to ivory. To drive overall ivory consumption down, the entire ivory market must be shifted more toward the Versace model.

This is where the second way to drive consumer demand down comes in—campaigns of the type WildAid, Save the Elephants, African Wildlife Foundation, and others have launched. Create awareness about the harm buying ivory causes to elephants. Target especially jewelry and other items that are seen in public, create stigma associated with wearing or using ivory items, as was done with fur. Combined with high prices, stigma could lower demand considerably for ivory bracelets, necklaces, cigarette holders, and so on produced in the black market.

In a sustained, legal ivory trade system the Chinese government is crucial to achieve the outcome of doing away with the black market. The traditional carrot-and-stick approach can be used to entice the illegal factories to register and join the legal, regulated system. They can be offered a quota of legal ivory annually at relatively low cost. The owner and employees of any unregistered factories found operating after a certain date would suffer severe penalties. Why would a factory owner choose to take the risk of staying in the black market when low-cost, legal ivory was on offer?

**Supply and Demand**

For the system above to work, it depends on there being enough legal raw ivory available to bring a high proportion of illegal ivory factories on board the legal boat, and being able to satisfy consumer demand reasonably well. A small amount of residual illegal activity is to be expected, but the overall objective of significantly reducing elephant poaching can be achieved.

A document submitted at the 65th CITES Standing Committee meeting in July this year stated that the “current African ivory stockpiles contain at least 800 [metric tons] of ivory... The true figure, however, may be considerably higher than that.” There are many complications involving what quantity would be legal to trade and which countries would meet CITES criteria to enable them to trade, but it is apparent that there’s a lot of ivory sitting in storerooms in Africa that is being wasted. It could be used to save elephant lives.

Kathleen Gobush produced the results of a lengthy study carried out for Save the Elephants last year that included estimates of how much ivory accumulates annually from natural mortality. Her methodology would yield 38 tons annually at a 4$ natural mortality rate from only 12 African countries, where data were good enough to run her model. If problem animal control (PAC) ivory were added, the quantity would be much larger. She found that 44-67% of the legal ivory sold by the 4 southern African countries in 2008 derived from PAC ivory, and the remainder from natural deaths. While no exact figure can be put at present on how much ivory would be available from stockpiles, natural mortality and PAC combined, I am confident that a minimum of 60 tons of legal ivory could be exported from Africa annually for at least ten years, without a single poached tusk needed. During this ten-year period, intense demand-reduction campaigns can be mounted so that renewable resource ivory from natural deaths and PAC can supply demand sustainably.

The cheaper legal raw ivory should not translate to cheaper worked ivory, however. This could stimulate consumer demand. I would recommend that a “conservation tax” be applied to worked ivory to keep prices up, dampening demand. The revenues could be dedicated to conservation projects in Africa and awareness campaigns in China.

**Preventing Leakage and Laundering**

Legal ivory stockpile quantities would be reported annually to CITES, as currently required. A country not reporting would not be eligible to sell its ivory. Every eligible country would be subject to periodic independent monitoring of its stockpile in a manner to be determined by CITES.
CITES would supervise sales annually or semiannually following procedures established for the one-off sales. The significant difference being that now buyers would be confident that they’d know when, where, and how much ivory will be available in future. Uncertainty and speculation will be eliminated.

The ivory will be shipped in sealed containers directly from African government storerooms to Asian government receiving points in the purchasing countries for storage and distribution. This will cut out all of the points subject to corruption and laundering mentioned in the Bennett essay.

If this type of system can be established, I foresee that many African countries that currently export their ivory illegally, often with government involvement, will see the advantages of cleaning up their act so that they can qualify to enter the legal trade regime. Why take the risk of smuggling illegal ivory that is subject to confiscation when it can be sold legally, risk-free? The advantages will become increasingly apparent as poached ivory prices plummet with legal trade.

“No Good Reason Why Anyone Needs Ivory”

I agree completely with Beth Allgood’s sentiments expressed in Russo’s feature: There’s no good reason why anyone needs ivory. But not everyone feels the way Beth and I do, and we have to face reality. Some people want ivory. I do not see the attempt to ban all ivory succeeding better than allowing the limited, legal raw ivory trade described here. Closing the legal ivory market in China will only drive the master carvers and others into the illegal sector. The black market is already illegal, how much more illegal can it become with a total ban? It will carry on and even expand, fostering crime, corruption, and continued elephant killing.

