

AFRICAN INDABA

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Dedicated to the People and Wildlife of Africa

1 Another debate – this time the African Lion

By Gerhard R Damm

In Vol 1/2 the article “Safari Hunting of Lion” contained a summary of papers which Karyl Whitman and Petri Viljoen presented to the African Lion Working Group (ALWG) in 2002. I started my introduction that “the real or perceived decline in lion populations in sub-Saharan Africa is not the issue”. Recent media reports, like those published on the web by the BBC News World Edition¹ on October 7th and in New Scientist Magazine on September 20th have proved me wrong.

BBC quotes Professor David Macdonald, director of WildCRU, Oxford University's Wildlife Conservation Research Unit, announcing the results of his team's 5-year study of lion conservation, which has concentrated on fieldwork in Zimbabwe and Botswana. The article continues with a statement that the estimate of 20 000 lions or fewer compares with a population of about 200 000 in the early 1980s. As the same figures are mentioned on Professor Macdonald's WildCRU website <http://www.wildcru.org/> I assume that BBC quoted him correctly. At the end of the article Macdonald says “*The lions' decline is shocking, because it suggests they're a great deal more frail than we might have thought. If they were all in your sitting room, 20 000 lions might sound a lot, but we're talking about an entire continent.*”

I also had the impression that Macdonald may dislike hunting. This impression is reinforced by WildCRU's connections to Born Free Foundation. Dr Claudio Sillero, a co-worker of Professor Macdonald at Oxford University and deputy chair of the IUCN Canid Specialist Group (Macdonald holds the chair), is also Head of Conservation of Born Free. (quote from the Borne Free website: “*Born Free's Head of Conservation, Dr Claudio Sillero, has been participating actively in a series of lion conservation workshops in various southern African countries by our partner WildCRU at Oxford University*”).

In New Scientist² staff writer Stephanie Paine reports an interview with Dr. Laurence Frank, wildlife biologist from the University of California. Dr. Frank stated the African lion population with 23 000 and Paine goes on to say that “*20 years ago the lion population seemed in good shape. There were no hard figures but conservationists guessed there were around 200 000.*” It seems that Paine got that latter figure from WildCRU. Other media rearranged Dr Frank's statement into this headline: “*Lion populations have fallen by almost 90% in the past 20 years, leaving the animal close to extinction in Africa, a wildlife expert has warned.*” The Chicago Suntimes Newspaper even discovered on October

26th that “Aids may be driving the African lion into extinction” and continued to state “*scientists reporting a devastating collapse of the African lion population from 230 000[sic] in 1980 to fewer than 20 000 now, the decline has traditionally been blamed on loss of natural habitat and hunting. But advances in virology and groundbreaking field research suggest large numbers of lions could be dying from AIDS because their immune system has been destroyed by lion lentivirus, the lion version of HIV.*” In the same article, Briton Kate Nicholls and her Dutch partner Pieter Kat even argued that the African lion figure to be close to 15 000. And the UK's Independent Digital News³ headlined on October 8th “*Rich Tourist trophy hunters are wiping out African lion population, conservationists warn*” (guess who was the quoted “leading British scientist”).

Fortunately, Dr Frank is also quoted by New Scientist's Paine to have said that “*people like to see wild animals against a spectacular scenic backdrop, but much bush country is dull and scrubby, and the wildlife hard to spot. The industry is fragile, too. The recent terrorist alerts have hit Kenya very hard. And tourism is never likely to be lucrative enough to protect the huge areas of habitat that species such*

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as lions and wild dogs need.

The alternative is trophy hunting. Many people don't like the idea, and it has been banned in Kenya for the past 25 years. Frank is a reluctant supporter - as long as hunting is properly regulated and doesn't put predator populations at risk. Paid hunting has brought about a huge resurgence of wildlife in South Africa and Namibia, and it is a mainstay of the economy in Tanzania, Botswana and Zimbabwe,' says Frank. Sport hunting requires the preservation of large tracts of land because it takes a large, healthy population of animals to produce a few old trophy males. It is also more robust than tourism: Zimbabwe no longer has an ecotourism industry but sport hunting is still going strong.

If conservation is to succeed, there must be a balance between the needs of the carnivores and the needs of the people. If persistent livestock killers aren't dealt with, people will revert to shooting and poisoning predators. Trophy hunting may be unpalatable, but it is practical. A trophy hunter will spend \$30,000 to shoot a big male lion. Apparently some will pay \$15,000 for a female. In Laikipia you could make half a million dollars a year by shooting the problem animals that are going to be killed anyhow. That would be enough to offset the cost of the entire local lion population for the next decade."

Professor Macdonald has access to the IUCN-ALWG African Lion Working Group Study (by Hans Bauer and Sarel van der Merwe⁴), which says "the number of free ranging African lions (*Panthera leo*) has never been assessed ... an inventory of available information, covering most protected areas and ranging in quality from educated guesses to individually known populations ... gives a conservative estimate of between 16 500 and 30 000 free ranging lions in Africa." The breakdown of numbers in this report shows an estimate of 23 000 lion with a minimum of 16 500 and a maximum of 30 000! (Editor's comment: van der Merwe said in a personal communication: "Nobody can make a sound calculation of the decline in lion numbers since Nowell and Jackson's 1996 publication. I took the accuracy of the figures which Jackson and Nowell provided for the African Lion (30 000 to 100 000) as absolute guesstimates, and it was confirmed by Peter Jackson. No-one in his right mind can make any trustworthy calculations with regard to decline in numbers. Except that it is reasonable to accept that decline will be a reality, due to human population growth).

Bauer and van der Merwe make a point to state in their study "the classification [of lion as vulnerable] was partly based on an educated guess of between 30 000 and 100 000 free ranging lions (Nowell & Jackson, 1996). The large margin was justified by lack of information and the notorious difficulty of lion censuses." In Bauer and van der Merwe's document the reader comes across another important passage: "many rural non-protected areas in East and Southern Africa contain lions (G. Mills, pers. comm.), in contrast to West and Central Africa (Bauer et al., 2003). **Some of these areas were included, but others have never been surveyed although they may contain substantial numbers of lions (order of magnitude: thousands). We speculate that surveys of unknown lion populations will increase the current estimate and min-max to an unknown extent, but surely by less than 100%**" (Editor's emphasis).

Is the increase over the estimated figure 23 000 around 50%? Then we come to a revised estimate of 34 500 (with a maximum of 45 000); if we take 80% then the figures are 41 400 as an estimate and 54 000 as a maximum. I suggest that Bauer, as a cautious scientist, did not use the upper limit of 100% without some plausibility checks on his side.

I further suggest that therefore a far more plausible figure

for lion population in sub-Saharan Africa (North Africa has a zero population) could be put around 40 000 to 50 000 – a figure which is astonishingly close to the 39 000 to 47 000 lion as established by Philippe Chardonnet in his 2002 study "Conservation of the African Lion"⁴. It would be a sensible course of action if the African Lion Working Group and the IUCN Cat Specialist Group encourage Chardonnet and Bauer to discuss their respective results in a joint paper – and to also include papers (like those of Viljoen and Whitman⁵) dealing with the aspect of sustainable lion utilization.

Incidentally, Bauer and van der Merwe mention that many large lion populations in East and Southern Africa have been stable over the last three decades and that [lion] conservation is bolstered by safari hunting and tourism revenues, allowing for conservation in natural lands outside National Parks.

I know for a fact that some academic lion experts show unhappiness with the insinuation of a catastrophic decline in lion numbers in Africa. Dr Frank – according to our information – made this clear in communications with his colleagues that he never mentioned the number of 230 000 or 200 000 lion. Professor Macdonald who certainly knows the study of Bauer and van der Merwe as well as the figures published by Nowell and Jackson earlier has not made any statement except that the website of WildCRU still advertises the figure of 200 000 African lion. That may have a reason in the connection to Born Free Foundation, since the emotional response which the recent media reporting has created, might well end up in generating funds for new research projects.

The entire debate at this stage looks rather similar to the emerging elephant debate some decades ago. Against better knowledge, scientists remained silent, when the international media, abetted by an assortment of so called animal rights organizations, went on a frenzy proclaiming the perceived immediate extinction of the African elephant. Setting matters right was either unfashionable or uncomfortable – or it jeopardized project funding. Scientific truth was sacrificed for short term goals. Adams and McShane have exposed this issue in their book "The Myth of Wild Africa" (1992). Today the unenviable situation of African elephant range states with elephant overpopulation problems is a result of the international media having created a doomsday scenario

The African Lion Working Group's responsibility towards society and African conservation requires that ALWG set matters right in their African Lion Database. Alarmist and doomsday reports do neither serve the African lion, nor the rural people who live with the lion and in the long run do not serve science!

I am only too aware that especially the West and Central African lion populations may indeed be in need of special conservation measures. The ALWG application to IUCN to upgrade the red list status of the West and Central African populations is a prudent step in the right direction.

In Eastern and Southern Africa, it is upon the hunting community needs to develop sustainable hunting models for lion in cooperation with field scientists, game departments and rural people. Whitman and Viljoen's work could form a departure point for a close cooperation between science and hunters, and Dr. Frank's above mentioned assessment regarding lion hunting underscores a possibility to dialogue.

