Landrover Supports Anti-Hunters
Rolf D Baldus

For decades Landrover has been an extremely popular vehicle with wildlife conservation agencies, hunters and PH’s in Africa. These organizations and people are therefore an important target group for the company. In some countries Landrover dealers organize special events for hunters or offer vehicles that are specially equipped for hunting.

Interesting enough the Landrover Company has selected the "Born Free Foundation", a pronounced British anti-hunting NGO as its "primary global conservation partner". According to the company’s website ‘‘Landrover is committed to provide the Foundation with practical help by supplying vehicles as well as financial backing for the next five years, reflecting its integrated approach to building global sustainability.” Another animal rights' campaigner, the "Environmental Investigation Agency", which concentrates on undercover work against real and perceived wildlife crime and wildlife use, is also privileged to traverse London in a posh Range Rover Evoque.

Like most animal welfare groups, Born Free does only limited practical conservation work. It concentrates on animal welfare activities and also lobbies for its welfare objectives including denouncing hunting. In its own words the

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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
Foundation “fights to end this glorified ‘sport’”.

As an example for its animal welfare work six landrovers from the UK were used to transport a circus lion from a resort in Belgium to Schiphol airport. The poor animal was flown to Lusaka and then driven 800 kilometers by an escort of a landrover fleet led by a silver Discovery to Lilongwe in Malawi. There it is living now, again behind fences in a kind of zoo. Lion Simba (a very inventive name for a lion), as it was called, shares now this new confinement with a lion from Romania. It is unknown whether these two European lions find African fences more pleasant than European bars. It is also unknown whether this type of moving misused creatures around the world is only a publicity stunt to collect donations for Born Free or whether this is the “integrated approach to building global sustainability” Landrover speaks of on its website.

The little that Born Free does around the globe for conservation is at the same time used as a door opener for its anti-hunting propaganda and its efforts to close hunting. Also on CITES meetings, the Foundation is active to rally support against pro-wildlife-use decisions and to organize by different means votes for this cause.

On its website the Foundation agitates against hunting in Africa and killing game in “cold blood” and taking “grotesque trophies” home. Born Free concludes „that the ethical, social and biological problems associated with trophy hunting far outweigh any positive contribution the industry can possibly make.“ The Foundation is also active to put pressures on Governments to ban trophy imports. In 1993 the Foundation was instrumental to establish the so-called „Species Survival Network“, a coalition of animal welfare organizations, which works against wildlife utilization including hunting. Born Free’s President is also the President of the network.

Hunting is controversially discussed in the public. We as hunters know this. We are therefore all the time stipulated to evaluate what we are doing and to secure that our hunting is sustainable, ethical and positive for biodiversity in line with the relevant international conventions. African Indaba is a good example how hunters do not hesitate to criticize occurrences, which do not come up to accepted international hunting standards. We do not expect from a company like Landrover to agree with hunting as a way of sustainably utilizing natural resources and thereby contributing to species conservation and rural livelihoods alike. However, it is difficult to accept that an equally controversial anti-sustainable-use pressure group that tries to destroy hunting gets financed from the revenues of the landrovers, which also we hunters buy.

If you drive a landrover or plan to buy one, you may have a few questions to your local dealer.

Some Firsts, By The First, For The First...
Dr Dave Grossman

Wildlife managers often debate issues around, for example, extra-limital distribution of species on game ranches; the selective breeding of commercially valuable genetic “oddities” such as golden gnu, black springbok; genetic contamination; sustainability; high prices paid for selectively bred buffalo, sable etc., etc. Mindful of these issues, a group of South Africa’s first people, Bushmen (as they call themselves) have been implementing their own wildlife management on land restored to them in the Northern Cape.

The !Khomani San, under the leadership of the late Dawid Kruiper, obtained some 25,000 ha of land in the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park, and some 36,000 ha of farmland to the south of the Park, as settlement of a land claim in 1999.
Renowned for their tracking skills, the current generation of Bushmen deals with the realities of modernity in a commercial, business-oriented social and economic environment, whilst striving to ensure maintenance and inter-generational transmission of knowledge, custom and tradition. They have voluntarily developed a set of protocols to ensure that their rights to hunt, gather and conduct important cultural/spiritual activities in the National Park are done in a manner that respects their traditions and values as well as the conservation of biodiversity and maintenance of ecological processes.

Younger members of the clan accompany elders and healers on plant gathering trips in the Park, and record plant population densities, off-takes and trends via GPS-linked cyber trackers. With the necessary technical support, the Bushmen thereby contribute to ensuring sustainable harvesting of certain plants and animals to mutual benefit of their community and SANParks (as the appointed custodian of public interest).

One of the farms, the 6,000 ha “Erin”, has been developed as a commercial game ranch. Entirely managed by members of the community, the ranch has been fenced in accordance with the requirements for a Certificate of Adequate Enclosure, and stocked with locally occurring species including oryx, springbok, red hartebeest and blue wildebeest. The community explicitly chose not to include currently “popular” (and high-value) genetic recessives such as golden gnu, black or white springbok etc. Two water points, with an unused third as backup, are deemed sufficient in this semi-arid region, and no supplementary feeding is provided. The target market are ethical hunters wishing to participate in an “authentic” Kalahari hunting experience, accompanied by skilled trackers who share their lore and knowledge.

Each year, the people decide on hunt quotas based on counts (foot counts, supplemented by aerial, funds permitting). Now in the third year of commercial operation, Erin, arguably South Africa’s only game ranch owned and managed by indigenous people, is already showing an annual operational profit.

Small, albeit important, successes in the Land Claim saga!

**Editor’s Note:**

In 1995, 160 !Khomani San clan members lead by Dawid Kruiper applied to have their land returned to them and in 1999 they received six farms with a total of 36,000ha outside the Kalahari Gemsbok National Park with a further 25,000ha inside the park. The Khomani San’s ancestral land has been placed on Unesco’s tentative World Heritage Site list.

Hunting has been a way of life for the Bushmen for tens of thousands of years, though it is now a dying art as a result of loss of access to traditional hunting grounds, new laws and the loss of culture and traditional way of life. They traditionally hunted with bow and arrow, and spears, giving thanks to the animal’s spirit after it has been killed. Hunting has never been conducted for its own sake, but to feed and nurture the people and provide skin, bone and gut to make clothing and tools.
For the Khomani San occupying and developing the land of their ancestors is a highly significant and indeed spiritual event. South African poet Laurens van der Post said, “The bushman personified an aspect of natural man which we all have, but with which we’ve increasingly lost contact...”.

It is now possible to undertake hunts with experienced !Khomani San trackers and hunters and engage with them, honor the age old rituals associated with the hunt and experience the ways of the past. Blade Witbooi, Erin’s huntmaster, once a farm laborer on the land now owned by the clan. Modern technology has also entered into the picture: information about plant and animal populations is entered and data is downloaded onto the cyber tracker system. This process creates an interface where inter-generational knowledge and ancient wisdom can be transferred and used through this technology. The information is also used to decide the number of hunts Erin can reasonably host.

Ecologists Dr David Grossman and Phillipa Holden van Zyl have provided support and back-up. “We’re in year 15 of a 6-month project,” said David with a smile. To help the !Khomani San develop their land, David and Phillipa sourced funding and contributed their considerable skills to the project. Funders include the WWF Nedbank Green Trust, the National Lottery Fund, Wildlife Ranching South Africa (WRSA), SANParks and Tswalu Kalahari Game Reserve.

The !Khomani San are real veld people; they understand the bush and they grasp the concept that ethical, walk-and-stalk hunting is what the visiting hunters are looking for. Details on hunting on Erin are available on request at the Bushman Council office. You can also contact Dr David Grossman on 083 266 6244 or email dawg@mweb.co.za. For information on the !Khomani San, visit www.khomanisan.com

Game Industry - Quo Vadis?
Koos Barnard, Editor, SA Jagter/Hunter

As everyone knows these days, the game industry is big news. Game breeders pay huge sums of money to acquire much sought after breeding material. Apart from scarce game and common species, color deviations (also called color variants) are being bred on an increasingly larger scale and the prices of these are even higher – saddle-back blesbok rams fetched R7.8 and R5.5 million at auctions.

At the magazine we increasingly receive letters from hunters complaining about higher prices. Even a few game ranchers, who farm on an extensive basis and allow hunting, complain they are unable to buy the more common game to increase their gene pools because the prices are too high. Common impala ewes regularly achieve prices of more than R3 200 on auctions. Taking all the factors into account, how many times does such a ewe have to lamb before she has covered her cost?

Females of different common species (and splits) are purchased to be covered by color variants/bulls. Besides the now familiar black and white springbok and white blesbuck, I have counted some 20 different color deviations that are being marketed these days.

Conservation experts are seriously disturbed about the breeding of color deviations – animals which are only born in the wild in the most exceptional of circumstances and where their numbers remain extremely low.

Questions are also raised about the selective breeding of common game in small camps where like racehorses they are pumped up and receive special food. Some people are concerned because it appears that animals are being bred exclusively for horn length. According to them, the
strongest or toughest animals are therefore not breeding with one another. Experts point out that it is not necessarily the animals with the longest horns or the heaviest bodies that become breeding rams/bulls in wild nature. These people therefore do not believe the statement that game breeders use only the best and strongest genes as breeding material. According to them, our wildlife’s natural toughness (the survival of the fittest) can eventually be affected.

Then there are of course those who believe that this industry is not sustainable in its present form, because there is no real end user. They believe this bubble is going to burst sooner or later and some people will lose a lot of money. In The Farmers Weekly dated 22 August billionaire Dr. Johann Rupert warns people to be carefully about investing in the game industry and not to put in their retirement funds. He mentioned that the buffalo bull which he bought for R40 million was not an investment. Furthermore, he clearly makes the point that those who got into the game industry first will make money and the last ones may burn their fingers. His golden rule is; first in, first out. When high stock prices (regardless of which industry) start to make the front pages of the newspapers, he believes it’s usually a signal to sell.

SAHGCA (South African Hunting and Game Conservation Association) watch these developments with concern and at a recent national branch meeting (where all the chairmen and representatives of the various SAHGCA branches attended) officially adopted the position that the way some game breeders currently went about their business was not desirable. The association believes that certain game farming practices constitute a danger to the biodiversity of our game and for sustainable hunting in South Africa. The first of three articles written by Chris Niehaus (Chief Executive Officer of the SAHGCA) appears in the SAHGCA section of SA JAGTER/HUNTER. His analysis of the industry has raised certain questions which many people would like the answers to.