Elephants cannot survive the continued ivory trade ban and “Stop Ivory.” They can thrive with legal trade.

Daniel Stiles is a member of the IUCN/SSC African Elephant Specialist Group; the views presented in this article may not represent the views of the IUCN AFESG. For those readers who are interested in the comments to Stile’s opinion piece, please click this website and scroll to comments – you will find pro and contra arguments from a diverse range of experts. This article was first published on http://newswatch.nationalgeographic.com/2014/09/15/opinion-can-elephants-survive-a-continued-ivory-trade-ban/ and has been published in African Indaba with the author’s permission.

Unsustainable Use: The Unintended Consequences

Chris Jarrett

In the year 2000 the Zimbabwe government embarked on their “Fast Track Land Reform Program” (FTLRP). This radical land redistribution exercise was to enrich and empower the masses by presenting them with land previously used by commercial agriculture. In so doing government said the entire nation would prosper, but it did not. Commercial agricultural production plummeted as expected but so too did that of the Communal Lands. As agriculture failed so too did tourism, industry, commerce, banking, mining and all spheres of financial endeavor. Foreign currency receipts declined as did tax revenues.

The solution adopted was to print money to make it work. Funding was given to FTLRP beneficiaries but still they failed to produce. Eventually the Zimbabwe dollar disappeared taking with it our then worthless 100 Trillion Dollar Note.
What on earth has all this got to do with sustainable utilization? Our continued existence on this planet demands sustainable utilization of our natural resources. The human species often flouts this principle but possibly nowhere as flagrantly as on Zimbabwe’s seized farmland. Having paid no compensation to former owners the government holds no ownership rights in FTLRP land and can only offer beneficiaries an insecure temporary occupation. The “tragedy of the commons” comes in to play. Communal land belongs to all and thus no one person owns it or is responsible to care for it. All use it and irrationally rush to deplete its resources. Thus we engineer our own demise.

Beneficiaries under the FTLRP do not behave as land owners whose continued wellbeing would dictate policies which require their land, together with its fauna and flora, be maintained in good heart. Instead their attitude is that speedy plunder is the logical course to follow during what they know can only be a stay of limited duration.

Creating wealth through cropping, cattle or game ranching is a long term exercise. This falls outside the uncertain tenure granted. Farming of whatever discipline requires capital to succeed. Without title beneficiaries have no security to offer banks. Unfunded and insecure, commercial cropping has failed along with cattle and game ranching. Respect of property rights is at the core of sustainable utilization; the FTLRP its antithesis. Very little food is produced under peasant subsistence systems.

Tobacco production funded by international tobacco companies has shown what is likely to be unsustainable growth. Some 90,000 small-scale growers in an endeavor to maximize returns do not use coal for curing and massive destruction of timber takes place. This production cannot last – the trees in these growing areas are gone. Livestock only graze where there is access to permanent water. Grazing systems requiring pumping of water, maintenance of pipelines, pumps and fencing are no longer used. Domesticated cattle can be driven back to one’s homestead but wildlife cannot. To own game you must utilize it quickly; eat it before anyone else does – the “tragedy of the commons” once more.

This irrational FTLRP has destroyed huge numbers of game animals. Wild animals being a “free good” were butchered under any pretext. Rare Sable antelope conserved on the Khami River Valley farms and in adjoining Forestry areas became meat stew at ruling party gatherings. The diverse herds in the Gwayi River Conservancy adjoining the famed Hwange National Park were wiped out. Thanks to better management the privately owned Gwayi River Conservancy carried higher densities of wild life than the National Park itself. FTLRP beneficiaries immediately linked up with unscrupulous professional hunters and between them they wiped out or drove these animals back into the Park to die of thirst. The Save Conservancy fared no better. Part of it was resettled. The properties covered by Bilateral Investment Treaties have not been seized but all the rest have and are now being run by the same Department of National Parks that was unable to water the game under their care in Hwange National Park. Save’s real owners over the past four years have not been allowed to conduct their normal safari operations so have consequently run out of funds. Rhinos had to be moved and consolidated. Poaching has escalated with few staff left on anti-poaching duties. Recently the Minister of Tourism complained that declining American and European tourist arrivals were linked to Save Valley Conservancy invasions and seizures.