To develop sustainable hunting models and to collect re-

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2 The status of the black and white rhinoceros on private land in South Africa

By Anthony J. Hall-Martin & Guy Castley

PACHYDERM published two articles in issue number 34 (January – June 2003) “**The status of the black rhinoceros (*Diceros bicornis*) on private land in South Africa in 2001**” and “**The status of the southern white rhinoceros (*Ceratotherium simum simum*) on private land in South Africa in 2001**”. Contact addresses: Anthony J. Hall-Martin, PO Box 73379, Lynnwood Ridge 0040, South Africa, email: hallmartin@worldonline.co.za and J. Guy Castley (South African National Parks, PO Box 20419, Humewood, 6013 South Africa; email: gcastley@upe.ac.za). Download PACHYDERM following the links indicated at <http://iucn.org/themes/ssc/sgs/afesg/> to access the individual articles.

The two articles provide a host of information about these two charismatic species and their management on private land in South Africa. To the readers of African Indaba the authors' conclusions with respect to the sustainable consumptive use of both species are of particular interest.

The surveys by the authors have shown that in 2001, 118 black rhinos (*Diceros bicornis*) were privately owned on 15 properties (an increase of 34% since 1999) and white rhinos (*Ceratotherium simum simum*) increased from a minimum estimate of 1922 in 1999 to 2534 on 242 properties in 2001

Black Rhino

Black rhinos have been available to private owners only since 1990, with stringent habitat and security requirements imposed by state conservation agencies. Three of the four recognized subspecies or ecotypes of black rhino are found with *D.b. minor* make up 69% of the total; *D.b. michaeli* 19% and *D.b. bicornis* 11%. Natural growth within the population is 5.7% per annum. The South African national rhino conservation plan recommends that they not be allowed to interbreed.

There is keen interest in some sections in sport hunting surplus bulls on private lands.

Hunting and Land Use

As the black rhino is currently listed in Appendix 1 of CITES, trade is restricted because of the threatened status of the species. Permits for black rhino hunting fall within the South African provincial conservation ordinances, and any quotas, if set, would need to comply with international trade restrictions in terms of movement of trophies as well as with CITES regulations. Five properties are prepared to allow hunting of surplus males if this becomes legalized, while seven properties, used for tourism or recreation, do not consider hunting compatible with their objectives. The other three properties are used purely for recreation, education and conservation. The economic potential of black rhinos has not been as great a reason for acquiring them as it is for white rhinos. Owners of black rhinos appeared to have greater appreciation than did white rhino owners of the part they can play in conserving a rare and endangered species. Whether the black rhino population of South Africa should be down listed from Appendix 1 of CITES, to stimulate trade and sustainable use of the species is an ongoing debate. Public interest in whether hunting black rhinos should be allowed is likely to be

keen. The opinions gathered in the present survey tilt towards the view that legalizing the hunting of surplus male black rhinos, one of the management options listed by Brooks (2000), will stimulate a desire to provide more privately owned habitat for the species. It would probably also drive up prices, as hunting white rhinos was shown to have done some two decades ago (Buijs 2000). Landowners, however, are prepared to make large investments if there is a reasonable prospect of long-term profit. The current shortage of black rhinos in the market will likely stimulate demand for the few animals available each year.

White Rhino

The authors concluded that increases in white rhino populations on private property through reproduction at a rate of 21% over the 28-month survey period (or 9% per annum) were higher than those purchased from state wildlife management agencies (14% over the survey period, or 6% per annum), although the latter remain a significant source of animals. The trade in live animals continued to grow, both from the state to the private sector and within the private sector, and average prices were still increasing. The economic value of white rhinos largely determines the attitude of private owners towards them. The commercial approach to wildlife management on private land (Anderson 1993) is still the driving force behind the white rhino market. This is clear from the fact that the majority of the private owners in the current survey were using their land for ecotourism or hunting, and few kept rhinos solely for conservation or aesthetic purposes. Although ecotourism and conservation are not necessarily mutually exclusive, financial benefits rather than conservation principles appeared to drive white rhino management.

Hunting

The authors state that they are not convinced that their survey has produced an accurate estimate of the number of rhinos hunted in South Africa, and some of the discrepancies in the figures reported above may be that hunted animals are not being reported. Buijs (2000) was of the opinion that the hunting industry had stabilized and was unlikely to grow as sale prices increased. Buijs reported that 47 rhinos were hunted over two hunting seasons (1998 and 1999). This figure included a minimum of 31 rhinos reported as hunted, plus 16 sold by KZN Wildlife for hunting purposes. Whether the latter 16 animals were all shot during the survey period was not recorded. It is also possible that more animals could have been hunted after July 1999, when Buijs ended his survey. The present survey could account for 57 rhinos, also over two hunting seasons, indicating a probable increase in hunting activity contrary to Buijs's opinion. Trophy prices are quoted in US dollars and were in the range of about USD 25,000 to 35,000 per animal. As the rand has lost 30% of its value against the dollar since January 2001, and 21% between 11 September and 7 December of that year, this will push up the value of trophy animals in rand terms. It could well be, therefore, that more rhinos will be offered for hunting by landowners in 2002.

At least four properties allowed green hunting (where rhinos are darted, often to perform other procedures, but not killed) of rhinos for an average price of ZAR 40,000 per 'hunt', while a further two were interested in initiating green hunts. The consequences of green hunts that concentrate on single animals that are repeatedly darted are as yet undeter-

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3 The Friedkin Conservation Fund – Making a difference in Tanzania.

By Craig Doria

Established in 1998, the Friedkin Conservation Fund (FCF) is a Non Government Organization (NGO) that is in charge of all of the community development, anti-poaching and field research for Tanzania Game Trackers Safaris (TGTS) and Wengert Windrose Safaris (WWS). FCF uses funds generated by hunting to make a difference in the lives of Tanzanian people. The offices are based in Arusha and operate throughout Tanzania; from Selous Game Reserve in the south east, to Lake Natron Game Controlled Area in the north on the border with Kenya.

FCF's mission is to assist the government and people of Tanzania in their efforts to conserve and protect the indigenous flora and fauna. In order to achieve this, FCF actively involves local communities in sustainable conservation practices to improve their economic conditions.

Education: FCF places particular emphasis on improving education standards throughout Tanzania. Over the past five years, FCF has channelled significant funds into the construction and upgrading of schools, particularly in areas surrounding TGTS and WWS hunting blocks. The latest FCF contribution towards education is taking place in Arusha, close to the offices of FCF, TGTS and WWS. FCF, in cooperation with Burka Coffee Estates Ltd, is financing and overseeing the construction of the Olisiva Primary School. Work began in early May and the first phase of construction is due to be completed in time for the beginning of the 2004 school year.

The current Olisiva Primary School is in a state of disrepair and cannot cater for the number of students requiring primary education in the area. By moving the school a short distance from its present location, the current students will not only be provided with upgraded facilities but more students from the area will be able to attend primary school without having to travel long distances to do so.

Initially the school will comprise seven classrooms and cater for around 700 hundred students, to be taught in two sessions (morning and afternoon). FCF has an ongoing commitment to the school and will fund the construction of more classrooms and upgrades into the future.

Community Development: The community development side of FCF's work relies almost entirely on funds generated from the sustainable utilization of wildlife by way of a 20% levy added to government trophy fees for every animal hunted. Clients are made aware of this levy and see it as their contribution towards improving the livelihoods of local communities and in turn conserving the wildlife of Tanzania. Each year FCF allocates villages their share of the funds generated from trophy fees in their area. This sizeable annual contribution is held by FCF and once the community decides how they want the money to be spent, FCF goes ahead with the project.

Anti Poaching: FCF has an extensive Anti-poaching

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4 A view from the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC)

By Dieter Schramm, CIC President

Editor's Comment: Dieter Schramm's article from the CIC newsletter touches a hot iron indeed. I fully agree with his statement that hunters and hunting associations worldwide have to become more proactive and be seen by their members and by the international conservation community as taking the initiative in vital questions.

In connection with hunting trophies we certainly have to reassess our position. Earlier this year I wrote in an article for "Africa Geographic" that "a hunting trophy is a way of remembering a particular experience, valuable and important to the individual hunter. It is therefore considered legitimate that a hunter collects and cherishes such tokens of remembrance. A hunting trophy is all the more valuable to the hunter, if the difficulties associated with collecting the particular trophy are exceptional. Self-discipline is a key-factor in trophy hunting, since the trophy must be the result and not the ultimate objective of the hunt."

Trophy hunting in the 21st century should be based on a conservation ethos, where the individually cherished trophy does not become the fetish of record mania and an element of unhealthy competition, but rather proof of good conservation methods.

In most African countries trophy hunting entails the pursuit of indigenous game in its natural habitat. The game industry in South Africa and Namibia, however, has developed some disturbing trends, albeit not without influence from outside. Economically attractive species have been transplanted into areas and habitats, where they are non-indigenous. Conservation factors did not play a role.

In the last African Indaba, the South African authors of the article "Can current trends in the game industry be reconciled with nature conservation?" (African Indaba Vol 1/No 5, page 3) stated that their objective is the persuasion of the international hunting organizations to recognize only trophies that comply with mutually agreed conservation criteria.