SAHGCA wants the best for its members regarding price negotiations and also insofar as the total hunting experience is concerned. And not only for local hunters, for overseas visitors as well. South Africa has already in some ways become the skunk of the hunting world as regards some of our hunting practices. As a well-known professional hunter put it, “… South Africa has been tagged as a joke for many years by much of the African hunting fraternity. Our clientele by and large hunt for the experience of an African safari……wildlife animals in wilder areas. Colored, line-bred, caged, corn-fed, photographed, vaccinated, catalogued and priced through ignorance (animals) are not on their radar and never will be.”

Where is the modern game industry leading us? And what repercussions will SAHGCA’s position against the selective breeding of game hold for its members, for hunters in general and for its relationship with interested parties in the game industry? Only time will tell.

Editor’s Note: This article appeared as editorial in the November 2014 issue of the South African magazine “South African Hunter/Suid Afrikaanse Jagter” which has a monthly circulation of 44,000. The article is re-published in African Indaba with permission, which we acknowledge with appreciation. We also thank Peter Flack for the English translation of the original Afrikaans version.

CIC Markhor Award: 2008 – 2014
Jan Mohr and Gerhard Damm

The loss of global biodiversity is increasingly causing major concern. This concern is most prominently embodied in the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) adopted in Rio de Janeiro in
1992. The Conference of the Parties (CoP) is the governing body of this Convention, and advances its implementation through the decisions it takes every two years at its meetings.

In 2008, the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC) endowed the Markhor Award (read more here). This award is presented bi-annually at the CBD-CoP to personalities, institutions, enterprises or conservation projects that link the conservation of biodiversity and human livelihood through the application of the principles of sustainable use, in particular hunting as part of wildlife and ecosystem management; in short, the Markhor Award recognizes and celebrates outstanding conservation performance through sustainable use.

This excellence accolade recognizes environmental and conservation leaders, who are solving challenges in the field of conservation of biodiversity by creating partnerships and by using sustainable, innovative practices, including hunting. Robert Kenward, then CBD Secretary General, recognized the importance of the CIC initiative by saying “I welcome the initiative ... [of the CIC] to use the markhor as its flagship species for the award to honor conservation projects that are community based and that successfully use hunting as a tool for rural development”.

The Markhor Award was presented the first time in 2008 on occasion of the 9th CoP of the Convention on Biological Diversity in Bonn/Germany and the joint laureates were the Selous-Niassa Wildlife Corridor in Tanzania and the Niassa National Reserve in Mozambique (read more here).

The Niassa National Reserve is Mozambique’s largest conservation area, funded mainly through sustainable hunting tourism. The 1-million-hectare Selous-Niassa Wildlife Corridor, on communal land but also under the management of communities, links the Niassa Reserve with Tanzania’s Selous Game Reserve. The 29 villages of the corridor organized themselves in 5 Community Based Organizations and created their own conservation area with hunting tourism is their first option to gain economic benefits from conserving the natural environment (read more here).

The 2010 Markhor Award laureate was the Torghar Conservation Program (TCP) of the Society for Torghar Environmental Protection (STEP) in Pakistan (Balochistan Province). The award ceremony took place during the 10th Conference of Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity CBD, CoP 10) in Nagoya, Japan (read more here).

TCP is arguably the most successful community based Caprinae conservation project in Pakistan and possibly worldwide. US wildlife biologists provided the original technical input and developed a sustainable use model which would bring measurable benefits to the local population.
Thanks to rigorous efforts of the STEP team the Torghar project eventually emerged as an exemplary model of successful conservation through sustainable use (Damm & Franco, 2014).

There were estimated 200 Afghan urial (Ovis vignei cycloceros) and less than 100 straight-horned markhor (Capra falconeri jerdoni) in the area when the program started in 1985 (FAO 2006). This exemplary success was confirmed on October 6th 2014, when the US Fish & Wildlife Service announced that the straight-horned markhor (Kabul Markhor – Capra falconeri megaceros and Suleiman Markhor – Capra falconeri jerdoni combined as straight-horned markhor C. f. megaceros) have been downlisted from endangered to threatened. Today, the Torghar markhor population exceeds 3,500 individuals as a direct result of the Torghar Conservation Project. USF&WS cited the CIC Caprinae Atlas of the World by Gerhard Damm and Nicolas Franco repeatedly in substantiating the downlisting. The project has not only resulted in a spectacular recovery of the markhor and urial populations, but also of other mammalian species, and of the habitat.

The 2012 Markhor Award went back to the African continent and was adjudicated jointly to the Namibian Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) and the Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organization (NACSO). The two entities were decorated for the introduction and supporting of the Communal Conservancy Program in Namibia on basis of the Conservation Amendment Act of 1996, which allows rural communities to facilitate the sustainable use of wildlife on communal land (read more details at Namibian Conservation Wins Markhor Award for its Communal Conservancy Program).

As self-governing entities, the Namibian Communal Conservancies enjoy the same rights over wildlife and tourism that private farms do; as collectives they earn money on conservancy lands from hunting tourism and game sales as well as from joint ventures with lodge operators. The actual program started in 1998 with 4 areas and had increased 79 conservancies in 2012, covering about 19% of the country. As a consequence wildlife numbers increased dramatically; for example, in the Kunene region, Hartmann’s mountain zebra numbers have grown from approximately 1,000 in 1982 to about 27,000 today. During the same period of time, estimates show that the population of desert-adapted elephants more than quadrupled, from around 150 individuals in to 750 today.
At the 12th meeting of the Conference of Parties to the CBD (CBD CoP 12) in October 2014 in Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea, the World Conservation Community represented by the CBD delegates honored the Tajikistan Mountain Ungulates Project and the Republic of Tajikistan with the 2014 Markhor Award for promoting community-based conservancies, in particular those involved in the conservation of the Bukharan markhor (*Capra falconeri heptneri*). The populations of this markhor phenotype in southwestern Tajikistan (extending from the Kushvariston Range along the eastern slope of the Hazratishoh Range and the eastern slope of the southwestern edge of the Darvaz Range towards Zighar village) have steadily increased over the past decade. More than a decade ago local hunters and concerned individuals in Tajikistan started recognizing the need to conserve the mountain ungulates of their communal areas and in 2008 the first association to manage hunting on communal land was established. During the last five years the markhor populations showed a dramatic increase in numbers and therefore, towards the end of 2013, the Tajik Government issued six markhor hunting permits for the 2013/2014 hunting season. The permits were allotted to the Tajikistan Mountain Ungulate Project, a joint initiative of 6 community based conservancies. With the help of CIC Caprinae Atlas author Gerhard Damm and Stefan Michel, a German researcher and member of the IUCN Caprinae Specialist Group, two South African hunters secured the first two permits and successfully hunted and harvested outstanding trophy markhor in February 2014 in the M-Sayud concession. According to the new hunting law promulgated in 2014, 40% of the permit fees is to be allocated to local communities (in addition communities earn revenue through the hunting fees).

The Markhor Award 2014 was presented to three community representatives Munavvar Alidodov, leader of NGO Yoquti Darshay (Darshaydara Conservancy), Saidali Nabievich Nazarov (Muhofiz Conservancy) and Ayubkhan Davlatishonovich Mulloyorov (Concession M-Sayud). The main international partners of the Tajik conservation initiative are the GIZ Regional Program Sustainable Use of Nature Resources in Central Asia (Germany), Zoological Society for the Conservation of Species and Populations ZGAP (Germany), Panthera (USA) and the Tajik NGO Nature Protection Team. The award was handed over by H.E. Uahekua Herunga, Minister of the Environment and Tourism of Namibia, together with Tamás Marghescu, Director General of the CIC. Madibron Saidov, Head of Specially Protected Nature Conservation Areas Authority of Tajikistan requested the international community to support the Tajik efforts.
Tanya Rosen-Michel, **Tajikistan Snow Leopard Program** Director of Panthera welcomed the reward in an email to the **IUCN Sustainable Use and Livelihoods** Chair Dr. Rosie Cooney, considering it a just recognition of the hard work in empowering the Tajik community-based conservancies.

Tanya Rosen-Michel, Stefan Michel and **Munavvar Alidodov** expressed gratitude to **Chris Weaver** of WWF Namibia. Chris Weaver had spent 3 weeks in Tajikistan in 2013 and his experience with working with supporting the development of community-based conservancies in Namibia was seen as great inspiration to the Tajik conservancies and to members of the support team. Weaver’s advice has since guided much of the work in Tajikistan.

Over the six years of its existence and through the four laureates from Africa and Asia, the Markhor Award has proved again and again that the intention of this CIC endowment, namely the recognition of environmental and conservation leaders, who are solving challenges in the field of conservation of biodiversity by creating partnerships and by using sustainable, innovative practices, including hunting, has led to partnerships of excellence across the continents.

**Additional information on markhor conservation in Tajikistan can be found here:**

- The Hunting Report: **Tajikistan Issues Limited Markhor Hunting Permits to Conserves**
- National Geographic: **Tajikistan Brings Endangered Wild Goat From the Edge of Extinction to the Peak of Hope**
- IUCN-SULi: **Conserving snow leopards through sustainable use of mountain ungulates in Tajikistan**
- IUCN-SULi: **Can trophy hunting support the conservation of the urial in Tajikistan?**
- Galemys: **Community based conservation and management of mountain ungulates in Tajikistan**

**Endnotes:**

1. The **International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC)** is the strongest voice for hunter-conservationists on the global arena of wildlife conservation. The CIC membership includes 34 state members represented through the relevant ministries/departments as well as corporate, institutional and association members. The CIC advocates sustained wildlife conservation and habitat preservation through shared incentive-driven use, based on science and adaptive management processes and rooted in uncounted millennia of hunting heritage to ensure that each generation bequeaths to its successor lands richer in wildlife, that the cultural heritage of hunting, is preserved and the ethical principles of hunting and sustainable use of natural resources are upheld and evolving.

2. The **Markhor Award derives its name from the successful community-based conservation efforts for the markhor wild goat (**Capra falconeri ssp**) in Pakistan (Balochistan, Gilgit Baltistan, Azad-Kashmir and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa provinces). The effective conservation efforts by the local communities, supported by the Government authorities and WWF-Pakistan and IUCN-Pakistan lead to the authorization of eventually 12 annual markhor hunting permits for Pakistan through CITES.
Markhor exist in small and scattered populations of five phenotypes from southeastern Uzbekistan, southwestern Tajikistan and eastern Afghanistan; through northern Pakistan into northwestern India and all markhor phenotypes are listed on CITES Appendix 1.