The few Conservancies that remained in operation also suffered. No privately owned properties remained which could absorb surplus stock from Conservancies so these wild life producers were reduced to culling surplus animals to sell at discounted meat value. In dry years many animals starved to death there being no secure properties left to which to relocate them.

The FTLRP has nearly ruined the banking system. Money supply consists of notes and coins together with deposits now mainly all short term. The value that was inherent in Zimbabwe’s titled
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

land which was used by the banking system as security is no more. Our rural land is now worthless and several banks are unable to repay customers their deposits.

What hope is there in this situation? First the man in the street is now very interested in and skilled in the subject of economics. He understands that the denial of property rights of commercial farmers brought about the “cascade failure” of every other sector in the economy. The second lesson is that farming is one of the slowest, most difficult and expensive ways of making money. Zimbabwe’s former productivity and wealth will return with restoration of existing property rights and will flourish should title also be granted in the Communal Lands. Only then will our resources again be used sustainably!

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Hunting For Sustainability: Lion Conservation In Selous Game Reserve
Henry Brink

Trophy hunting and lions inspire extreme opposite reactions. Hunters feel that trophy hunting is essential to conservation or stewardship of wilderness areas; while animal rights people feel that trophy hunting in the name of conservation is a madness that should have been banned long ago. Similarly, lions are either magnificent beasts, the ‘king of the jungle,’ which people are willing to pay substantial amounts to see or shoot; or they are a bane to society killing livestock and people. Occupying the middle ground on trophy hunting and lions can be a lonely place to be.

In 2006, the opportunity to indulge two of my chief interests, namely, lions and sustainable resource use as a tool in conservation, presented itself, and I began a study on lions in Selous Game Reserve, Tanzania (access the completed PhD thesis, submitted in 2010, here). Since 2011, I have been working in Selous GR in various capacities. Over the next few pages, I will summarize some of my PhD study’s key findings and at the end, bring discussions up-to-date.

Lion trophy hunting is very topical at the moment, with diverse interested parties awaiting the decision of the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on the listing of lions for import of trophies into the USA. These interested parties range from the government of Tanzania, American hunters, the Tanzanian hunting industry, conservation groups, and animal welfare groups. It is my opinion that well regulated, managed and transparent trophy hunting has an important role to play in the conservation of wildlife populations and areas in Tanzania. The key question is whether trophy hunting is well regulated, managed and transparent in Tanzania?

And if not, what can be done to make it so?

Background to Lions, Conservation, and Hunting in Tanzania

Tanzania has more lions than any other country, supporting between half and a third of the remaining free-ranging wild lion population. Tanzania has achieved this through a sensible approach of pursuing both photographic tourism and hunting tourism, and has to be commended for setting aside so much of its land for wildlife (some 30% of the country). Only some 15% of this wildlife area is reliant on photographic tourism to fund its conservation and protection, the other 85% is reliant on trophy hunting. While photographic tourism can make much more money than hunting tourism
per unit area (in some cases up to 40 times as much), you need many more visitors and the infrastructure to support these numbers of visitors. You also need the attractions to bring in the visitors, and much of the more scenic wilderness areas of Tanzania are already set aside for photographic tourism (e.g. Serengeti, Ngorongoro, etc.) – they make more money. Hunting seems a sensible option in areas that are very woody (hard to see animals), have fewer animals, or are too inaccessible.

Hunting in Tanzania is permitted through the issuance of a license by the Director of Wildlife, and a total of 74 species of big game can be hunted by tourists. Hunting areas are divided up into hunting blocks or concessions which are leased to hunting companies who are responsible for organising the hunting safaris and attracting tourists. Each hunting block has a quota of animals that may be hunted. This quota is, in general, set through educated guesswork, but hunting companies still have to achieve 40% of their quotas or face fines and penalties. Much has been written about the negative consequences of infanticide on lion populations if the breeding pride males are constantly removed through trophy hunting, and suggestions have been made to only hunt older males. Such suggestions of only hunting males above six years old would do away with the need for a quota system, but would require the ability to accurately age lions in the field (for more info, see Whitman et al., 2004).