I do consider this approach a step into the right direction – away from colour variations, genetic manipulations, hybrids and a constant "invention of new trophy categories"- back to our conservationist roots! There will be more about this topic in future African Indabas.

From the numerous actual subjects presented and discussed at the 50th CIC Convention in Helsinki earlier this year, let me pick an item and start to discuss it with you briefly: the "hot potato" issue of trophies. For us, ethical hunters, a trophy is a wonderful memory of an exciting occurrence in free nature, while for those opposing hunting, a trophy is THE anathema, i.e. the only raison d'être certain people attribute to hunting... In an interview with the Spanish magazine "Cazadores sin Fronteras", I had the opportunity to say the following:

"In the beginning, the CIC points, i. e. our measuring system, have contributed substantially to make the CIC renowned in many parts of the world. Today, the CIC point system is considered "a tool of the

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liable field data (in particular from the non protected areas where lion hunting takes place) scientists from ALWG, nature conservation agencies and professional hunters, outfitters and tourist hunters as well as rural people must find a common platform, cooperate, share information and most of all arrive at sensible solutions which take the conservation needs and management realities of the African lion and the aspirations of the rural communities into account. The ALPRU proposals in the article “African Lion – What the hunter can do” (see page 17 for details) could be the catalyst for that partnership!

It makes no sense that alarmist news and bitter commentaries put the parties into feuding camps. Prohibition of lion hunting – although certainly of short term benefit to some, and fund-generating for others – will not help to increase lion populations – Botswana’s history during the lion hunting moratorium proves that. More lion have been poisoned, shot and trapped in Botswana in the last years than at any time when lion hunting was legal. Kenya has a similar record.

Reports like those of BBC and the subsequent spreading of negative comments will be water on the mills of the international conflict industry represented by vociferous animal rights groups and divert funds from essential conservation projects to the conflict industry’s public media campaigns. The African lion will certainly benefit the least!

In my comment which I referred to in the first paragraph I also wrote “*The economic future of many a safari operator and professional hunter, and indeed the future of complete conservation schemes in Africa will depend on a sensible no-nonsense approach to evaluating existing lion populations for sustainable take-off of trophy specimens as well as on the strict adherence to set quotas.... to eventually create together with the research community feasible and ecologically sound lion management schemes for the game fields of Africa.*” The survival of viable lion populations in Africa too, one might add today!

The challenge to act responsibly applies not only to the hunting community, but also to the research community, to the conservationist from IUCN affiliated NGOs and to the operators of photographic safaris and camps. It is about time that all these parties work together! **African Indaba** will be more than happy to provide an adequate forum for dialogue!

¹ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/3171380.stm>

² *In* Lion Conservation in West and Central Africa, Dissertation, Hans Bauer, Leiden University, 2003 pp 48-56.

³ <http://news.independent.co.uk/world/africa/>

⁴ *In* New Scientist vol 179 issue 2413 – 20.09.2003, page 36

⁵ Conservation of the African Lion: Contribution to a Status Survey, Chardonnet, Ph. (ed.), 2002. International Foundation for the Conservation of Wildlife and Conservation Force

⁶ Viljoen, P.C., Starfield, A.M. & Whitman, Karyl L., 2002. A simulation model for managing free-ranging lion populations. Whitman, Karyl L., 2002. Safari Hunting of Lions: A review of policies, practices and industry concerns *In*: De Waal, H.O. (Ed.). *Proceedings of the 2nd Meeting of the African Lion Working Group*. 9 to 10. 05. 2002. Willem Pretorius Game Reserve, FS, RSA. African Lion Working Group, Brandhof, RSA pp 141-145 and pp 111-124.

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2 The status of black and white rhinoceros ...

mined and may be detrimental to these animals.

Editor’s Comment: *I feel that the onus is on the professional hunters and outfitters to supply annual and correct figures of white rhino hunted and killed. The harvest data should be complemented with supplementary biological information. It is suggested that PHASA and the IUCN African Rhino Specialist Group cooperate in developing a form sheet which could be completed in the field by the safari outfitter or his representative. If the ARSG feels that biological specimens are required simple-to-use field kits could be developed and the samples could be centrally analyzed. We certainly need to keep reliable and accurate statistics for the consumptive use of the white rhino in order to fulfil our information obligation to the public and our cooperation obligation towards the scientific community of IUCN in general and the ARSG in particular.*

This will be of particular importance with a view to the possibility of some very limited sport hunting of black rhino.

Visiting and local sport hunters who contract a white rhino hunt should insist with their outfitter that the data of their particular rhino are made available to science.

5 Strange Lions

Sarel Derman, the owner of a reserve about 150 kilometers north-east of Cape Town into which – according to his statement - six lions will be released shortly, claimed in a SAPA/AFP report that these lion are the closest relative to the extinct "black mane" Cape lion. "A hunter shot the last Cape lion in the 1850s," Derman said.

African Indaba would like to ask Mr Derman where these so-called “close relatives of the extinct Cape Lion” originated from.

In the Lowveld at least one predator center claims to house specimens of the so-called Barbary lion and the various groups of white lion continuously catch media attention.

African Indaba contacted Sarel van der Merwe of the University of the Free State and Chairman of IUCN African Lion Working Group (ALWG) regarding these “lion subspecies” and received the following statement:

“ALWG recognizes that the Barbary lion and Cape lion are both extinct. We are aware of claims that some private people and also some institutions have one or both of the sub-species in their collection, but we doubt that very much. We do recognize, though, that one will find cross-breed remains in zoos and circuses all over the world, and unfortunately, until fairly recently, very few zoos kept proper record of their lions' origins. I do not believe that there still lives a single pure specimen of both extinct species [of the Cape and Barbary lion]. I am [also] very much against the importation of lions from overseas, especially from Spain and Brazil, because our ex situ populations can very easily get contaminated with corrupt gene pools from remnants of Barbary, Cape and even Asiatic sub-species. Some [people] from Holland wanted to import circus lions to ‘release them into the wild’ in SA. What kind of lions are they importing? And if such lions would survive in large nature reserves, what will happen to the cubs? Then we’ll have our wild lion populations contaminated with corrupt gene pools also. The white lions are also a headache by themselves, because nobody cares about keeping proper record of breeding history.”

6 IUCN Species Survival Commission and its Specialist Groups

Hunter-Conservationists from around the world can find a wealth of information on the IUCN websites. Of special importance for us is the Sustainable Use Specialist Group (SUSG) and the Southern African Sustainable Use Specialist Group (SASUSG), headed by Dr Brian Child. Please visit the website of SASUSG (address details at the end) – and get acquainted with its work and the many projects which have a direct bearing on consumptive use of African wildlife and of course hunting. Another important partner for the African hunting community is the Southern African Group of the Conservation Breeding Specialist Group headed by Yolán Friedman, conservation director of the Endangered Wildlife Trust. The importance of a coordinated cooperation with these groups can be seen on the website of the Caprinae Specialist Group. Although the work of this group touches only very few species on the African continent (Aoudad, Walia and Nubian Ibex), the pro-sustainable use stance will convince every hunter. In cooperation with the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC) – an accredited member of IUCN – the Caprinae Group held the Bishkek Global Mountain Summit in 2002. During that symposium the importance of regulated trophy hunting for the conservation objectives and for the economic empowerment of local people was highlighted. CIC's work for the wild sheep and goats of the world could form a blueprint for the African future. Of particular interest is also the "Position Statement on Trophy Hunting" – read the complete text on the Caprinae website:

<http://callisto.si.usherb.ca:8080/caprinae/thunt.htm>

I consider it imperative that hunter-conservationists get involved in the work of the World Conservation Union (IUCN). African Indaba will continue to report about IUCN and its diverse programs. We suggest that all concerned hunter-conservationists get involved at local level with the network of volunteer members.

Please contact African Indaba (gerhard@muskwa.co.za or PO Box 411, Rivonia, 2128, RSA) if you need contact names with addresses and phone numbers.

The Species Survival Commission is a knowledge network of some 7,000 volunteer members working in almost every country of the world. Members include wildlife researchers, government officials, wildlife veterinarians, marine biologists, wildlife park managers, and experts on birds, mammals, fish, amphibians, reptiles, plants, and invertebrates. Most of SSC's members are deployed in more than 120 Specialist Groups and Task Forces. Some groups address conservation issues related to particular groups of plants or animals while others focus on topical issues such as reintroduction of species into former habitats, or sustainable use of species.

SSC is the largest of the six Commissions of IUCN - The World Conservation Union. It serves as the main source of advice to the Union and its members on the technical aspects of species conservation. SSC seeks to mobilize action by the world conservation community for species conservation, particularly those species threatened with extinction and those of importance for human welfare.

What does the Species Survival Commission (SSC) do?