**US Fish & Wildlife Service: Lion Not An Endangered Species**
Rolf D Baldus

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) rejected the claim that the African lion merits listing as an endangered species under the Endangered Species Act. After a long and comprehensive review of the species status, which included information from the foremost lion researchers in the world, the FWS concluded that the African lion simply is not on the brink of extinction and did not merit listing as an endangered species. Nevertheless the lion will be listed as "threatened" due to a rapidly increasing human population in Africa, which leads to habitat loss, loss of prey-base, and increased lion-human conflict, usually in the form of killings in retaliation for lion attacks on livestock. The FWS decided that lion hunting is “not ... a threat to the species at this time,” and that well-managed hunting can provide important conservation benefits for the lion.

This decision is a blow to US anti-hunting organizations which are fighting for an import ban of lion hunting trophies. However, according to Safari Club International eighty percent of US voters agree that while they care about the future of the African lion, there are higher priorities that need to be addressed in the United States. The FWS should focus on those species found here, that the government actually has the ability to manage.

Links for more information:
[Service Proposes Endangered Species Act Protection for the African Lion](#)
[USFWS Proposed Lion Rule– How Does This Affect Me as a Hunter?](#)
[SCI Foundation: In Major Setback for Anti-Hunting Efforts; FWS Rejects Attempts to Stop Lion Hunting](#)

**Strategies To Stop Poaching In Selous Game Reserve**
Benson Kibonde

The Selous Game Reserve had for many years enjoyed its status as the largest stronghold of African elephants in the world. The first formal census was conducted in 1976 and recorded 110,000 elephants. This was believed to be the carrying capacity of the 50,000 km² wildlife country. This population of elephants faced an onslaught beginning the early 1980’s.

I only joined Selous Game Reserve in 1985 after my studies at Mweka College of Wildlife Management of Africa. In 1986 I was appointed a Sector Warden for the Southern Sector – Liwale, one of the then four sectors of Selous. I took part in the 1986 census. Another census was conducted in 1986 recorded 55,000 indicating that in only ten years, 55,000 elephants were massacred. I participated in the census. The situation was very grief, chilling and frustrating. This was a very sad story. While the poaching level was very high in the entire Selous, the southern part of Selous was better-off in terms of numbers of elephants compared to the northern, eastern and western part of Selous Game Reserve.
In reaction to the appalling situation, Frankfurt Zoological Society sponsored a report on rehabilitation of Selous Game Reserve in 1987 on behalf of the Wildlife Department of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism. Frankfurt Zoological Society contracted J. Stephenson to prepare the report. The report advanced strategies to remedy the situation and detailed the requirement of resources necessary for arresting the situation. The German Government quickly intervened by funding the emergency program to arrest the situation in the same year (1987). In 1989, a fully-fledged program (The Selous Conservation Program) was commissioned by the German Government. As a condition to the funding, the German government requested the Tanzanian Government to allow for a 50% Retention Scheme whereby Selous Game Reserve would retain 50% of its revenue accruing from tourist hunting. The German Government also attached a component of involving the communities in conservation of wildlife resources in the areas surrounding the reserve. This was the dawn of community based conservation in Tanzania.

Another dry season census was undertaken in 1989, this time only three years after the previous census. This census was done in order to establish the baseline population of elephants at the outset of the program. The story was even worse-off, grimmer, and more consternating. The census registered slightly less than 30,889 elephants in the ecosystem. This was shocking but was also a good ground for commitment on the part of the Government of Tanzania and the Selous Staff.

The funding from the German Government and the Retention Scheme improved the management capacity of Selous. On the other hand, the Tanzania Government launched a crackdown on poaching through an operation christened Operation Uhai. I took part in the Operation Uhai, and as a Sector Warden I worked hard to make sure that the elephant carnage was stopped in my area of work. The poaching trend was stopped and the elephant population started building up. The Retention Scheme was fully operationalized in 1993 and was the biggest factor for the capacity building for the Selous staff. When I was appointed a Chief Warden for the entire Selous in 1994 I made sure that we bought heavy construction equipment including graders, bucket loaders and lorries in addition to the equipment that was acquired from the German funding. This enabled us to open roads to allow for an access to all the areas of the reserve. On the other hand, we undertook in situ combat training and inspired discipline among the staff and a sense of responsibility and commitment to anti-poaching.

Our anti-poaching motto was “that the only way to deter poachers from operating in Selous was for the rangers to register presence in all the areas of the reserve”. We did it and poaching was absolutely contained. A census conducted in 1994 registered 52,234 elephants, in 1998, there were 55,672 elephants, in 2002, 63,039 elephants and in 2006, 70,406 elephants. This was an increase of 39,517 elephants from the lowest dry season count of 1989 (see figure 1). At a conservative estimated population increase of 6% (7% for Addo National Park in South Africa) for Selous elephants, the record figure of almost 110,000 in 1976 i.e. 112,215 elephants could have been reached this year (2014).

I left Selous Game Reserve in 2008 after being transferred to a training institute in the northern part of Tanzania. I left while the population of elephants was still increasing. I came back to Selous in July 2012. I found the situation of poaching beyond imagination. The situation was again terrible. The infrastructure had degenerated, equipment completely broken, staff morale very poor, patrol vehicles were virtually all broken. There were also some problems with the retention scheme. The funding for Selous was very low. There were only 250 scouts who each spent 10 patrol days per month thus a total of 30,000 patrol days per year which was an equivalent of 3/5 of a day per square kilometer per year. This was to low an average. Scouts had their allowances not paid in time or not paid for all the days they went on patrol and made the reserve porous to poachers. It was sad news. It was very frustrating and disheartening. My heart bathed in my tears. I cried for my beloved Selous.
I felt Selous shattering in pieces. I prayed to God that this should not continue to happen under my watch.

After assessing the situation, I raised an alarm to conservation partners particularly the hunting companies. I requested them to come to our assistance in waging an all-out war against poaching. Based on my experience, I knew it was possible to fight the poaching and stop it. I knew that I did it in the past and definitely could do it once more. I mobilized and sensitized the staff, called in volunteers, rehabilitated vehicles, opened roads to ease patrols, established a high level performance evaluation among the staff and ensured that every staff was paid what was due for him/her. The idea was to spend every dollar of the retention scheme as effectively and efficiently as possible. I knew that we had to offer sweat and blood as our ransom of elephants from their siege. A number of scouts were injured in the cause of actions, but we taught the poachers a lesson that we could no longer tolerate their self-imposed immunity to the conservation laws. Poachers flouted the Wildlife Conservation Act No. 5 of 2009 with impunity, went on press bragging that nothing would stop them from exercising their self-imposed right. Today, the situation is different in Selous. I am sure the census conducted last month will confirm this. When we said we are going to free elephants we meant it. We have done it.

Figure 1

The Selous elephant population performance (1976 - 2013)

I thank all those who have participated in the struggle. The hunting companies contributed and are contributing a lot. The Tanzania Wildlife Safaris and its sister companies of Barlette Safaris and Pasanisi Hunting Safaris have contributed two 4x4 patrol cars, four Polaris 4x4 off road patrol jeeps, monetary support of up to USD 600,000 for paying monthly allowances for 100 volunteers, On the other hand, Kiboko Hunting Safaris, Kilombero North Hunting safari and Luke Samaras Hunting
Safaris have also contributed significantly to our efforts against poaching. These companies and others have supported us by availing their vehicles for transporting scouts to patrol areas. We are planning for a meeting with all the hunting companies operating in Selous to sensitize them on contributing to this endeavor. We thought that we show that we can do it and then invite them to assist. I shall, let Eric Pasanisi arrange for that meeting. He is so moved by our success and highly passionate to our approach we have taken against poaching I have a draft of strategies to tighten the noose on the poachers. I am sure they will endorse the plan and we should be able to set an example in Africa that we have done it and others should follow suit.

How have we done it? First we increased the number of patrol scouts from 250 in 2012 by employing 207 new employees, recruiting 250 volunteers. We now have 680 patrol scouts. Each scout spends a minimum of 20 days on patrol per month for the 12 months of the year. This adds to a total of 163,200 patrol days up from the 30,000 patrol day bringing an average of 3.2 days per square kilometer per year. These scouts have patrol bases in the bush which are permanently occupied. In hotspot areas, where the concentration of elephants is evident, patrol groups are spaced at short interval distances and any shoot out by poachers will be picked and pursued immediately. We have managed to increase the number of patrol cars from 20 to 40 and expect to increase them to 60 by the end of next year. We have rehabilitated four graders seven lorries and other machinery that are urgently required for anti-poaching. The International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC), the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) and the Frankfurt Zoological Society have meanwhile come to support us. Together we have devised a "Selous Elephant Emergency Project" (SEEP), which equips rangers and provides urgently required practical assistance. We invite others to join.

We are doing more and more at a fast rate. It is imperative that tourist hunting continues in Selous for two main reasons. The first reason is that hunting companies and hunters have helped a lot to control the poaching situation in Selous Game Reserve through direct involvement. Secondly, 85% the Selous Retention Scheme comes from hunting. If any amount of hunting revenue is compromised, the registered success in anti-poaching could be seriously jeopardized. This year the US Fish & Wildlife agency stopped the importation of hunting trophy ivory into the USA. This move is a disaster for Selous as most of its income is directly or indirectly dependent on elephant hunting. If the remaining 13,084 elephants would be wiped out in the very near future this ban would a major cause for this.

I wish that hunting of elephants is sustained. Tourist hunting has a very insignificant impact on the decline in numbers of elephants. It can in no way be linked to the declines. It is strictly poaching that has the highest and unsustainable off-take. There could be stricter requirements for hunting elephants but the hunting should continue. If we stop hunting of elephants in Selous we should be prepared for another pandemonium from poachers, another distressful time, that of a possible loss of an entire population of elephants in Selous, an elephants doomsday, we may not be able to recover the African elephant population in Selous forever. This could be another experience after the rhino experience.

If the current efforts of anti-poaching in Selous are sustained and stepped up, we should be capable of doubling the Selous elephant population in the next 12 years. This year’s census will give a good baseline as we expect that due to the peaceful situation that has been achieved, even the hidden elephants should have come out and could increase the number to some extent. I am hopeful that we have more elephants now that the number revealed in 2013.