The Selous (SGR) is Africa’s largest and oldest protected area. It is internationally designated as a World Heritage Site and has developed a considerable reputation as a tourist hunting destination. However, two of the SGR’s 47 hunting blocks were set aside for non-consumptive or photographic tourism in the 1960s, and in 2003 two more blocks were added to the photographic area. Currently, the four photographic blocks of SGR comprise 2996 km² or six percent of SGR. Further blocks may be added to the photographic area in the future. The Selous makes a good case study for the future of lion trophy hunting in Tanzania.

**Lion Population and Ecology in Selous Game Reserve**

Due to difficulties in initially getting permission to work in the hunting areas of Selous, my field research was predominately focused on the photographic area of northern Selous; where intensive searches for lions were conducted between 2006 and 2009 (except during the rainy season of March to May). Over 160 lions were individually recognized, and in August 2012, there were 112 lions in an 800 km² study area, giving a density of 0.14 lions per km², or 1 lion per 7 km². The population in this area had remained relatively constant, as my density estimates were similar to results using the same method from 1997-1999, but the adult sex ratio had decreased from 1 male: 1.3 female in 1997 to 1 male: 3 females in 2009. Such changes in the sex ratio are often indicative of unsustainable male lion trophy hunting, which tie in with recent studies of lion trophy hunting in Tanzania (discussed later).

In 2009, I was given permission to work in the hunting blocks of SGR and using buffalo calf distress calls conducted call-up surveys to census lions in three hunting sectors in the west, east and south of Selous, and in the northern photographic area. Estimated adult lion densities varied from 0.02-0.10 per km², allowing an overall population estimate of 4300 (range: 1700 – 6900). This represents Africa’s biggest lion population (for more info, see Brink et al., 2013).

Lion distribution in the 800 km² study site in northern Selous was best explained by lean or dry season prey biomass. The mean dry season prey biomass for the study site was 1436 kg per km², suggesting a lion carrying capacity for the study site of 164 lions (0.21 lions per km²). However, by another method a carrying capacity of only 104 lions (0.13 lions per km²) was suggested for the same area based on the average number of preferred prey species recorded on prey transects. In August 2009, as mentioned earlier, at least 112 lions were observed in this 800 km² study area, so the
observed number of lions was between the two possible carrying capacities. Based on prey transects and field observations of lions on kills, lions in northern Selous showed a preference for buffalo, zebra, giraffe and wildebeest and an avoidance of warthog and impala. However, no relationship was noted between lion distribution and buffalo sightings. Environmental and anthropogenic factors that best explained lion distribution in northern SGR were distance to the reserve boundary and villages and soil type of an area. Understanding lion ecology and the factors that impact lion distribution and population can be useful in setting the lion trophy hunting quota in Selous.

Setting the Lion Trophy Hunting Quota in Selous

The sustainable management of hunting in Selous Game Reserve (SGR) is driven by a quota system, whereby the reserve is divided into 43 hunting blocks and each is allocated a quota of animals to hunt. The lion hunting quota in Tanzania, as mentioned previously, is currently set through educated guesswork. A transparent means of setting quotas for lions in SGR was devised. In particular, three different approaches were used to investigate the sustainability of the lion hunting quota (for a detailed discussion of these three approaches, please see my thesis: pg. 55-78).

The most accessible and simplest to implement was an approach based on hunting off-take and quota data. Based on lion off-take data from 1995 to 2008 a reduction to the quota is suggested to one lion per 1000 km$^2$. Therefore a block of 2000 km$^2$ would get a quota of two lions per year, and a 500 km$^2$ block would get a quota of one lion every other year. This approach suggests a lion quota of 46 lions for Selous. The other approaches would suggest a quota of 70 or 88 respectively. All three approaches showed the need for the lion quota to be reduced from the actual figure of 140 lions in SGR.

The reaction from the various hunting companies to suggestions of a reduced quota has by and large been negative; their objections have focused on three points: i) the quota should not be reduced, as it is rarely met; ii) certain areas have higher densities of lions, and therefore these areas should be allowed to continue to harvest at higher levels; iii) the reduction in off-take has been a result of self-regulation.