- produces the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species
- provides technical and scientific advice to governments,

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3 The Friedkin Conservation Fund ...

program in place. There are now 8 anti-poaching teams in the field in 8 of the game reserves that TGTS and WWS operate in. These teams are known as the Rapid Action Teams (RAT). There is also a relief team which takes over duties as each RAT goes on leave. The teams are made up of commander, driver, 2 rangers and 2 government game officers. Each team has a fully equipped land cruiser pick-up with radio communications and camping equipment. Each area also has a resident Protected Area Manager who oversees the anti-poaching activities and feeds the results back to FCF's Arusha base. The RAT teams' anti-poaching activities are controlled and coordinated by Project Managers in the Game Reserves or the District Anti-poaching Personnel in Open Areas. The TGTS and WWS Protected Area Managers also ensure that all of our activities are coordinated carefully with the anti-poaching work of the Wildlife Department.

In addition to the RATs, FCF operates a Mobile Anti-Poaching Unit. This is a bigger team, made up of 7 FCF rangers and 4 government wildlife officers. The unit has 2 fully equipped land cruisers. The mobile team is deployed for 4 months at a time to areas that are considered in need of special attention due to heavy poaching.

Research: In 2003 FCF started a research component to monitor wildlife population trends in hunting blocks utilized by TGTS and WWS. All data collected is captured into an integrated database which is still being developed. This data provides reliable information on changes in population numbers, distribution and movements. Population data, particularly sex and age structure, are essential to determine population growth rates and predict population trends.

Key animal species have been identified for each area. A key species is a trophy animal considered of particular importance because of its value from a hunting perspective as well as its role in a particular environment. Several of the key species are also indicator species. These are species that highlight certain changes or trends in an ecosystem. Lions for example are one such species and FCF is working with the Tanzanian Wildlife Research Institute (TAWIRI) and an outside consultant to carry out an in depth research program into the lions within Moyowosi Game Reserve.

In addition to trophy fee allocations, FCF sources additional funds to support its projects. At present there are a number of donor organizations helping to fund projects such as rehabilitation of schools and student sponsorships. We plan to allocate these donors particular regions where they will contribute funds over the long term and build up a relationship with the people. FCF reports back to the donors regularly with updates on how projects are progressing and what future projects require funding.

FCF has a long term commitment to the conservation of wild resources throughout Tanzania. This can only be achieved by actively involving local communities in conservation practices and providing them with the direct benefits that sustainable utilization can bring.

Anyone interested in finding out more about the work of FCF please contact Craig Doria or Dom Lever at fd@babari.co.tz or write to Craig Doria, Friedkin Conservation Fund Coordinator, P.O.Box 2782, Arusha, phone:++255-27-2508917, cell: 0744 463144

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6 IUCN Species Survival Commission and ...

international environmental treaties and conservation organizations

- publishes action plans, newsletters and policy guidelines
- organizes workshops
- implements on-ground conservation projects
- raises funds for and carries out research

The Commission is led by a Chair, who is supported by an Executive Committee and a Steering Committee. Members of these committees give a geographical and interdisciplinary balance to the Commission and provide direction to the Specialist Groups and Task Forces.

SSC Specialist Groups

SSC members are deployed in more than 120 Specialist Groups and Task Forces based on their area of expertise. Those of particular interest to the readers of **African Indaba** are listed below:

African Elephant Specialist Group

<http://iucn.org/themes/ssc/sgs/afesg/>

Chair: Dr Holly Dublin - Email: afesg@ssc.iucn.org

African Rhino Specialist Group

<http://www.rhinos-irf.org/rhoinformation/index.htm>

Chair: Dr Martin Brooks, Contact: Richard Emslie - Email: remslie@kznwildlife.com

Antelope Specialist Group

Chair: Dr Richard D. Estes, richard.estes2@verizon.net

Canid Specialist Group

<http://www.canids.org/> Chair: Dr David Macdonald, Contact: C Sillero-Zubiri Email: canids@zoology.oxford.ac.uk

Cat Specialist Group

<http://lynx.uio.no/catfolk/> Co-Chairs: Drs Urs and Christine Breitenmoser, Email: urs.breitenmoser@ivv.unibe.ch

Equid Specialist Group

<http://www.iucn.org/themes/ssc/sgs/equid/> Chair: Dr Patricia Moehlman Email: tan.guides@habari.co.tz

Hyaena Specialist Group

<http://www.hyaena.ge/> Chair: Dr Gus L. Mills, Email: gusm@parks-sa.co.za

Pig, Peccary, and Hippo Specialist Group

<http://www.iucn.org/themes/ssc/sgs/pphsg/home.htm>, Chair: Mr William Oliver Email: WLOliver@aol.com

Conservation Breeding Specialist Group

(<http://www.cbsg.org/>), Chair: Dr Robert Lacy, Contact: Yolán Friedman, Email: cbsgsa@wol.co.za

Sustainable Use Specialist Group

<http://www.iucn.org/themes/ssc/susg/index.html>
Chair: Dr John Hutton, Contact: David Beaumont Email: dbeaumont@iucn.org, Southern Africa Chair: Dr Brian Child, Email: BChild@zamnet.zm,
<http://www.iucn.org/themes/ssc/susg/susgs/southernafrica.html>, and <http://www.sasusg.net>

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4 A view from the International Council for Game ...

trade" by our scientists in terms of one aspect only: a bio-indication to evaluate the results of wildlife management. We have decided to use all our influence internationally to eliminate the negative aspect of human competition from trophy measurement. Let me be drastic: a world record stag prompts the question 'how fast did this animal run'??? A gold medal for a genuine grown trophy (not artificially fed, fenced, gene-manipulated, etc.) is a certificate for a "luxury of nature". What we need is the widespread understanding also within the hunting community that the purpose of sustainable use cannot be the promotion of trophy craziness... This, however, does not exclude a genuine hunter from enjoying his or her "extraordinary" trophy as a special memory of a unique experience in nature..."

Of course, we understand that for reasons of economic incentives of sustainable use of game animals, the income of quite a number of genuine hunters and their families depends on a hunt, which is evaluated with the quality of the trophy "taken".

A number of our friends told me: "if you bring up this issue you will have a riot...!" Really? Why do we always have to wait until outsiders challenge us hunters and force us into self-defence? Why do we, as responsible hunters, sidestep certain issues under the motto: *ah, another slice of the salami is cut from us?* Think about it! 30 years ago only a few people had a mobile phone, but today this is part of our daily life.

In a changing world, modern and actively thinking hunters must take the initiative. You and I know that there does exist what we call "trophy craziness", which gives free ammunition to "antis" The true hunter-conservationist has a keen interest in hunting being recognized as a form of natural harvesting by the general public and the parties directly concerned. Can we, therefore, really defend the strategy of sidestepping issues in the vain hope that this will anyway be forgotten by tomorrow? No, let us target this directly from a position of strength, and not only when forced into the defence...

We want to fulfil our mandate as stipulated in the statutes of CIC. In this context, we consider the CIC trophy measurement point system as an established and valid bio-indicator now and in the future. What we must do is to eradicate the term "competition" and the "macho" character attributed to the word "trophy" by many people, unfortunately, not only by outsiders... Then economically speaking, why do we not sell "hunting experiences" of various degrees rather than gold, silver or bronze medals? This makes much more sense, as within the philosophy of Ortega y Gasset the issue we are dealing with is the experience of acting as a hunter in a natural environment, and not only the eventual taking of an animal.

In this sense, let us enjoy our hunting and our trophies!

Reprinted by courtesy of CIC

Contact details: Kai Wollscheid, Director General, email: k.wollscheid@cic-wildlife.org web: www.cic-wildlife.org

The International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC) is a unique organization; its members include experienced hunters and professional managers of game and wildlife, who joined forces over 60 years ago. Essentially, this was – and still is – to investigate the problems affecting game all over the world from the tiny snipe to the African elephant

7 News from Africa

South Africa

Geffert Pretorius, a professional hunter from KwaZulu-Natal has appeared in court charged with stealing a white rhino and illegally allowing it to be hunted. Pretorius is alleged to have stolen the white rhino bull from Timothy Rudmann, and New Orleans-based lawyer Eric Skrmetta. Rudmann and Skrmetta bought the rhino at a KZN Wildlife auction and had an arrangement with Pretorius to keep it on his farm. It is alleged that Pretorius attempted to sell it to a neighbour for R150 000, pretending it was his to sell. When this neighbour turned him down, he approached a German doctor who paid him R190 000 to hunt the rhino and export the "trophy" back to Germany. Apart from theft and fraud, Pretorius faces 10 other charges of contravening nature conservation legislation. These relate to his failure to obtain a valid permit to hunt the animal, his failure as a professional hunter to ensure lawful hunting and his failure to obtain licenses, permits and exemptions for his client. Pretorius was granted bail of R5 000 and forced to surrender his passport.

Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe's participation in the tripartite Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park hangs in the balance since cash-strapped country will require an estimated \$2 million to clear land mines planted within the Gonarezhou National Park during the 1970s war.

South Africa

The Limpopo province's Organized Crime Prevention Unit broke up a leopard smuggling syndicate. Ben Mphahlele, head of the provincial Department of Finance and Economic Development, said the exposure of the leopard trading racket was proof that the province would not tolerate the abuse of wildlife species. The syndicate was active in the Vaalwater, Swartwater and Kakamas areas, and it is suspected a number of leopards found their way into the unsavory "canned leopard shooting" scheme. A telephone hotline to report illegal activities at mobile 072 122 9567 was opened.