I have never believed that poaching cannot be contained; I will never believe that it is impossible to stop poaching. The last person who pulls a trigger to shoot an elephant is an African in an African environment, I am an African trained and committed, armed and dedicated to protect
wildlife in the African environment. I will do all that it takes to stop poaching. I have the will, vision, passion and courage to do it. So do my fellow Selous staff as of now. The international community should understand this. I will not do it for financial gain. God bless Selous, God bless the elephants, God bless conservation in Tanzania and the world over.

Elephant Poaching In Northern Mozambique’s Niassa Reserve – An Action Replay Of The Selous?
Peter Flack

I have just returned from a brief, 10 day Livingstone’s eland hunt in October 2014 in Northern Mozambique’s Niassa Reserve, some 100 kilometers from the Ruvuma River, which forms the northern border of the country with Tanzania.

Niassa has still not recovered from the ravages wrought by the 17 year old civil war. Game is still scarce and the Reserve, a vast, 4.2 million hectare (nine million acre) unfenced wilderness, which the original public/private partnership called SGDRN (Sociedade para a Gestao e Desenvolvimento da Reserva do Niassa) has only partially helped to restore. The partnership was not renewed when it expired a few years ago, apparently because of the onerous, unacceptable conditions the government sought to impose in a new arrangement. The future of wildlife and wildlife habitat in the region is now less certain despite the attempt to replace the past arrangement with an agreement between the government and the New York-based Wildlife Conservation Society.

I had been keen to visit the region for many years after I made contact with Anabele Rodrigues, the woman originally in charge of SGDRN. I was fascinated by Anabele’s photographs, descriptions of the region, including the granite inselbergs – literally, island mountains – and, more importantly, by the steps taken to integrate both photographic and hunting operations in the Reserve as well as the wildlife and wildlife habitat conservation efforts, which allowed sustainable use to generate much needed revenue and jobs. These latter efforts were rewarded when CIC accorded SGDRN the prestigious CIC Markhor Award for Outstanding Conservation Performance at the CBD Conference of Parties in 2008.

During my recent visit, I successfully hunted the 715,000 acre concessions of Kambako Safaris in the south eastern corner of the reserve for Livingstone’s eland during the one month the massive old blue bulls emerge from their thicket strongholds to pass on their impressive genes to the coalescing cow herds.

The only negatives about the hunt were the many signs of poached elephants. I was told that, from the air, you can see...
literally thousands of carcasses that have been poached over the last five years or so. This mirrors what has taken place across the border in Tanzania’s Selous Game Reserve where an estimated 13,000 elephants have been poached over the last six years.

In my brief stay I saw eight elephant carcasses, including two juveniles and a baby, no more than 5 feet at the shoulder, that had been shot within eight kilometers of our camp some three days previously, according to the fisherman who came to report the incident. This confirmed to me how brazen the poaching was and indicated that the professional poachers, who use heavy caliber hunting rifles with modern, premium grade ammunition, were completely confident that they would not be followed and apprehended by police or army. I also saw the carcasses of three juvenile elephants in a long line with the last one, a female with the small, 11 pound tusks still in the skull, indicating to me that she had been shot, wounded and left to die. The fact that all the carcasses were juveniles may imply that the more mature elephants, carrying larger ivory, had already been shot out. This was confirmed by the people I spoke to you. I was told that, while big bulls were frequently seen in the past, this was an incredibly rare occurrence these days, although a friend of mine shot an elephant carrying nearly 80 pounds of ivory a side, on the far western side of the reserve in October.

After I left, in a clear case of shutting the stable door after the horse had bolted, the region was visited by representatives of the American and Mozambique governments. I was also told that a hut in a village in the Reserve was searched, two men arrested and firearms, including the ubiquitous AK 47s and heavy caliber hunting rifles and ammunition, confiscated, as well as a diary indicating that the men had poached and sold over 3,000 kg of ivory over the previous three years. The diary implicated senior politicians, police and army officers and, surprise, surprise, after a few days, the two men were released. Whether this anecdotal evidence is true or not, given the sources of the information, it is clear that huge numbers of elephant have been killed for their tusks to supply the Chinese ivory carving market. In my opinion, it is not possible for an operation of this size to be conducted without the connivance and active cooperation of the governments in the countries where these outrages have taken place, given the substantial logistical support required to both place professional poachers in the field and remove and export the ivory with few, if any, people being apprehended in either Mozambique or Tanzania.

Certainly, given Mozambique’s reluctance to take any steps to curtail, let alone arrest and prosecute the professional rhino poachers who camp on the borders of Kruger National Park in South Africa, it is no surprise that the elephant poaching epidemic in the country carries on so freely. What we are seeing in these two countries as well as Zimbabwe is the opposite of Shane Mahoney’s documentary *Opportunity for All* describing the North American Conservation Model: “wildlife and wildlife habitat, if conserved and used sustainably, can provide opportunities for all the citizens of a country in perpetuity”. In these three countries, we are seeing how a few powerful politicians, with their snouts in the trough, are sacrificing the natural resources of their countries and the future of their people on the altar of their insatiable greed.

**CITES And Confiscated Elephant Ivory And Rhino Horn – To Destroy Or Not Destroy?**  
John E. Scanlon, CITES Secretary General (posted October 20, 2014 on NG Newswatch)

_Editor’s Note: We publish this blog of John Scanlon with reference to the quote by Dr. Ian Player, published in *African Indaba 12-5-II* in order to afford our readers a balanced view._
Over the past 24 months we have seen a number of countries, including Belgium, Chad, China, Hong Kong SAR, China, Czech Republic, Gabon, France, Philippines, and the USA, destroy stockpiles of illegally traded elephant ivory and rhino horn that have been seized and confiscated.

I have been invited by national CITES authorities to witness several of these events and was able to accept the invitation on three occasions, namely for events held in China, in Dongguan and Hong Kong SAR, and most recently one at the Dvůr Králové Zoo, Czech Republic. My statements made at these events are all publicly available.

These events, and on occasion my personal participation in them, attract a significant amount of commentary both in favour of, and against, destroying confiscated elephant ivory and rhino horn. Two examples of comments posted on our Facebook page after the recent Czech Republic event to destroy rhino horn illustrate the point:

- This is the most stupid event John Scanlon has been involved in.... obviously he is being led by others outside of CITES...
- Great action, thank all for doing this very much! The world need more action like this!

So where do I, as Secretary-General, stand on the issue of whether to destroy or not to destroy confiscated elephant ivory and rhino horn? The starting point for the Secretariat in considering any CITES issue is the Convention text and the Decisions and Resolutions adopted by the Parties to CITES. They bind the CITES Secretariat, including myself, and we adhere strictly to them. We are also mandated (under Article XII of the Convention) to present suggestions to the Parties where we deem it necessary.

So, what then is the position of CITES Parties — the 180 States that have joined the Convention, on the issue of whether to destroy or not destroy confiscated elephant ivory and rhino horn? The answer lies in a Resolution (Resolution Conf. 9.10 (Rev. CoP15), adopted by CITES Parties in 1994, and updated in 2010, which recommends that: Parties dispose of confiscated and accumulated dead specimens of Appendix-I species, including parts and derivatives, only for bona fide scientific, educational, enforcement or identification purposes, and save in storage or destroy specimens whose disposal for these purposes is not practicable;

This Resolution, like all others, provides interpretive guidance on the legally-binding text of the Convention. However, the language used in this Resolution may not be all that clear to people who are not familiar with CITES terminology. So what does it mean in plain English? ‘Specimens’ is the language used in the Convention to refer to the plant or animal, or part thereof, or any derivative (such as a manufactured product) that is in trade and it is defined in the Convention text. Hence, in the context of this issue, the reference in the Resolution to ‘dead specimens of Appendix-I species, including parts and derivatives’ is referring to the elephant ivory and rhino horn.

(Another Resolution (Resolution Conf. 10.7 (Rev. CoP15) deals extensively with the confiscation of live animals and plants.)

The Resolution treats Appendix-I specimens very differently from those of species in Appendices II and III. The reason for doing so is because specimens of Appendix-I species generally cannot enter commercial trade, whereas Appendix-II and -III specimens can be commercially traded if certain preconditions are met. The Resolution does allow for the commercial sale of confiscated Appendix-II and -III specimens under certain conditions, if the country chooses to do so.

This Resolution is consistent with the Convention text, including on Appendix-I specimens not (re)entering commercial trade. The guidance provided by the Resolution is that the illegally traded and confiscated elephant ivory and rhino horn should be restricted to four uses only, namely, ‘bona fide scientific, educational, enforcement or identification purposes’. Where this is not
practicable, two options are provided by the Resolution, namely to save the specimens in storage or to destroy them.

As Secretary-General, I do not encourage or discourage countries (as States Parties to CITES) to choose one option or the other. This is a matter for each country to determine for itself.

However, when a country takes a decision to publicly destroy its confiscated stockpiles of elephant ivory or rhino horn, I do believe it presents a unique opportunity to draw public attention to the scale, nature and impacts of the serious crimes that lie behind these confiscations and to act as a deterrent to illegal trade – and that is why I participate in such events where I can.

In this context, it is worth noting that the Resolution goes on to recommend that: *Parties publicize information on seizures and confiscations when appropriate as a deterrent to illegal trade, and inform the public about their procedures for dealing with seized and confiscated specimens*…;

The events in Dongguan, Hong Kong SAR, and at the Dvůr Králové Zoo all attracted massive media attention. Each event saw the country concerned publicly express its determination to bring the illegal trade to an end and provided the opportunity to send out a clear message that people who invest in this contraband face an ever increasing risk of detection and serious punishment.

While the destruction of confiscated elephant ivory or rhino horn will not in itself stop the illegal trade in elephant ivory or rhino horn, when coupled with rigorous and consistent enforcement measures, it can serve as a deterrent to people from engaging in these illicit activities.

*Note: While not all African elephants and rhino populations are included in Appendix I, the annotations associated with those populations included in Appendix II effectively place the tusks and the horns under Appendix I (other than any trade in hunting trophies for non-commercial purposes). A full explanation can be found in the CITES Appendices. In the source countries of the African elephant referred to above, stockpiles of ivory accumulated from natural deaths may also have been destroyed.*

**Elephant Ivory Trade In China: Trends And Drivers By Yufang Gao And Susan B Clark**

**Highlights**
- Ivory in China is traded in the “white”, “black”, and “gray” markets.
- White legal factories and outlets increased from 40 in 2004 to 182 in 2013.
- Black online market price for small tusks is about US$ 2.15 per gram in 2014.
- Gray ivory auction market (2002–2011) is highly correlated to elephant poaching.
- The arts investment boom since 2008 is a key driver of ivory trade in China.