The hunting companies argue that they need the high quotas to sell the opportunity to hunt to tourists, and that they do not expect to fill the quota. This is true of many companies, but there are companies that have a quota of four lions, a block of 379 km$^2$, and shoot all four lions on their quota. The challenge has always been how to regulate the companies that over harvest their blocks. A reduction of the lion quota to one per 1000 km$^2$ would reduce the quota from 499 for the whole of Tanzania (as it was in 2008) to 230, but this would still be higher than the 162 lions hunted in 2008 in Tanzania. What it would mean is that the spread of hunting would be more even (i.e. you would not have areas of over harvesting).

Certain areas have higher densities of lions, and therefore these areas should be allowed to continue to harvest at higher levels; there are blocks harvesting at two or three lions per 1000 km$^2$ that have not shown a reduction in off-take over time. While this may certainly be true, there have been almost no independent field studies from hunting areas in Tanzania. Conversely, it could be argued that these high levels of off-take have been maintained by increased hunting effort or illegal practices (e.g. hunting at night with spotlight) masking a reduction in the overall population and a sudden decrease in off-take is imminent.

These reductions in off-take have been a result of self-regulation; that is, hunters are showing restraint and only hunting older animals or good trophy animals. While this may be true of several companies, it does not explain why the greatest decrease in lion hunting is seen in areas with the highest hunting pressures (i.e. most lions shot per unit area per year). Nor does it explain the
general perception among government officials and professional hunters in SGR that there are fewer lions in 2008 than in the 1990s, nor the fact that under-aged lions are still being shot in Tanzania in 2008. In the next section, I look at one of the major causes of unsustainably high hunting off-take, namely, short-term block leasing or sub-leasing.

The Impact of Short-Term Leasing on Lion Trophy Hunting

Over the last two decades the lion quota in Selous has remained relatively constant and the numbers of tourists visiting Selous for hunting safaris have increased. However, actual lion trophy hunting off-take in Selous peaked in 1998 (115 lions shot) and over the last decade lion trophy hunting has decreased by some 50% to 53 lions hunted in 2008. However, this decrease has not been uniform across the Selous. The blocks in Selous with the highest lion hunting pressure (i.e. the most lions shot per 1000 km² per year) were the blocks that experienced the steepest declines in trophy off-take from 1996 to 2008 and tended to be leased by the same company for less than five years (or sub-leased). This short-termism is driving the over-hunting of lions, leading to declines in the lion population in these hunting blocks. Furthermore, because of Tanzania’s over-reliance on trophy fees (i.e. fees paid for the dead animal) these high pressure hunting blocks brought in the greatest amount of revenue for the government per km² of area. There is a need to move away from the over reliance on trophy fees for government income generation.

There is very little information available on many aspects of the Tanzanian hunting industry. In particular, many of the concessions are leased to local companies that do not have the capacity to market their hunting opportunities, thus leading to a system of subleasing mostly to foreign professional hunters without any residence status in Tanzania. This has implications for revenue collection and long-term utilization of the blocks whereby all parties involved benefit most by maximizing returns over the short term, which is achieved through shooting the most lions over a limited period. In Selous, most of these blocks are on the western side of the reserve. Hunting companies that retain the same hunting blocks over 20 years take a long-term view over husbanding hunting opportunities in their blocks. This relationship is clearly highlighted by the lion trophy hunting data in my study. It is therefore strongly recommended that blocks should be leased for a minimum of ten years and not the five years as is current practice.

The Future: Lion Trophy Hunting in Tanzania

Till this point, I have largely been focused on sharing the results of my work in Selous from 2006 to 2009, now I would like to discuss what has happened since and look at future opportunities and challenges. On returning to Tanzania in 2011, my focus was very much on continuing to monitor lions in Selous. In particular, to expand monitoring to the hunting areas of Selous using a new cost effective and reliable method based on spoor transects (for more info on the method see, Funston et al., 2010). However, it has proved impossible to get research clearance for the work in the hunting blocks. This work could have been used to allow for a more informed decision in the USFWS listing of the lion. The former Director of Wildlife wrote in the New York Times (March 17, 2013): “I ask on behalf of my country and all of our wildlife: do not list the African lion as endangered. Instead, help us make the most from the revenues we generate. Help us make trophy hunting more sustainable and more valuable. In short, please work with us to conserve wildlife, rather than against us, which only diminishes our capacity to protect Tanzania’s global treasures.” If these sentiments are genuinely held, partnership with international conservation organizations could greatly help Tanzania’s credibility that lion trophy hunting was currently sustainable by allowing these international organizations to assist in field surveys and monitoring of trophy quality prior to export. Many of these necessary changes to lion trophy hunting are not rocket science and are far from new,
and recent efforts on trophy assessment and lion aging with IGF Foundation (Fondation Internationale pour la Gestion de la Faune) represent a step in the right direction, but to my mind do not go far enough: lion trophy data should have been made more widely available and organizations with differing viewpoints should be involved.