SADAC

SADC member states have appealed to the European Union, UN Food and Agriculture Organisation and the African Union to support efforts to eradicate foot and mouth disease. The appeal was launched in Gabarone on September 25th. The 14 SADC member states require about \$26 million to tame the disease in a two-phased approach. In the emergency phase the procurement of vaccines and a vaccination program will take priority, while the recovery phase will include medium term surveillance programs. The EU has pledged to release \$4 million and FAO provide technical support.

Gabon/DR Congo

A study by the London Zoological Society in central Africa suggests that what is generally known as bushmeat, threatens wildlife and poor households that depend on it as a source of food and cash income. The society said that the severity of demand for wild game meat was most devastating in tropical Africa, where the unsustainable harvesting of animals had led to a "bushmeat crisis" that threatened many species, including the great apes. The society said its strategy combined species protection and sustainable use approaches

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8 Criteria and Indicators of Sustainable Hunting

A group of Austrian scientists and government officials (Forstner, M., Reimoser, F., Hackl, J. and Heckl, F.) have developed a method to document and to evaluate the sustainability of hunting in Austria. The 80-page illustrated report was originally published in German in 2001 but is now available translated into English as *Criteria and Indicators of Sustainable Hunting* published by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water, Vienna 2003 (download report www.biodiv.at/chm/jagd/english/study).

Process oriented and practical evaluation methods for field application/evaluation through hunters have been developed in consultation with a broad spectrum of stakeholders. The report is a serious and systematic attempt to devise principles, criteria and indicators to enable hunters and government regulatory authorities to cooperatively work out whether a specific hunting regime will be ecologically, socially and economically sustainable.

The newsletter of the IUCN Sustainable Use Specialist Group ("Sustainable" 4th Q 2002/1st Q 2003) praises the Austrian effort "*to attempt such an analysis for hunting throughout a whole country is praiseworthy [and] ... an invaluable starting point [and] a ground-breaking effort and [important] as an intellectual checklist for assessing the sustainability of hunting animals in specific contexts*", although some cautionary remarks regarding methodology are raised. In the Vienna meeting of ESUSG's Wild Species Resources (WISPER) Working Group material from this document was used to see whether principles in line with the IUCN Policy Statement on Sustainable Use of Wild Living Resources could be developed at a European level.

We have studied the report in detail and found a broad common denominator with African hunting and therefore contacted the authors. *Criteria and Indicators of Sustainable Hunting* [in Austria] could form the basis for a something which could eventually be a document titled *Criteria and Indicators of Sustainable Hunting in Africa*. **African Indaba** is in close contact with a number of persons and organizations in Europe and USA in order to develop a working platform. We will keep you informed.

African Indaba Newsletter

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Opinions expressed in African Indaba are not necessarily those of the publishers and editor. Whilst every care is taken in the preparation of this newsletter, we cannot accept any responsibility for errors.

African Indaba eNewsletter is published on a bi-monthly basis as a free service to the sustainable use community. Please share it with others who may be interested in the topics covered by African Indaba. We welcome contributions and would like to remind you that archived copies of African Indaba eNewsletter are available on request.

Subscription requests or article submissions should be sent to: gerhard@muskwa.co.za please include your name, full address, e-mail address and organization

9 African Indaba Book Shelf

“Sustainable Use and Incentive-Driven Conservation: realigning human and conservation interests” by **J.M Hutton and N. Leader-Williams** (Published in *Oryx* April 2003 Vol 37, No 2 and reviewed by Dr. Grahame Webb)

Hutton and Leader-Williams establish that "sustainable use" embodies a concept that has captured the imagination of conservationists around the world. Yet despite clear and practical definitions, for example in Article 2 of the Convention on Biological Diversity, its link to conservation remains controversial. From this starting point, their paper follows two somewhat separate themes.

The first is that regardless of the wisdom associated with being cautious, a good deal of opposition to sustainable use is unwarranted. It reflects a failure to appreciate the context within which conservation, use and sustainability operate in the real world. They imply that if one goes slowly through the logic linking conservation, use and sustainability together, then it all makes common sense. More precise terminology is seen as a way of adding clarity, in the sense that if use of wildlife takes place and can be sustained, then it constitutes sustainable use. If the benefits derived from use ultimately provide incentives to conserve, then this type of conservation should be separated from sustainable use and labeled "incentive-driven conservation". They favor 2 terms, "*sustainable use*" and "*incentive-driven conservation*", to encapsulate what is sometimes stated as "*conservation through sustainable use*".

The second platform is a comprehensive discussion of the subject of wildlife conservation, use and sustainability. It draws on a diversity of current literature and reflects the broad experiences and credentials of the authors. This review of the major issues is highly recommended. It's all here - the importance of the social and cultural variables in wildlife conservation, the appropriate ways to link local people to both conservation and sustainable use, the process through which sustainability can be achieved, the role of incentives to conserve, adaptive management, risk and uncertainty, the precautionary principle, and species versus ecosystem management.

Readers may not be convinced that separating sustainable use and incentive-driven conservation will achieve much, although the distinction has long been recognized. Conservation action at some level is usually required to sustain uses anyway, so they are intimately linked. In the broadest sense of "use", the simplification that conservation is sustainable use has a lot of merit and may be lost with the new insights.

The central problem fuelling controversy about sustainable use still seems to be that wildlife conservation is viewed as a welfare or protection issue by the public. Linking it in any way with "use" - sustainable or not - is thus counterintuitive. How could we conserve wildlife populations by killing and selling them? Has some madness descended on us all? This public impression drives the political machinery that dictates when, how and if wildlife conservation and sustainable use will proceed hand in hand. Changing the terminology may not be enough to assist in public education about why use matters and why it must be sustainable.

Grahame Webb is Director of Wildlife Management International and Adjunct Professor of the Northern Territories University (Source: IUCN SSC Sustainable Use Specialist Group E-newsletter:10/03)

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7 News from Africa

in a mixture that balanced conservation and development needs. It said its scientists had recently developed a computer model of a "virtual bushmeat hunting system, which was being used to develop the best management policies to ensure that the legal trade in bushmeat was sustainable". Using this multifaceted approach will protect species from extinction and poor households from losing a crucial resource.

Namibia

The Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology (DICE) sent 2 Namibians, Simson Uri-khob, Director of Fieldwork for Save the Rhino Trust, and Michael Sibalatani, Chief Control Warden - Etosha National Park, of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism to the UK to study Conservation Biology and Conservation Tourism at the University of Kent. Both are involved in black rhino conservation and will be trained to a Master of Science (MSc) educational level.

Sudan

CIC Tropical Game Commission Chairman Prof. Wouter van Hoven, University of Pretoria, announced a joint venture with several Sudanese environmental agencies, UNDP, the Center for Wildlife Management at the University of Pretoria and the CIC Tropical Game Commission dealing with the drafting of an integrated management plan for the Dinder National Park, with an emphasis on the local communities..

South Africa

6 lions, 4 males and 2 females, were released in the Addo Elephant National Park in early October as part of a project to restore the natural balance of the ecosystems. The lions were caught in the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park and have spent more than a month in Addo holding camps. They were selected from different prides to maximize genetic diversity. The animals have been separated into two groups of one female and two males each and will be released on opposite ends of the park to form two prides. The ratio of males to females was deliberate to minimize the breeding rate. The carrying capacity of Addo for lion is at most around twenty.

Wildlife Health – The AHEAD Program

The AHEAD program (Animal Health for the Environment and Development) was launched at the World Parks Congress to explore the health-related challenges facing conservation and development efforts. Wildlife diseases such as brucellosis and chronic wasting disease (CWD) cause millions of dollars in damage in Canada and the USA. In South Africa, tuberculosis continues to be a management challenge in Kruger National Park. The primary goal for AHEAD organizers is to establish a multidisciplinary model involving both development agencies and environmental organizations combining the traditionally separate fields of conservation and health. For more information contact John Delaney, mobile +27-(0)82-858-3255, Email: jdelaney@wcs.org

South Africa

Fiona McLeod, journalist with the Johannesburg newspaper Mail & Guardian reported on September 30th that conservation officials and the Organized Crime Unit had joined forces to bust a huge smuggling network involved in illicit trade in endangered wildlife. Wildlife trader Riccardo Ghiazza and some of his business associates (amongst them Sandhurst

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10 African Indaba – The way forward

The first 5 issues of **African Indaba** have been produced as SCI African Chapter Newsletter. I initiated this newsletter, researched and wrote the articles, contacted external authors and experts, put the newsletter together with my limited publishing and computer knowledge and sent it by snail and electronic mail. Initially **African Indaba** went to all SCI African Chapter members and to a number of SCI members overseas. But soon enough, considerable interest from the non-hunting conservation NGO community, from government and parastatal nature conservation agencies and from educational institutions was noticeable.

I realized that **African Indaba** could serve as an important link between hunter-conservationists and the non-hunting conservationists from NGOs, research and science, as well as with those people who are charged with the day-to-day management of Africa's wild natural resources. Without having had the intention in the beginning, **African Indaba** grew into something more than just a chapter newsletter.