**Abstract**

Poaching of African elephants is threatening the species viability. International non-governmental organizations and media often attribute the basic problem to China’s domestic ivory market. We present quantitative and qualitative information on trends and drivers of the ivory trade in China. Results show that ivory is traded in “white” legally licensed retail outlets, “black” illegal shops and online trade forums, and “gray” live auctions of uncertain legality. White markets are primarily in Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou. The numbers of legal factories and retail outlets increased from 9 and 31 in 2004 to 37 and 145 in 2013. Black markets thrive in online trading platforms, such as Baidu Post Bar. Gray markets auction ivory items surging around 2006.
mushrooming after 2009, peaking in 2011, and plummeting over 97% following government intervention. During 2002 to 2011, the ivory auction in China and elephant poaching in Africa are strongly positively correlated. Drivers of the ivory trade are multiple and complex, including Chinese consumers’ motivation stemming from the socially-constructed economic, social, cultural, aesthetic, religious, and medical values of ivory. We highlight China’s intangible cultural heritage preservation, the boom of arts investment, and the auction ban in changing ivory values and influencing markets. We argue that elephant conservation can be more effective if it is based on a more comprehensive and contextual understanding of China’s domestic ivory trade.

Download the full article HERE

The Complex Policy Issue Of Elephant Ivory Stockpile Management
Michael ‘t Sas-Rolffes, Brendan Moyle and Daniel Stiles

This paper was published in Pachyderm, the Journal of the African Elephant, African Rhino and Asian Rhino Specialist Groups No 55 (2014) January - June 2014. Pachyderm publishes papers and notes concerning all aspects of the African elephant, the African rhino and the Asian rhino with a focus on the conservation and management of these species in the wild. At the same time, the journal is a platform for disseminating information concerning the activities of the African Elephant, the African Rhinoceros, and the Asian Rhino Specialist Groups of the IUCN Species Survival Commission.


Abstract
Recent elephant poaching levels are a serious concern for conservationists. Opinions differ over how to deal with the upsurge and associated illegal ivory trade. Following the CITES-imposed international trade ban voted in 1989, limited legal trade has been permitted in two one-off sales. Opinions are divided on what effect this has had on poaching. Opinions are now also divided over whether trade in ivory products should be outlawed worldwide, both between and within countries. In the midst of this debate is the question of what government agencies should do with existing stockpiles of collected legal and confiscated illegal ivory. Governments of some countries have destroyed their stockpiles with the claimed intent of reducing poaching, and there are calls for others to follow suit. We review the academic literature and available relevant data and find that under current circumstances, stockpile destruction violates the precautionary principle because the outcome is unknown; it is therefore not recommended. Credible evidence suggests that speculation may drive the current high poaching rates more than consumer demand for carvings. Legal stockpiles provide an option to curtail speculative behavior of criminals. We recommend that governments move closer towards consensus on a long-term vision for elephant and ivory management before undertaking measures such as large-scale stockpile destruction. In the meantime they should continue to retain existing ivory stockpiles securely to reduce incentives for criminal speculation with illegally accumulated stockpiles. We recommend that research be carried out to understand better the dynamics of the current legal and illegal ivory trade systems in order to formulate evidence-based policy.

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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
More On The Ivory Trade Ban

Daniel Stiles

Editor’s Note: We published Daniel Stiles’ article “Can Elephants Survive a Continued Ivory Trade Ban?” in African Indaba Vol. 12 5-II. As to be expected, Stiles received a lot of flak from ivory ban proponents. He responded with the following opinion piece (which you can download HERE as published in the blog “Irrelevant, Illogical, and Illegal—24 Experts Respond to Arguments Supporting Legalization of the Ivory Trade” compiled and edited by Katarzyna Nowak).

It is apparent from some of the comments of those who understand the issue that they didn’t read my piece, or are purposely avoiding important aspects of what I did write, or are inventing things I did not write in order to make facile attacks. Some things we simply disagree about. Other “authorities” basically do not understand the issue or made irrelevant comments. There were a few comments that I thought were useful contributions, especially from Tusk Trust and John Hart.

I read through the comments hoping someone would come up with a better way to solve the ultimate problem of reducing supply of ivory from slaughtered elephants to satisfy demand, whether it be consumer demand for worked ivory or dealer/factory demand for raw ivory, including speculators.

Ivory does not have to be supplied from slaughtered elephants. It can be supplied from a combination of controlled release of the hundreds of tons of existing stockpiles (which currently are being wasted), natural mortality and problem animal control. Even if these sources can’t satisfy all demand, isn’t it better to reduce elephant killing for ivory by 50% than not at all?

You have made enormous efforts to try and demonstrate why replacing poached tusks with legal tusks won’t work, but what is the proposed alternative? We all agree on demand reduction campaigns – which I started calling for in 2004. Your other proposed solution is to close all domestic ivory markets. But you haven’t adequately thought out the difficulties involved in trying to close effectively legal domestic ivory markets. Look at the current mess in the U.S. Even with the new restrictions on ivory commerce, there will still be legal ivory traded to “confuse consumers”. Asserting that making something illegal will do away with demand flies in the face of empirical evidence demonstrating the opposite, recreational drugs being just one example of many.

You also haven’t proposed how you will close existing black markets, and the fact that in the absence of legal ivory, the black markets will grow, fostering even more crime and corruption. I have proposed one possible solution that should be examined objectively.

No “solution” will be perfect. The economic, social, cultural, ecological, demographic, ethical and political variables involved in ivory trade are so complex that any agreed policy and legislative implementation are bound to leave some aspects only partly addressed. My primary goal is to reduce killing elephants for ivory. Based on my experience and knowledge of the issue I have proposed what I think will save the most elephant lives.

It looks like the overwhelming momentum is for a nominal closing of domestic ivory markets. I imagine even China might give in. If they do we’ll have an opportunity to see how a domestic ban works there and how it impacts on elephants. But if they don’t?
Guidelines On Methods And Procedures For Ivory Sampling And Laboratory Analysis
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime located in Austria at the Vienna International Centre informed of the release of the ‘Guidelines on methods and procedures for ivory sampling and laboratory analysis’, within the framework of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCWC). The document can be viewed and downloaded through the UNODC website here.

“We believe that the use of the Guidelines will support more timely, thorough and effective investigations, resulting in an increased number of successful prosecutions and a reduction in this illegal trade” said UNODC’s Executive Director Yury Fedotov. Davyth Stewart, Criminal Intelligence Officer with INTERPOL’s Environmental Security Unit, explained that "these guidelines cover the whole chain of custody, from supporting law enforcement officers on the ground with collecting samples for forensic analysis and crime scene management, to laboratory analysis, interpretation of results and data handling. This is crucial for building the evidence base to prevent and combat ivory trafficking and a step forward in advancing law enforcement actions against illegal elephant poaching". Dr. Dietrich Jelden of the German Federal Office for Nature Conservation (BfN) thanked the CIC International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation and Dr. Rolf Baldus, a co-editor of African Indaba and CIC member, for their strong commitment and assistance to provide the material for the scientific work which formed a basis for these guidelines.

African Indaba has been involved in this project since its initiation, when we issued a call for action titled “Small Atoms Can Help Saving Big Elephants” in the January – February 2011 Volume 9-1 which stated that “In a cooperation between the World Wide Fund For Nature (WWF), the International Centre of Ivory Studies (INCENTIVS) of the University of Mainz, the University of Regensburg (Germany), the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation and the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC), scientists are developing a reference database for the geographical origin of African elephant ivory and a precise method on how to designate the age of ivory tusks. The project is part of Germany’s contribution for the implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan, in particular strategy 1.4, i.e. ‘Strengthen the enforcement of laws relevant to conservation and management of African elephants’. Hence the project will make a useful contribution to the fight against the illegal trade in ivory and furthermore will enable the range states to better control the legal ivory trade under CITES.”

See also:
Germany’s Research Project To Determine Age And Provenance Of Elephant Ivory – Project Status May 2014, Volume 12-3
UNODC Report Addresses Ivory Trade In Eastern Africa, September 2013, Volume 11-4
Tooth For A Tooth: With Forensics Methods On The Track Of Ivory, February 2013, Volume 11-1

Identification Of Policies For A Sustainable Legal Trade In Rhinoceroses

Enrico di Minin, Jussi Laitila, Federico Montesino-Pouzols, Nigel Leader-Williams, Rob Slotow, Peter S. Goodman, Anthony J. Conway, Atte Moilanen. Identification of Policies for a Sustainable Legal

Abstract:
Between 1990 and 2007, 15 southern white (Ceratotherium simum simum) and black (Diceros bicornis) rhinoceroses on average were killed illegally every year in South Africa. Since 2007 illegal killing of southern white rhinoceros for their horn has escalated to >950 individuals/year in 2013. We conducted an ecological–economic analysis to determine whether a legal trade in southern white rhinoceros horn could facilitate rhinoceros protection. Generalized linear models were used to examine the socioeconomic drivers of poaching, based on data collected from 1990 to 2013, and to project the total number of rhinoceroses likely to be illegally killed from 2014 to 2023. Rhinoceros population dynamics were then modeled under 8 different policy scenarios that could be implemented to control poaching. We also estimated the economic costs and benefits of each scenario under enhanced enforcement only and a legal trade in rhinoceros horn and used a decision support framework to rank the scenarios with the objective of maintaining the rhinoceros population above its current size while generating profit for local stakeholders. The southern white rhinoceros population was predicted to go extinct in the wild <20 years under present management. The optimal scenario to maintain the rhinoceros population above its current size was to provide a medium increase in anti-poaching effort and to increase the monetary fine on conviction. Without legalizing the trade, implementing such a scenario would require covering costs equal to approximately $147,000,000/year. With a legal trade in rhinoceros horn, the conservation enterprise could potentially make a profit of $717,000,000/year. We believe the 35-year-old ban on rhinoceros horn products should not be lifted unless the money generated from trade is reinvested in improved protection of the rhinoceros population. Because current protection efforts seem to be failing, it is time to evaluate, discuss, and test alternatives to the present policy.

How Robust Are The Arguments Against A Legal Trade In Rhino Horn?
Michael Eustace

African Indaba has published several articles of Michael Eustace on rhino horn trade. Here Michael examines the arguments of the anti-trade lobby and concludes that the arguments against trade seem weak and contrived.