The adoption of the 1995 Policy and Management Plan for Tourist Hunting (MNRT, 1995), which was accepted by the then Director of Wildlife, but has yet to be implemented, would go some way to making trophy hunting sustainable as it would allocate hunting blocks through market-based competition with a long-term lease, thereby reducing the importance of trophy fees. The 1995 Management Plan focuses on a more equitable distribution of revenue and had six main recommendations:

- The allocation of hunting blocks through a tender system that allows equitable distribution of blocks, without compromising the existing high standards of many outfitters or prejudicing the long-term economic returns from tourist hunting to Tanzania (open allocation);
- The adoption of a fee structure that combines a right to use concession fee paid by the outfitter in return for a long-term lease of that block, and a trophy fee per animal shot (improved fee structure);
- The setting of sustainable hunting quota that promote trophy quality on a scientific basis (sustainable quotas);
- The adoption of codes of conduct by outfitters and the overseeing of examinations for professional hunters that ensure their competence in the practice of hunting and in providing the necessary services to their hunting clients (codes of conduct and professional examinations);
- The sharing of revenues and benefits with rural communities from hunting carried out on their land (community benefit); and
- The reinvestment of part of the funds derived from tourist hunting in the management of game reserves (Game Reserve retention).

It is my opinion that transparent, well regulated and managed trophy hunting has an important role to play in lion conservation in Tanzania. For lion trophy hunting to be of benefit to conservation in Tanzania, it has to be sustainable, but more importantly beyond any suspicion of wrong-doing. Regardless of how the USFWS list the lion, those that support lion trophy hunting have to clearly explain how they intend to deal with allegations of unsustainable hunting, corruption, and poor wildlife management practices. Similarly, those that support a ban on lion trophy hunting have to clearly articulate how they intend to fund the conservation of areas currently reliant on trophy hunting, a very substantial area in the Tanzanian context.

Further Information:
Henry Brink was formerly Principal Investigator on Selous Lion Project and a Project Officer on Frankfurt Zoological Society’s Selous Conservation Project. The views expressed here are the author’s own and do not reflect the opinions of the organizations mentioned.

News From And About Africa

Africa

INTERPOL has established a dedicated team to tackle illegal ivory trafficking and other environmental crimes in Africa. As part of its Regional Bureau in Nairobi, the team will collaborate with national law enforcement agencies and INTERPOL National Central Bureaus in the region to increase information exchange, support intelligence analysis and assist national and regional investigations. With the illicit trade in ivory and rhinoceros horn a major concern in Africa, the team will work with countries and partner organizations to further the activities of INTERPOL’s Project Wisdom, which combats elephant and rhinoceros poaching and the illegal trade in ivory and rhino horn. This includes capacity building initiatives and creating a regional network for environmental protection. David Higgins, Head of INTERPOL’s Environmental Security Unit, said the establishment of the environmental crime team at the Regional Bureau demonstrates INTERPOL’s dedication to offering the highest level of support to law enforcement in its member countries in disrupting the transnational criminal groups involved not only in wildlife crime, but also other serious forms of crime (source: http://www.interpol.int/News-and-media/News/2014/N2014-196).

Namibia

Deputy Minister of Environment and Tourism, Pohamba Shifeta stated at the Conservancy Chairperson Forum that the areas of Lusese and Nakabolelwa along the Zambezi and Chobe rivers will be turned into conservancies, bringing to 81 the number of registered conservancies in the country. Trophy hunting, lodge developments, game for hunting and live game sales, game for own use and other game utilization activities continue to be the main source of income for conservancies.

Namibia

Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF), Namibia, has been active in the fight against the illegal trade in cheetah. During the first six months of 2014, CCF compiled 13 cases of illegal cheetah trafficking involving 37 cheetahs. Sixteen of these cheetahs were confirmed dead, and the fate of 15 is unknown. Of the remaining six alive cheetah, four are housed in zoos in the United Arab Emirates after confiscation, and two are being held in Ethiopia.