African Indaba has to choose an evolutionary path in order to reach a broadest possible public with its message of sustainable use of wild natural resources. This issue is the second step of this evolution – you will realize that it is now not anymore the African Chapter Newsletter, but an **e-Newsletter for hunter-conservationists and all people who are interested in the conservation and the sustainable use of Africa's wild natural resources**. I have temporarily taken up the twin-burden as publisher and editor until we have finalized the future format of **African Indaba**.

Let me say so much right now – **African Indaba** will continue to examine the challenges of managing African wildlife as a sustainable resource and the relationship between Africa's game and Africa's people. We will continue to distribute **African Indaba** per email free of charge to all present 3000 subscribers. For obvious cost reasons we unfortunately cannot send printed versions by mail anymore.

I will let you know about the further development in the next issue.

In view of the lion discussion, I would like to urge all hunters to assist the scientific community – especially the **ALWG** and **ALPRU** – in their research and conservation efforts. Please carefully read the article on page 17.

Thank you for your interest in **African Indaba**.

Kind regards
Gerhard R Damm, Editor

“A Game Warden's Report” by Ron Thomson

We erred in the email address in the ordering information for Ron Thomson's newest book in the September issue.

To order Thomson's **“A Game Warden's Report”** please contact **MAGRON PUBLICATIONS, PO Box 733, Hartbeespoort 0216, Tel/Fax: 012-253-0521, email magron@ripplesoft.co.za Price: R340.00** (postage included for South Africa). **Books should be available at the time this African Indaba reaches you**

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7 News from Africa

Safaris) seem to be in the center of the investigation. Sandhurst Safaris is reported to be a main player in the network and has repeatedly been implicated in “canned” shooting in the past. In connection with this case, M&G reported that a Harno van Rensburg from Tolwe in Limpopo, was convicted for illegally capturing three young leopards and was fined R15 000 for the offence, R10 000 of which was suspended for 5 years. Another suspect was arrested in Swartwater/Limpopo end September and has been charged with capturing and keeping endangered wildlife. Shortly after 3 suspects who had arranged deals in Upington were arrested and a 14-month-old leopard was confiscated.

Angola

The Forest Development Institute announced that 3.000 forest guards are needed for a stricter control and protection of Angola's wildlife parks and natural reserves, covering an area of more than 61 000 km² and are now controlled by only 750 guards. The Angolan State, to exert control and protection of its fauna and flora, needs major investment in the sector, the outlining of a national conservation strategy, and the drafting of regulations on the basic environmental law. Training of staff and sensitizing of the population are supplementary measures for the protection of reserves.

South Africa

The director of the Kruger National Park, David Mabunda, has been named as the new CEO of South African National Parks (SANParks), heading the country's 17-strong national park network. He replaces Mavuso Msimang, who has been appointed to run the State Information Technology Agency. Mabunda's nomination was confirmed by the South African cabinet.

Zimbabwe

The state-owned Herald reported in October that the National Parks and Wildlife Management Authority will investigate Zimbabwean safari operators who allegedly assisted foreign hunters in “abusing hunting licenses, a development which has prejudiced the country millions of dollars”. 5 national parks officials have been suspended on grounds of allegedly allowing South African hunters to kill animals not on their permits and to export trophies without clearance, said wildlife authority director Morris Mtsambiwa.

Movement for Democratic Change MP Trudy Stevenson, who raised the matter in Parliament, said it was “wonderful” that action had finally been taken. But the fact that ruling party “big fish ... and their relatives and cronies have been allocated farms in Gwayi Conservancy should indicate that there is a huge scam going on”. Stevenson said that in the conservancy wildlife had been decimated and infrastructure and habitat destroyed.

Mozambique

The north of Mozambique, between Nampula and Pemba, has seen the creation of Kambaco Investments. Shareholders include Adelina Mocumbi (wife of Prime Minister P. Mocumbi), leaders of the former SNASP (secret service), and Spanish investors. Kambaco created an affiliate, Kambaco Safaris, to develop hunting tourism. The Spanish

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7 News from Africa

investors handed the management of Kambaco Safaris to the son of Adelino Serras Pires of the well-known family of Portuguese-Mozambican hunters. (Source: The Indian Ocean Newsletter #1059)

Southern Africa

Weather forecasters warned that the biggest drought disaster in 100 years might be looming for Southern Africa. According to satellite imagery the region is experiencing drought conditions over most of the summer rainfall regions. In 1992 - one of the driest years in recorded history - about 70% of the crops failed, and half the population in the affected areas were at risk of malnutrition, related health problems and even starvation. The SADC Drought Center stated that *"the south-western and eastern parts of the SADC region are likely to receive normal to below-normal rainfall for the period October to December 2003."* Normal conditions are forecast across Southern Africa between January and March 2004, with the possibility of below-normal rainfall in the west between March and June.

South Africa

SANParks will acquire 121 000 ha of land for addition to South Africa's national parks as the single largest proclamation of land since the 1931 establishment of the Kalahari Gemsbok National Park. The additions, totalling R76-million in expenditure, will be made to the Addo Elephant, Agulhas, Bontebok, Cape Peninsula, Karoo, Marekele and Tanqua-Karoo NPs. Since 1995, R193-million has been invested in the acquisition of 300 000 ha, resulting in the establishment of 4 new national parks – the Cape Peninsula, Agulhas, Namaqua and Vembe Dongola – and the expansion of others. 20% of the funds for the establishment and expansion of NPs came from government, 25% from donors and 55% from SANParks' conservation efforts.

Zimbabwe

The proposed eradication of buffalo from all areas outside National Parks will have significant impacts on the Great Limpopo TFCA since it is currently being promoted as a fusion of state land, community-based wildlife management and commercial game-ranching areas. The eradication program would contradict the TFCA principles, and would drastically reduce Zimbabwe's potential to benefit, if some separation has to be made between National Parks and surrounding areas within the TFCA in order to restrict buffalo movements. The cost-benefit aspects of the operation (the capture of a single buffalo would typically cost around US\$250, excl. transport cost). With over 4,800 buffalo that require translocation, the direct logistical costs would amount to more than US\$1.2 million. Buffalo are a critical component of the "Big 5" and it is not possible to sell up-market tourism without this species and the inclusion of a buffalo trophy in a typical hunting safari the doubles the price (+/- US\$ 8000 additional in foreign exchange). Apart from the economic implications on consumptive and non-consumptive use options, there are various less obvious ones, such as the fact that without buffalo as their prey base, lions that are living outside National Parks will increasingly prey on livestock, giving rise to serious problems of human-animal conflict especially in Communal Lands. **African Indaba** will keep you updated.

Tanzania

A Tanzanian government official stated that Tanzania will apply for CITES approval to sell either part or total of its stock of 90 tons of ivory kept in the famous "Ivory Room" at Dar-es-Salaam's airport road. Minister Zaika Meghji informed the Tanzanian parliament of these plans. Prior to any sales, the next Conference of Parties of CITES, which will convene towards end 2004 in Bangkok, will have to give its approval.

In addition to the 90 tons in the Ivory Room, an unknown quantity of ivory is kept in decentralized locations with the district administrations of the Wildlife Department. All that ivory originates from elephants which either died a natural death, have been killed in the crop protection program, or have been either found with poachers or have been confiscated from smugglers. Tanzania does not have any culling program for its more than 100 000 elephants, of which 60 000 live in the famous Selous Game Reserve.

11 Sustainable Hunting at the World Parks Congress in Durban

Participants of Session 6 "Hunting and Fishing" are concerned that the Congress does not recognize the importance of appropriate forms of wildlife utilization to generate revenue for conservation. Instead overemphasis is placed on non-sustainable external funding. Thanks to an initiative of the **International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC)**, represented in Durban with CIC Director General Kai Wollscheid and CIC Expert Dr Rolf Baldus, these concerns resulted in immediate action, with a small group drafting a so-called "Emerging Issue" to point out the role of hunting in sustainable financing of protected areas and rural development. The FAO (Food & Agriculture Organization of the UN) regarded this initiative very important and provided its full support to the following final document which was adopted by the plenary and will appear in the official Congress proceedings:

Emerging Issue on Sustainable Hunting

We bring the following *Emerging Issue*, which is fully supported by the FAO, to the attention of the Congress.

Sustainable hunting and fishing (including trophy- and subsistence hunting) and other wildlife uses contribute to biodiversity conservation by:

- Providing finance for the management of protected and non-protected natural areas
- Generating income and benefits for local communities and landowners
- Creating strong incentives to manage and conserve wildlife and its habitats
- Offering indigenous people economic opportunities, whilst retaining rights, knowledge systems and traditions

Therefore IUCN should identify best practices of sustainable hunting and fishing and assist in their dissemination and implementation.

African Indaba commends CIC for having initiated this important initiative.

12 Namibia - Philosophy on hunting and wildlife

By Kai Uwe Denker, Safari Operator in Namibia

I feel that ours is a very special country. Scientists say that the Somali Arid Zone from the horn of Africa and the South West Arid Zone of South Western Africa were once connected. This is said to be proven, amongst others, by the fact that a species like the Dik-Dik, which originates from the horn of Africa, occurs in an isolated population in the South-west Arid Zone.