“It is morally wrong to sell horn if it does not work”
The Chinese are the main consumers and they believe, or some believe, that it works. Western medicine is skeptical and has said so. There are thousands of different remedies that are sold all over the world that have no proven effectiveness and there are lots of products sold that are actually harmful. Nobody has suggested that horn is harmful. A placebo can have a powerful beneficial effect. Killing 1,000 rhino in 2013 was clearly wrong and if the killing can be reduced by trade then the world will be a better place, regardless of whether horn works or not and any comparatively minor sensitivities around that.

“Trade will stimulate demand”
It may do. Some consumers may not buy horn now because it is illegal to do so. But the “Smart Trade” model of a monopoly selling to a cartel of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM)
hospitals will be able to adjust the price of horn so as to bring the level of demand into balance with a sustainable level of supply. Also, Smart Trade is designed to reduce the appetite speculators now have for buying horn, an appetite that is based on the prospect of the value of horn increasing because of the declining numbers of rhino. Trade should lead to less speculation in horn which will reduce poaching.

"Trade cannot satisfy the 'insatiable' demand"

Actual consumer demand is limited by high prices and is estimated at a total of 1,100 horn-sets p.a. South Africa can sustainably supply 1,300 horn-sets from stocks (400), natural deaths (400) and farmed horn (500). There are said to be a large number of “intenders” who would buy horn if the price was lower but that is the case with most products. (There is no intention in the model to reduce prices and “flood” the market with horn so as to reduce the poacher’s profit. Reducing the poacher’s profit would be good but flooding the market would be unsustainable and invite speculation. There are other ways of reducing the poacher’s profit).

"More law enforcement is the solution."

Law enforcement is essential but difficult over vast areas and it is expensive. Greatly increased expenditure has not been able to reduce the numbers poached. There are high rewards to poaching and the risks are low. Corruption undermines the process. There are budget constraints. On its own, law enforcement is not working and may never work.

"Demand reduction is the solution"

Only about 0.1% of the Chinese population consumes the entire supply of 1,100 horn-sets so a demand reduction strategy is going to have to persuade more than 99.9% of the population or it will not be effective.

"If South Africa sells horn, it will jeopardize rhino populations in other range states such as Namibia, India and Java"

The intention of a Smart Trade is to satisfy demand with legal horn which should result in a reduced poaching threat for all rhino populations.

"The ivory auction in 2008 was said to have increased the amount of poaching of elephant"

There are some 20,000 elephant being poached every year in Africa which would produce 100 tons of ivory at, say, 5 kg per elephant. Most of that goes to China. CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) has said that there is no evidence of the auction having increased or decreased poaching. 62 tons were sold to China and 46 tons to Japan. The 2008 auction was allowed by CITES on the basis that there would not be another sale for 9 years so the 62 tons sold to China was minimal, is being rationed, and represents a fraction of Chinese demand for the 9 year period. By comparison, the proposed horn trade should satisfy the full annual demand at current high prices.

"Illegal horn will find its way on to the legal market"

The proposed model has been structured to prevent that. There will be a clear legal channel and the only place to buy legal horn will be from the cartel of licensed TCM state hospitals. Keeping their retail licenses will depend upon their respecting a “Best Practice” set of rules and they will lose their licenses and a very profitable business if they trade in illegal horn.

"Poaching will still be profitable given a legal trade and poaching will continue"

Yes, but it will be much less profitable to the criminals than now and carry higher risks and the market for poached horn will be much smaller. Illegal goods typically trade at a 30% discount if there is a legal market. This relates to the risk of being caught and punished. In addition there will be the risk of buying fake or poisoned horn in the illegal market which will increase the discount to, say, 40%. The Chinese government, being invested in the legal trade, is likely to clamp down on the criminal trade. The expectation is that a legal trade will substantially reduce poaching levels.
“The trade proposal’s main aim is to enrich a few farmers and some corrupt individuals in government”

Private ranchers own 25% of rhino in South Africa and have a right to profit from any trade, proportionately. To the extent that they make profits on trade they will pay taxes to the state in the normal way. The other 75% is owned by SANParks and provincial parks; hence 75% of the income from horn sales will go directly to those parks with no middlemen and no corruption possible.

“More data is needed before embarking on trade”

It is not possible to collect data when there is no legal trade. The Smart Trade model is based on the De Beers Central Selling Organization (CSO) which worked well for over 50 years. It is a tried and tested model. The CSO was closed because the competition authorities opposed a near monopoly selling to a cartel. With both the rhino horn selling monopoly and the retail (TCM) cartel belonging to governments, competition authorities should have no interest in the horn trade.

“CITES will never accept the trade proposal”

CITES was established to regulate trade in endangered species. Unfortunately the organization has become highly politicized, encouraged by donor agencies who influence votes, although they have no vote themselves. These agents, of which there are scores, are universally opposed to horn trade because, perhaps, a rhino crisis makes donor funding easy and the agents live off donor funds. But, are they the saviors they profess to be? The case for trade is compelling and if it is not accepted by CITES for rhino horn it is difficult to see in what circumstances and for which species trade will be acceptable.

The arguments against trade seem weak and contrived.

Chemical Horn Infusions – A Poaching Deterrent Or An Unnecessary Deception?
Sam Ferreira, Markus Hofmeyr, Danie Pienaar, Dave Cooper


Abstract

Poaching for horn remains a significant threat to rhinos. Conservationists use various approaches to deal with the threat. One method advocated is infusing rhino horns with chemicals and dye. Promoters of this method claim the procedure renders the horn useless and that ingesting poisoned horn carries potential risk to the end-user. We visually examined white rhino horn that had been treated; we examined available literature; and we obtained expert opinion to assess several assumptions and risks associated with the approach. We found the information on which the assumptions are based to be weak, and refute claims that discoloring horns is a viable method. Our assessment contests the efficacy of this technique on conceptual and logistical grounds, especially when dealing with relatively large populations. We argue that conservationists should not use this technique to deal with the rhino poaching threat.

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**IUCN Position Statement: The Threat Posed By Unregulated Use Of Poison To Africa’s Biodiversity, Ecosystems And Human Health**

In September 2014, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Species Survival Commission (SSC) published a position statement in relation to the increasing incidence and scale of the use of poison causing catastrophic declines in wildlife populations across Africa. The rapid acceleration of poison use has a devastating effect on populations of many scavenging species ranging from hyenas to vultures and has also been linked to poaching for elephant ivory, rhino horn and furs. Chemicals of major concern include the systemic carbamate pesticides Carbofuran and Aldicarb, which are commonly used to poison wildlife. In addition, various toxic organophosphates and organochlorines, as well as cyanide, strychnine and arsenic, are widely available in several African countries and are often subject to insufficient controls. IUCN appeals to the governments and other conservation actors in Africa to make a strong commitment to seeking effective strategies to address the root causes of the poisoning problem. [Read the full statement ...](#)

**News From and About Africa**

**Africa**

The world is currently facing a devastating crisis with the outbreak of Ebola. Travelers fearful of Ebola are avoiding Africa or canceling long-planned safaris, creating dire consequences for the economy in Africa, tourism and government officials from various countries said. Safari operators and officials point out that those stricken West African countries (Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone) are closer to Madrid, Paris and London than they are to safari hot spots, such as South Africa, Mozambique, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Tanzania in the continent's south and east. Yet the wider world is probably not aware how the underlying drivers of disease are linked to development and biodiversity loss, said [Dr Jane Smart](#), Global Director of IUCN’s Biodiversity Conservation Group. Ebola outbreak highlights critical links between biodiversity loss and human health. Habitat change, associated biodiversity loss and human health are connected. In the specific case of Ebola, the virus is highly devastating to both human and great ape populations, representing a threat to human health and biodiversity. Ebola outbreaks have occurred from hunting and consumption of infected wildlife, which in turn poses a pressure on wild populations.

**Africa**

Colin Bell, who co-founded Wilderness Safaris in the 80s and Great Plains Conservation in 2006, claimed that half of the [photographic] safari revenue never reaches Africa in a debate on how tourism can assist in conservation that opened World Responsible Tourism Day at WTM. “Fifty per cent max of the dollar paid at this end ends up in Africa,” he said, and “sometimes that money ends up in Guernsey, the Isle of Man. That needs to stop; the tourism industry needs to look at where the money is going.” Bell also cited the example of one reserve in Africa where the water has been turned so toxic by waste from lodges further up the river that it is not safe for human-touch. “How is wildlife supposed to survive in that situation?” he asked. Read more [HERE](#)

**Africa/Australia**

The Australian Government seems to prepare an import ban for lion hunting trophies. This is primarily aimed at canned lion killings in South Africa, but will also include lions which have been...
taken under sustainable and fair chase conditions in the wild. “These animals, in many circumstances, raised in what are the equivalent of factory farms they are then released into a small area and shot as an allegedly trophy prize, but honestly it’s not fair, it’s not humane, it’s not 21st Century and on my watch it’s not acceptable,” Australia’s Environment Minister Greg Hunt said about the South African practice of canned killing of lion. This statement came while South African animal rights activist Ian Mitchler was on a campaign tour in Australia. He had shown films about canned killings to the Minister. “I think if Australians knew more, as this program is showing, then they would be rightly horrified,” Minister Hunt said. Australian hunters fear that this ban which is triggered by canned killing might be expanded by the Government to other hunting trophies. Read more HERE

Angola
A large illegal retail ivory trade continues unabated in Luanda, fuelled mainly by Chinese nationals. The recently-carved ivory items for sale in the Benfica market in the capital derive mostly from forest elephants of Central Africa, where numbers are in sharp decline. No vendors displayed any apparent concern that they were offering ivory for sale illegally, perhaps owing to the fact that official inspections and confiscations are extremely rare. Growing numbers of Chinese workers, and other East Asians coming to Angola, buy ivory in this market daily. It is vital that the Chinese Embassy and other East Asian embassies warn citizens from their countries working in Angola not to buy ivory. It is also imperative that the Angolan Government closes down the huge retail ivory market in Benfica. Read more HERE

Angola
In July 15 Vietnamese were jailed for 6 months each after being arrested in June following their arrival on a flight from Angola, via Ethiopia with a total of 790 kg of ivory in their package. Source Traffic Bulletin 26-2/2014.

Kenya
Experts have raised fears that oil exploration in northern Kenya may displace elephants and destroy breeding places for other wildlife. Of concern is the Rimoi National Reserve in Kerio Valley, Elgeyo Marakwet County, which hosts large population of elephants. The little-known park has been swallowed by the Tullow Oil Kenya’s exploration Block12A, which also stretches to Baringo, Samburu, Turkana and West Pokot counties. KWS said the locals’ concerns are valid and that the 66-square kilometer Rimoi will be fenced with an electric fence to keep out human activities.