Southern Africa

Between 350,000 and 470,000 birds are killed accidentally or deliberately with pesticides every year in South Africa. Vultures suffer in particular, mainly as result of deliberate predator poisoning with insecticides by farmers. Farmers in South Africa have easy access to suitable chemicals. Such deadly pesticides are also repacked and sold in small quantities by street vendors without counter-action. Such poisonings, which every time affect 60 to 90 vultures, occurred in different South African provinces with similar incidents happening in neighboring countries, there often as a result of poaching. 183 vultures were killed on a single poisoned elephant in Gonarezhou/Zimbabwe, over 200 vultures in Kwando/Botswana, and 400 to 600 at an elephant
poisoning site in Babwata/Namibia. Poachers are often in possession of pesticides to eradicate vultures, as those alarm the game rangers.

**South Africa**

8 sitatunga transferred from Prague Zoo in the Czech Republic to Johannesburg Zoo were euthanized after arrival due to a restriction on the movement of antelope species into the region from Europe. Prague Zoo’s Director commented, “We learned from the Lufthansa that the final destination of the consignment was not Johannesburg zoo, but [Mr. Clive Albutt] [who] was to deliver some animals to Johannesburg zoo in exchange for our sitatungas! [Johannesburg Zoo has declared] that it wants the [sitatunga] for themselves, while it has arranged their import for a private breeder, completely unknown to us, and without any our agreement and approval.”

**Book Review: Hunting the Spiral Horns: Bushbuck – The Little Big Buck by Peter Flack**

*Gerhard R Damm*

Edited by Peter Flack, this is the third in Flack’s five-book series covering all 30 spiral horn species and subspecies recognized by Rowland Ward and SCI. Experienced hunter and passionate conservationist, Flack designed the bushbuck volume to be the definitive book on hunting the 11 subspecies of this enigmatic animal, a beautiful but pugnacious antelope. It is a big book, containing nearly 400 pages, profusely sprinkled with 450 color photos and 33 black and white ones. The photographs are truly outstanding and we have been lucky to receive excellent examples of the work of a number of top class professional wildlife photographers, including Jofie Lamprecht, Cath Robertson, Robert Ross, Brendon Ryan and Michael Viljoen, as well as hundreds supplied by the contributing authors themselves, including one taken by Adam Parkison in C.A.R of a huge python swallowing a fully grown bushbuck ewe.

The 26 hunters and authors who contributed material specially written for the book read like the Who’s Who of bushbuck hunters and include luminaries such as Rolf Baldus, Irvin Barnhart, Don Cowie, Kai-Uwe Denker, Brian Herne, Jeff Rann, Nassos and Jason Roussos, Alain Smith, Tony Tomkinson and Coenraad Vermaak to name but a few.

The book also includes the exploits of famous hunters of yesteryear such as Ahlefeldt-Bille, Chapman, Cornwallis Harris, Gordon Cumming, Maydon, Percival, Selous, Vaughan Kirby and others, as well as chapters on rifles and ammunition, clothing and equipment and

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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](http://www.cic-wildlife.org)
"how to" chapters by passionate and very experienced bushbuck hunters. Some of the stories relate potentially dangerous encounters with these feisty, little buck who seem to have no reverse gear when confronted and especially when dogs are thrown into the mix.

Flack aimed at providing the prospective and experienced bushbuck hunters with a complete guide on hunting 11 subspecies of bushbuck, and he succeeded admirably. The bushbuck volume of the series – like those other spiralhorn books edited by Flack, covers every aspect of bushbuck hunting; in fact, you possibly cannot learn more about hunting this ghost of riverine forest – except by going on hunting them yourself. Each of the hunting stories in the book has been carefully chosen – Flack placed emphasis on it being well-written, entertaining and moreover containing a lesson or two in each story. Some of them are subliminal, others more obvious and direct.

In my opinion the bushbuck book follows the tradition of Flack’s passion for the spiral-horned antelope, and he again exceeded expectations – but isn’t this what one expects from an accomplished hunter-conservationist and author like Peter Flack? A worthwhile addition to your hunting library. Collectors may want to look at the quarter leather bound, cased and signed limited edition priced at US$ 175.00.