The old British Big game hunters, who set standards in many ways were very enthusiastic about the Somali Arid Zone and their beloved Somaliland and remote northern Kenya. These parts were said to be country for the real hunter who could appreciate something special. And the Somali Arid Zone, with species like Gerenuk, lesser Kudu and Grevy's Zebra, has very special game animals indeed. Yet the South-western counterpart of the Somali Arid Zone never was considered a really great hunting destination. Amongst international big game hunters Namibia is considered second rate. And we ourselves are responsible for Namibia's reputation of being a country just for the beginner. We seem not to be aware what a uniquely beautiful country we possess. We seem not to be aware of what grandeur Namibia's North-western regions with its desert elephant and black rhinoceros, of what singular beauty and vastness the Namib Desert and the Escarpment Mountains are. We seem to be unaware of the breathtaking scenery of Namibia's southern regions.

I don't want to speak about the Greater Kudu again. But it seems that many of us are not aware what unique species we possess in the gemsbok, the springbok and the Hartmann's zebra. And as we seem to be unaware of all this – out of a feeling of inferiority – we try to emulate and copy other African countries. We try to offer attractive species. We offer waterbuck, blesbok, black wildebeest, sable and nyala. And thereby we spoil the unique flair of our country and we frighten away the real hunters, because they want to hunt these species where they belong. And there really is no need to offer many different species. Quality always is more important than quantity and our country offers all that quality if we are just aware of the hidden beauty and uniqueness of Namibia.

Some time ago I read in a hunting magazine the statement of a PH from southern Namibia, who claimed that southern Namibia has become more attractive to trophy hunters, because 11 species were introduced into an area, where formerly only springbok and gemsbok did occur. This really hurt me!

You must know that hunting springbok amongst the far horizons of southern Namibia is a soul-quenching experience to me. I know a huge, unfenced farm in the Great Namaqualand of southern Namibia. Every year I do some springbok hunting down there myself. Although I have done it for many years now, I return soul enriched time and again. The freedom of those vast horizons is absolutely unique. And although the midday sun is of murdering intensity, the morning air is of special crispness and the silence of late afternoon with its soft colours is simply appeasing. It is very difficult to describe the humble feeling of loneliness when stepping over a vast empty plain and hearing the "chicke – week" call of Namaqua Sandgrouse flying overhead on their way to some

remote little desert spring.

To bag an old male springbok in these coverless wastes, is one of the finest things hunting has to offer. When I see the springbok open its "pronk" for the last time just after death, I am struck with affection every time. And the strange smell that exudes from within that backfold is like a heavy desert perfume. I treat this place like a secret, but every year I take some clients, who can appreciate something special, to Great Namaqualand. And all of them agree to have seen a unique hunting area. Perhaps we should concentrate on the real thing and ask higher prices for it, instead of offering some kitsch!

I also know several PH's from the central or northern regions, who speed down southwards with two clients and return after a day or two with three or four Springbok shot, and thereby are able to offer more species. Certainly most of us are well organized and effective, but this is not what hunting is about. A hunt is not a thing to be hurried and an animal species is not something to be ticked off.

Every year I receive with a letter by some game dealer in which I am addressed as "Meneer, die Wildboer". Please do not understand me wrongly, but I almost feel insulted by this. I am not a wildboer, I am a hunter. And a hunter is a relict from a time when man was still living in harmony with nature, when man was part of nature. It was a time, when man treated his environment with respect. To me a wild animal is not a thing to be managed and handled and radio-collars hung around its neck. We don't own these animals. They are magnificent creatures, which should be left alone and admired in their secret ways.

I sometimes wonder, whether we make such a poor show against the anti-hunters, because so few pure hunters are left. If I have to be placed in any other category apart from being a hunter, than that would be a conservationist – nothing else.

A hunter is a relict from a time when man was still living in harmony with nature. We have strong arguments when we purely argue the case of the hunter. There is a marked swing back towards nature. Peter Steyn once said that it almost seems as if man wishes to return to stir the ashes of the primordial fire in his heart. In a hunters heart this fire is still alive. We should make people aware of this fact.

I have once hunted buffalo in the cloud forest on Longido Mountain, on the border between Tanzania and Kenya. On one day I came up with the buffalo very late in the evening on the very peak of the mountain and was forced to spend the night there. I have spent many an uncomfortable night without a blanket in the open. That night on the misty, windswept mountain rim was miserable beyond words. But when I got up just before sunrise the next morning, I had a sight, which surpassed everything I have seen.

In the coolness of the night, the misty clouds had dropped perhaps a hundred meters below where I was standing and covered the world into all directions. Apart from the narrow ridge on which I was standing, only the distant peaks of Kilimanjaro and Mt Meru were visible above the clouds. In the first light of sunrise, the distant mountain peaks were turned purple and the clouds into soft colours of pink with bluish ripples. Although I had not yet shaken off the miserable chill of the night, I no longer felt anything of it. It appeared like the first morning after the creation of the world.

That is, apart from the excitement of the chase itself, the main reason why I hunt. It allows me to get away from the

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12 Namibia – Philosophy on hunting and wildlife

idiotic hurry of this world. It allows me, to return to the primordial fire in my heart. And that is what hunting is all about.

A PH should not be judged by the number of species he has to offer. We have nothing to offer in nature. It is not us who make this world turn. But since man was no longer happy to be a simple hunter and has started to manage and manipulate everything, we ruin this world. A hunter should step humbly and silently through nature. And if a PH is able to stir the ashes of the primordial fire in the heart of his client without shooting anything, than that is a good PH.

13 Did you know ...

... that trophy hunting of cheetah is a significant conservation tool.... A programmatic permit policy which recognizes controlled trophy hunting as a conservation tool for the Namibian cheetah is long overdue ... The IUCN Cat Specialist Group's Cat Action Plan recognized that finding incentives for landowners to conserve populations of big cats outside protected areas is one of the most important challenges facing the conservation community. ... If trophy hunting can be demonstrated to be biologically sustainable and the program is well managed to enhance population conservation, then it is deserving of support as a conservation tool. **(Kristin Nowell, IUCN Cat Specialist Group)**

... that by providing strong economic reasons for the conservation of wildlife species and natural habitats, trophy hunting is the primary justification for setting aside over half of the land which is currently used for wildlife conservation and utilization in Africa. ... It is irresponsible to oppose hunting without suggesting alternative mechanisms that are at least as effective in increasing the economic value of wildlife. **(IUCN Occasional Paper No. 21, p. 19)**

... that trophy hunting operators and safari hunting organizations collectively make an enormous contribution to wildlife conservation in many parts of Africa, e.g., they are in the front line of the war against poachers throughout much of Central Africa. Without the efforts of these people and organizations, wildlife populations would be in a much worse state than they are. There is no doubt ... that sustainable trophy hunting, monitored and controlled by well thought-out, comprehensive and effectively implemented regulations, will be a prime justification of and vital element in successful long-term conservation of antelope populations in Africa. **(IUCN Occasional Paper No. 21, p. 11)**

... that the development of effective, sustainable wildlife conservation in many parts of Africa may depend on programmatic implementation of approaches such as ... sustainable utilization through carefully regulated trophy and/or meat hunting, community-based wildlife management and/or involvement of the private sector. ... In Africa's current and foreseeable socioeconomic climate, realization of the potential economic value of wildlife will be essential if conservation is to be widely successful in the long term. This will include ... consumptive uses such as trophy hunting. ... The private sector may play an increasingly important role in the conservation of many antelopes, as in several Southern African countries at present **(IUCN Occ. Paper No. 21, p. 351)**

14 Project Black Ghost - The Quest for the last West African Black Rhino

By Campbell Scott

The Western Black rhino (*D.b.longipes*) was considered extinct by the late 80's when Dr Hubert Planton brought evidence that some 60 individuals still remained free ranging in Northern Cameroon. The international community was formally informed of the situation between 1989 and 1992 (San Diego rhino conference, 1991, and African Rhino Specialist Group (AfRSG), 1992). The subspecies was recognized at the 1996 Cincinnati rhino conservation meeting by the WWF, IUCN and its affiliate the African Rhino Specialist Group (AfRSG) and is presently on the IUCN's Red list as critically endangered. The population over the last two decades has been reduced, by poaching from a few hundred individuals to its present population estimates of less than 10 individuals scattered over a 25 000 sq. km area. There are four subspecies of black rhino in Africa, *D.b.longipes*, represents the most genetically distant and thus most important population of the species *Diceros bicornis* the black rhino. There are no known captive individuals in zoos or parks anywhere in the world today, and thus emphasizing the importance in conserving the last remaining population.

After several detailed action plans in the last decade little progress has been made for the long-term protection of these animals. The last major effort was a location and identification project conducted by the WWF in collaboration with the IUCN/AfRSG and other NGO's in 2001, over 40 signs and tracks of these rhino where logged using a GPS in Northern Cameroon, but no sightings were confirmed although sightings where and are still being reported.

Controversially past efforts have failed to establish the viability of a minimum founder population as a result the IUCN and the WWF can no longer support efforts in Cameroon as conservation funding is limited in general and there are only so many projects they can justify perusing. Operation Black Ghost is a private initiative that is recognized by all the major rhino conservation organizations including the Cameroon Wildlife department, and Conservation Force. We are mainly focused on raising funds through the international hunting community, as this is the only sustainable revenue generating activity in and around the know rhino areas in Northern Cameroon.