Kenya
Poachers killed a black rhino at the privately owned Solio ranch in Nyeri county. An unknown number of armed poachers cut through an electric fence at the expansive ranch and killed the rhino with a gun. This comes barely two weeks after two suspects were arrested at Chaka trading centre in Kieni East looking for market for two rhino horns.

Mozambique
Five Mozambique nationals have been arrested when trying to illegally trade in rhino horns and hoofs in the village of Magude, Maputo Province. One of the culprits, Manuel Sambo, a natural healer and resident in Mawanja, was indicted of providing rhino parts to the other four who are said to be residents of South Africa.
**South Africa**

SANParks announced that 14 suspected rhino poachers have been arrested in the Kruger National Park over one weekend in mid-October in three highly successful operations. This brings the total number of poaching suspects arrested in KNP this year to 113 (status 19th October). In a joint operation with members of the SA Police Service on Friday morning, SANParks rangers stopped a vehicle near Skukuza and arrested five suspects. Later three other suspects were arrested in the Malelane area. In the Punda Maria section a joint SANParks and SAPS deployment, supported by the SA National Defense Force air wing made contact with and arrested three suspected poachers after a fire fight; two of the suspects were seriously wounded, one later died of his wounds in hospital. Hunting rifles, ammunition and poaching equipment were confiscated in all cases.

**South Africa**

The case against four Mpumalanga men arrested in connection with the theft of 112 rhino horns valued at more than R116m was postponed to 8th December for further police investigation. The four accused - Gideon Mtshali, 51, Leonard Sizwe Malatjie, 34, Velly William Zwane, 43 and Selby George Khoza, 39 are all out on R20,000 (= ca. USD 1,900) bail each.

**South Africa**

SANParks invited bids for rhino in newspaper ads under a plan to move 500 of the animals from KNP to safety to counter a wave of poaching. Potential buyers are asked to "make a written offer to purchase white rhino in batches of 20 or more". Rhino are usually bought as an investment to attract tourists to a lodge for game viewing and for legal trophy hunts and are traded in an open market. Some ranchers also bought rhinos in the hope that trade in horn will be legalized at some point. But given the rising risks in owning rhino and the growing costs of keeping them secure, the planned sales might not get many takers. "You are asking someone to put a large amount of money on the table in a speculative venture," Pelham Jones, chairperson of the Private Rhino Owners Association, told Reuters. Private rhino owners were already spending around R270m ($24m) a year just on security to protect their investment and the species, Jones said. Between 1991 and 2013, the average price of white rhino at auction increased to R277,351 from R180,247 - a rise of just 54%.

**South Africa**

Two Vietnamese men, aged 25 and 26, were arrested at Johannesburg airport with a record haul of 18 rhino horns, weighing 41 kilos (90 pounds), during a one-hour stop at OR Tambo airport, Johannesburg on October 31st. They were on a Qatar Airways flight from Maputo, Mozambique to Hanoi, Vietnam and a "very credible" tip-off led authorities to ask passengers to leave the plane so they could investigate. South African police and customs officials said on Saturday Nov 1st, 2014 in a joint statement "this is the largest haul of rhino horns seized in one operation in South Africa". It is believed the horns, which were still intact, were removed from South African rhinos. The two Vietnamese men were due to appear in court on Monday November 3rd. "They will possibly be charged with transporting, possession and dealing in endangered species," said police spokesman lieutenant general Solomon Makgale.
Tanzania

When Tanzania announced to build a 53 km long road through Serengeti NP conservationists rang the alarm bell. A southern road, which would bypass the park, was therefore proposed as an alternative and Germany is presently financing the planning. Yet, strong national interest groups continue to push for a Serengeti highway. Rumors persist that finally the Government could give in and build the through road; apparently the Norwegian Government indicated being prepared to assist. The Tanzanian Mazingira Network, a Tanzanian conservation NGO, proposed to build alternatively a tunnel. Last year Kenya's former Director of Wildlife, Richard Leakey, suggested building an elevated highway over the Serengeti and Paula Kahumbu, one of his closest associates even showed a sketch of such a bridge allegedly drawn by star-architect Daniel Libeskind in Facebook. A senior representative of a major international development agency was horrified when informed about these proposals and remarked: "I do not even find such proposals funny. At the end of the day they appear as concrete project proposals with a funding request in international development fora."

Tanzania

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism has launched a five-year national strategy to combat poaching and illegal wildlife trade in collaboration with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The strategy which will require USD 51 million. It will strengthen the capacity of the ministry in terms of conducting intelligence led anti-poaching, highly coordinated law enforcement, and improvement of rural livelihoods through enhanced community based management of natural resources. The strategy will also raise awareness in supply, transit and destination countries to help change attitudes towards wildlife crime and build international support. Financing is expected to come from donor countries. Read more HERE

Tanzania

Controversy surrounds a plan to build an international airport close to Serengeti National Park. Wall Street billionaire Paul Tudor Jones who runs a luxury lodge nearby will finance the airport, including the buildings. Jones has rented three hunting blocks covering over 1000 km2 in the area. The airstrip is said to facilitate photographic tourism in the Serengeti. It will not be tarred. Whereas local politicians support the project, the respective Minister for Natural Resources is said to oppose the project for environmental reasons.

Tanzania

The Tanzanian Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism in partnership with The ICCF Group (International Conservation Caucus Foundation) and UNDP hosted the “Regional Summit to Stop Wildlife Crime and Advance Wildlife Conservation” in Arusha on November 7-8, 2014 to achieve trans-boundary collaboration on the poaching crisis and wildlife trafficking. Participants included leaders from 24 countries, including twelve African nations, leading conservation NGO experts, development institutions, and members of the business community. The
Summit touched on two important topics: Regional Coordination on Poaching and Wildlife Trafficking and “Regional Actions to Manage Wildlife Corridors and Shared Ecosystems”. Eight African nations committed themselves to stronger cross-border collaboration in the Arusha Declaration. Germany who is a major supporter of biodiversity protection (spending 500 Mio. EUR annually worldwide) committed to provide support for the Selous-Niassa-Corridor between Mozambique and Tanzania as well as for collaboration between Kenya Wildlife Services and the Tanzania counterparts. CIC Africa Ambassador Dr Ali Kaka represented the CIC International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation at this important meeting. A full summary will be available in the next African Indaba issue (February 2015).

Tanzania

The process of creating a Wildlife Authority is based on the Wildlife Management Act of 2009 and has been supported for several years by the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ). In May 2014 the Tanzania Wildlife Authority (TAWA) was finally gazetted. Benson Kibonde, a highly reputed senior wildlife officer, has been appointed as interim Director with the task to implement the road map and a board will be appointed before the end of the year. It is planned to have TAWA fully operational by July 2015. The authority will be based in Morogoro. GIZ will support TAWA in training matters, in working out a business plan and a communication strategy, in establishing an anti-poaching unit. Extensive training programs to inform employees of new regulations e.g. benefit sharing of rural communities, on decentralized administration and local authorities will be carried out in TAWA’s first year.

Tanzania

A popular pastoralist is under arrest, as he supposedly poisoned six lions outside Serengeti National Park, after a pack of 17 lions attacked one of his cows. The local newspaper Daily News reported that due to increased human-wildlife conflict relations between locals and conservators in Western Serengeti are deteriorating.

Uganda

The Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) has suspended five top officials after a ton of confiscated ivory worth over one million US dollars vanished from government strongrooms according to "The East African"-newspaper. UWA chief Raymond Engena said, following calls from the president to catch the culprits: "We have suspended five officials to allow investigations into how the ivory went missing." They include the government-run UWA’s chief ranger, those who had access to the strongroom, as well as intelligence officers in the agency. Uganda is a key transit country for the illegal trade.

Zambia

On October 18 the Zambian Parliamentary Conservation Caucus (ZPCC) and International Conservation Caucus Foundation (ICCF) hosted a “National Conference on Conservation and Development Priorities and Partnerships: A Way Forward”. The conference included sessions on wildlife crime and policy and focused amongst other issues on the improvement of benefit sharing from natural resources with local communities, including also capacity development of the Zambian Wildlife Authority (ZAWA). Dr. Kaush Arha in his capacity as Vice President of ICCF played a pivotal role. Dr. Arha is also Vice President of the CIC International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation. ... read more HERE
Zimbabwe

A gang of elephant poachers were cornered by rangers on the night of September 6. The shootout left one poacher dead and three seriously wounded, with one shot in the leg, one had his chin blown and the third one had his ankle shattered by bullets. The three are being charged with unlawfully hunting in a Safari area and possessing two elephant tusks each weighing 5kg after they allegedly entered Chete Safari in Binga where they killed an elephant and took its tusk. The accused were arrested by rangers after the shootout. Parks and Wildlife rangers appear to have adopted a shoot-to-kill strategy after two men suspected to be poachers were also shot dead by rangers near Victoria Falls.

The New SANParks CEO Is Fundisile Mketeni
Gerhard Damm

Fundisile Mketeni was appointed as the CEO of the SA National Parks (SANParks) in October and his appointment on a five-year contract was approved by the South African Cabinet. Mketeni leaves his job as Deputy Director General in the Department of Environmental Affairs & Tourism after 10 years of excellent service and dedication to the conservation of South Africa’s rich biological diversity. He replaces acting CEO Dr Nomvuselelo Songelwa.

Mketeni, who holds a Master’s Degree in Environmental Management and has 25 years’ experience in the field of Environmental Management and Biodiversity and Conservation, will face the huge challenges of rhino poaching in his new job; as a conservation career professional with extensive experience in conservation management he will have to muster all his abilities to address the scourge head on.

Mketeni welcomed the confidence placed on him by the SANParks board and the minister and said in a statement "I am committed to continuing with the good work and also to positioning the organisation as a lead agent in conservation nationally, regionally and globally".

Background: Fundisile Mketeni’s career at SANParks saw him serve as the Chief Operating Officer for the 19 National Parks except the Kruger National Parks, and acted as Executive Director: Parks before taking up the position of DDG: Biodiversity and Conservation in the Department of Environmental Affairs in 2004. He has played an instrumental role in the development and implementation of South Africa’s rhino anti-poaching legislation and policies as he headed the development of the Rhino Safety and Security Strategy and the Rhino Issue Management Process. He lead the South African negotiating teams to the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) between 2004 and 2012. Mr Mketeni also played a leading role in the development and implementation of the country’s Elephant Management Policy. He is presently the chair of the South African National Committee of the International Conservation Union (IUCN), the current chairperson of the African Group under the UNCCD and the Bureau Member for Africa of the Intergovernmental Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) established in 2012 as an independent intergovernmental body committed to the credible assessment of the state of the planet’s biodiversity, its ecosystems and the essential services these systems provide to society.
The Struggle for Survival of the Madagascan Pochard

Gerhard Damm

The world’s rarest bird, the Madagascan pochard (*Aythya innotata*), still relatively common at Lake Alaotra in Madagascar in the 1920s, was thought to be extinct in the late 1990s. The decline of this diving duck probably started some 60 years ago with the introduction of some fish species in the lake that killed most of the pochard chicks and damaged nesting sites. Rice cultivation, cattle grazing on the shores, burning of shore vegetation, introduced rats, gill-net fishing and indiscriminate hunting were factors that led to its disappearance. In 1960 a small flock of about 20 birds constituted the last record of multiple birds at Lake Alaotra, and in 1991 a single male was captured and kept in the Antananarivo Botanical Gardens until its death one year. Intensive searches and publicity campaigns in 1989-1990, 1993-1994 and 2000-2001 failed to produce any more records of this bird.

In November 2006 a flock of nine adults and four recently hatched ducklings were rediscovered at Lake Matsaborimena (or Red Lake) in a remote area of northern Madagascar. In 2008 only 25 adult birds had been counted in the wild.

In 2009, a rescue plan involving the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust and the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust removed a batch of 24 ready-to-hatch eggs from nests and incubated them in a lab that was set up in a shore-side tent. After hatching, the day-old chicks were taken to a holding facility in a local hotel. Reared in captivity, they hatched eighteen ducklings in April 2012 at the captive breeding center in Antsoihy, bringing the total population to 60. In April 2013, the population reached 80. But the Madagascar pochard will not be able to thrive without a new wetland home.

A new study by experts of the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT) established that 96% of the newly hatched chicks were disappearing at two to three weeks old. WWT researchers, estimate that only 25 individual birds now remain in one wetland in north-east Madagascar - a complex of lakes near Bemanevika. Piecing the evidence together, including samples of food from the bottom of the lake, the researchers realized that the chicks were starving to death.

These diving ducks feed from the bottom of lakes, and apparently the steep volcanic crater lake is simply too deep for them. But the researchers say the species could thrive in Madagascar again if the captive-bred ducks can be found a new wetland reintroduction site for the captive breeding population free from the pressures of fishing invasive predators. More information HERE.

Obituary: Don Lindsay

Gerhard R Damm

On October 3rd, Don Lindsay, one of the icons of professional hunting in Africa, passed away after a long fight with cancer. He always exhibited the profoundest belief that sustainable and regulated hunting was an important conservation tool in Africa. Don was a founding member of the Professional Hunters’ Association of South Africa (PHASA) and served PHASA almost a decade as
Don Lindsay was born in Johannesburg and educated at the venerable institution of St John’s College. In his formative years he spent much time in the veld as the youngest member of the Witwatersrand Bird Club and one of the youngest members of the Wildlife Society of South Africa. He studied pasture management and soil conservation at the University of Natal capping his studies with the thesis “Wildlife – A Crop Off The Land”. Don was a true pioneer and played a pivotal role in promoting the concept of science based sustainable use of wild natural resources, and that incentive-driven-conservation can contribute substantially to wildlife prospering and incentivizing rural people to preserving wildlife habitat.

Don Lindsay’s fictional novel “Win the Wild”, with an introduction by one of South Africa’s foremost conservationists, Dr. Ian Player, ingeniously explains the birth and growth of the game ranching industry in South Africa, and how wildlife became an asset of the land, thus saving marginal lands for conservation by replacing livestock with wild game. John Jackson of Conservation Force said pointedly that “Don knew first-hand the force of hunting and talked the talk like few others. His contribution to hunting and conservation was immense”.

I met Don many years back in the early 1980s when my family and I arrived in South Africa. His infectious smile and stories from the early days of hunting in Botswana, where Don was one of the old-time bwanas, who had hunting rights over an immense concession of 90,000 square miles, held me captivated more than once. His signature kilt and proud Scottish heritage were the highlight of many gala evenings in Africa and overseas, and he could entertain crowds like no other at auctions when he swung the gavel.

The entire hunting community will miss you, Don – Fare Well, my friend.

Obituary: Ray Sparrow

Alan Sparrow

When the history of game ranching in the south-east lowveld of Zimbabwe is written, the names of several pioneer ranchers will be prominent. These were Despard Bridges of Devuli Ranch, Ian de la Rue of Ruware Ranch, C.E. Sparrow of Fair Range, George Styles of Buffalo Range, Stanley Stockil of Essanby Ranch, Derek Henning of Samba Ranch and Ray Sparrow of Lone Star Ranch, among others.

Ray Sparrow started Lone Star Ranche in 1949, after serving a stockman’s apprenticeship on Devuli Ranch. In Ray Sparrow’s own words, “I spent considerable time on Devuli Ranch hunting predators - lions, leopards, hyenas, wild dogs - that plagued the livestock in heavy bush country. I
Ranching cattle in the harsh lowveld was a challenge in those early days due to the high number of predators. Ray followed the local African Hlengwe (or Shangaan) practice of not dehorning the heifers to allow the cattle to defend themselves from lion attacks. He employed a Hlengwe tracker named Nyarhi, who was to hunt with him for many years.

The second major challenge was the provision of water for cattle and wildlife. The drought prone lowveld is a harsh, unproductive environment without water. Ray built several dams and weirs, the largest of which is the Malilangwe Dam. The provision of water was to provide for the management of wildlife in the seventies, when Lone Star became one of the earliest private ranches to start hunting safaris in Zimbabwe.

Lone Star Ranch also pioneered the capture and translocation of a wide variety of wildlife, notably rescuing young elephant from the culling programmes in Hwange National Park. He was also a staunch supporter of protecting endangered species in Zimbabwe such as the Lichtenstein’s hartebeest and introduced white rhino onto Lone Star.

After nearly sixty-four years on Lone Star (now Malilangwe Trust) Ray Sparrow passed away recently at the age of 92. Ray Sparrow was held in high regard by a wide spectrum of people and communities in the lowveld and the country at large. Such was this respect that his funeral was attended by leading traditional and community leaders.

Ray Sparrow was the first to acknowledge that without the unwavering support of his beloved wife “Dossie” Sparrow and family he would not have succeeded. His passing represents the end of an era. We shall not see his like again. We salute him and we shall remember him.

Obituary: Brian Marsh
Hannes Siege

Brian Marsh, the “pioneering hunter”, who later became a writer, died on 10th November in Capetown at the age of 86.

Born as Ewart Pinker in 1928 in South Africa, he took his step-father’s name when he was 6 and remained Brian Marsh for all his life. Pioneering he really was. In the 1950s he started as one of the first professional crocodile hunters in Nyasaland, at what is now Lake Malawi. From that time into the mid-eighties the fisheries dept. issued unlimited crocodile licences.
An able hunter like Brian could make a good living from selling the end with “Pondoro” Taylor and later greatly facilitated Peter Capstick’s biography of John Taylor, the “Man called Lion”.

As a staff contributor to Magnum Magazine from 1987, when his days as a professional hunter in various countries of Southern Africa were over, he was a well-known figure in the hunting community. But his writing career really took off in 1982 with a novel, titled “The last Trophy”. Although the book had two reprints, he then settled for the non-fiction articles and books we know him for, drawing on his vast experience of hunting in Africa and the people he met over the decades. For many of us he is best known from his biographical books about the owner of Safarilandia in Mozambique, Werner von Alvensleben, “Baron in Africa”, and “The Hunting Blackbeards of Botswana”.

After his wife of almost 50 years, Jilly, passed away, his life became more difficult. His last years he spent in an old age home in Pinelands, where he was supported by a number of friends, mostly hunters from all over the world. When I visited him in 2012 to talk to a fellow crocodile hunter from Malawi, one could see that his age told against him. Nevertheless, he would always remain a gentle host to his visitors.

Beyond Proprietorship - Murphree’s Laws On Community-Based Natural Resource Management In Southern Africa
Edited by B.B. Mukamuri, J.M. Manjengwa & S. Anstey; 2009 Weaver Press Harare and International Development Research Centre

The book seeks to capture the spirit of Professor Marshall Murphree’s work and convictions from the past, present and in shaping future research initiatives. It is based on a collection of papers that were prepared for and presented at a conference hosted in honor of Murphree’s work, held at Leopard Rock Hotel, Vumba, Zimbabwe, in May 2007. Professor Marshall Murphree contributed immensely to academia, to the conservation of wildlife resources, to community development and to race relations for more than four decades. His professional career as an academic and social developer was anchored at the Centre for Applied Social Sciences (CASS), formerly called the Centre for Race Relations, which he opened in the 1960s.

The book covers a wide range of issues and conveys a central concern with the notion of equality and fairness to all humankind. There is a deliberate focus on the poor and marginalized people living in Southern Africa’s most impoverished and remote regions, characterized by low rainfall, limited agricultural potential, and poor infrastructure and social services. However, these remote regions have latent opportunities for economic development and conservation of natural resources, particularly wildlife. This opportunity for wildlife-based development was noted by Murphree and his colleagues while they worked with the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management.

Murphree and his colleagues spearheaded the wildlife proprietorship initiatives which led to the creation of the world acclaimed Communal Areas Management Program for Indigenous Resources (Campfire) in the mid-1980s. The program, though encompassing other natural resources, was centered on wildlife in Communal Areas adjacent to National Parks and other protected areas. It was, and is still, based on the principles set by Murphree and his colleagues, notably Rowan Martin, who crafted the initial Campfire document. These principles center on proprietorship of wildlife by communal people living with wildlife and their right to benefit from funds generated through wildlife-based activities including trophy hunting, culling and eco-tourism.
Contributors to the book have interacted with Professor Murphree in various capacities: people who have worked with him over the last 20 or more years, his former students and friends, academics currently based at CASS who have benefited enormously from his scholarship and leadership, as well as postgraduate students who continue to be inspired by him. Download the full text HERE.

The editorial team of African Indaba wishes all readers a Merry Christmas, some relaxing holidays and a New Year filled with all the good things you aspire for!