Dr Hubert Planton, a wildlife veterinarian who has spent over 12 years in Northern Cameroon working with wildlife and the local communities heads up Operation Black Ghost. He is a member of the AfRSG and is recognized as the world authority on these rhino. The short-term objective of Operation Black Ghost is to scientifically verify the population, in other words to gain knowledge of the population in order to implement a sound conservation strategy that will ensure their long-term survival of this population. Some of the important questions needing answers are as follows: the actual size of the population, the numbers by age and sex classes, the home range for each individual found, and the relationship between

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15 Lion conservation and lion hunting

By Ron Thomson

Editor's note: Ron Thomson's new book "A Game Warden's Report" was already discussed in the last African Indaba. For ordering details go to page 10 of this issue. The lion discussion, which has taken headlines in international media and which we report about in this edition of African Indaba, would not be complete without the views of Ron Thomson. Thomson's theories about the causes of a possible decline of lion in Botswana make compelling reading and will certainly provoke a dialogue. This article was first published in "The African Sporting Gazette" and we are grateful to having received permission to reprint Thomson's article in connection with our coverage of the African lion. You can contact African Sporting Gazette at subs@africansportinggazette.co.za

The annual hunters' conventions were held, as usual, in the United States of America in January/February 2001. Amongst those who attended were professional hunters and hunting outfitters from Botswana who participated in order to sell their government-approved lion-hunting quotas for the year. After the conventions the Botswana hunters returned home to find that their government had, precipitously, placed an indefinite moratorium on lion hunting in the country and all the booked lion hunts had to be cancelled.

The reason the government gave for the moratorium was that many people in the game-viewing tourist industry had voiced concern that Botswana's lion population was in serious decline - and they blamed this state of affairs on various over-hunting practices. The moratorium was a *coup de main* achieved by Botswana's anti-hunters. The scales were tipped by an overseas animal rights NGO - who claimed to be specialists in lion "conservation" - lobbied for the cessation of lion hunting amongst the country's political elite.

A major thrust of the anti-lion-hunters' argument was that many Botswana citizens, who lived and farmed outside the boundaries of the protected wildlife areas, were poisoning and shooting large numbers of lions in protection of their domestic stock. Another was the alleged over-killing of pride males by the safari industry. The purpose of the moratorium, the government said, was to assess the validity of all the claims that had been made and, if the lion population was indeed declining, to determine the reasons why. Today, two and a half years later, the moratorium remains in place and nothing seems to have been accomplished with regards to even initiating an investigation.

This action caused a huge rift between the hunters and the non-hunting game-viewing tourism. What few people realized was that, behind the scenes, many anti-hunting animal rightist NGOs were pulling the strings. Emotions, for many months, ran high. Nobody sat down to calmly and coldly evaluate the ecological facts of the matter and/or to think through what this whole debate was about. The Botswana government had fallen into the trap set for it by the growing army of foreign-based animal rights activists whose NGOs now proliferate in Africa's post colonial capitals and who are trying to control the direction of official wildlife management programs everywhere.

It is important, therefore, that we examine the facts per-

taining to lion ecology and to reveal the truth about what is going on in Botswana - and what is happening in many similar wildlife situations across the length and breadth of the continent.

African lions are prolific breeders. Females breed at age 30 months. They have 2 to 5 cubs at a time. If food is plentiful, and if the prides are of the right size for the prey they normally kill, at least 50% of the cubs survive. The cubs are independent at age 20 - 22 months, at which time the young males, and often the young females, too, are evicted from their parental prides. They then become nomads - or vagrants - and they wander the countryside looking for a home range of their own.

In established game reserves that support a lion population, available lion home ranges and lion territories are always dynamically full to capacity. This means that as the young nomads move about the sanctuary they cannot find a place to settle down. They are being forced to scavenge for their meals, or to kill and eat where and when they can, before being forced to move on. There is a wanderer's life, therefore, that exists only on the outskirts of, or in between, where the established prides are living. It is a hard life that is full of conflicts and many nomads are killed and eaten by other lions or by hyenas.

If a vacant home range is found - such as might occur, for example, when a new bore-holed game water supply is commissioned - the young nomads will settle down. A new territorial pride will then become established. Few nomads, however, ever become fixed into any kind of permanent home range. Home ranges are places where animals satisfy their "living needs" - or "survival needs". They provide the animals with air, water, food and shelter (security). Home ranges become fixtures in an adult animal's life out of which the occupier rarely ventures. To do so is to invite a stranger to occupy the vacancy - and to invite conflict with the lions living in the strange places into which the wanderer ventures. Home ranges are not easy to secure in a saturated habitat so they are important finds for nomadic lions.

Territories, on the other hand, are concerned with breeding. Territories are "owned" by fully mature males - which gather around themselves units of breeding females. Territories are defended by the big males - which chase off other male lions that might want to intrude. A young male lion's home range will become his territory if he survives into full adulthood. Sometimes two males or more will hold down a territory. When this happens it is most likely they are brothers that grew up as nomads together. In all such cases one male is always dominant.

Much has been surmised about what happens when the dominant male of a pride is killed. It is said that this event is followed by a period of turmoil in the pride and that, when a new male takes over, he kills all the cubs that were sired by his predecessor. That this happens there is no doubt. That it is a regular and normal behaviour pattern, however, nobody knows. A cold-blooded review of this cub-killing behaviour suggests that even if the phenomenon is the order of the day it probably has little impact on the fortunes of the population as a whole. This is because cubs sired by the newcomer will replace those he has killed within a few months.

Author's Note: All the individuals of a lion population need

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15 Lion conservation and lion hunting

to do, to render their population "stable", is that they replace themselves once within their own life-time. And lionesses remain fecund for a dozen year and more after they reach maturity! A great deal of natural mortality, therefore, occurs within normal lion populations.

The killing of cubs by large male nomads also takes place - which probably happens more frequently than most people realize. I watched just such an event unfold in Hwange some years ago. Three male nomads one day entered the territory of two large males near the game reserve's Main Camp headquarters. The big males were absent - hunting nearby - at the time, so the nomads challenged the two lionesses of the pride one of which had four not-so-small cubs. A battle royal ensued, the end result of which was that all four cubs were killed, which the nomads then ate. Sometimes, however, the nomads are cornered by the big territorial males - and killed - whereupon they are often eaten by *their* killers. This, too, might happen more frequently than most people think.

Nomads are lions-in-waiting that are always hanging around the fringes of permanent lion society ready to take advantage of any vacancy situations that might occur. They are always being hounded by the resident territorial animals and are really surplus to the permanent population. These nomads are the lions that oft times venture over the game reserve boundaries and predate on domestic animals. The lions that the cattlemen of Botswana destroyed in protection of their stock, therefore, were "surplus" animals and their destruction did not really affect the resident lion population in the nearby game reserve at all.

Author's Note: It has recently become fashionable for people who are concerned about lion "conservation" to fund the capture of nomadic stock-killing lions and return them to the nearby game reserves from whence they came. This practice does nothing for lion "conservation". It just adds extra stress to the more important resident lions that live permanently within the game reserve boundaries.

Male lions reach their prime between the ages of 5 and 7 years. They can hold a dominant position in lion society only until they are about 12. Females conceive for the first time before they are 3 and, thereafter, will continue to produce cubs every two years until they are about 15. Immediately following the loss of their cubs - for whatever reason - lionesses come into heat again, and four months later produce their next litter. Lions, therefore, are fecund and quick-maturing animals that have a huge propensity for increasing their numbers rapidly when conditions are right. This being the case it is not difficult to understand why most game reserve lion populations are "at capacity" most of the time. Furthermore, when a pride-male is killed - for whatever reason - there are normally many surplus nomad males to take its place.

When lion society is thus understood, we can reason that if Botswana's lions were really in decline, the killing of nomadic stock-killing lions by farmers cannot be the cause. The possibility that hunters on safari may be killing too many mature males in the resident prides then becomes a much more obvious "other" reason for the population decline. And that is what the anti-hunters are promoting. When we examine

the current ecological circumstances of Botswana's game reserves in their very broad dimensions, however, a much more probable cause becomes manifest.

In any game reserve the overall sustainable animal biomass (the combined weight of all the animals) is determined by the soil-type and its fertility, the species composition of the vegetation, and the average annual rainfall. The nature of the vegetation, taken together with its physical environment, determines the diversity of habitat-mix that occurs - and that determines the number of different animal *species* the game reserve can support. A game reserve can only produce a certain mass of grass and a certain mass of browse every year. And this finite food supply can sustainably support only a certain number (or biomass) of those different species of animals that eat grass and those that eat browse. Furthermore, the different animal species that eat either grass or browse compete with each other for these limited food resources all the time.

The respective numbers of each animal species, however, are restricted not just by the availability of food. Their numbers are determined also by the size of the particular habitats to which each species is especially adapted and by certain species-specific intra-population behavioural traits. So the equation is fairly complicated. Nevertheless, anyone who makes even the most superficial assessment of the current ecological circumstances of Botswana's game reserves will very quickly find out that the ecosystems are dominated, throughout, by a hugely excessive elephant population. I believe that Botswana's elephants exceeded the carrying capacity of their habitats in or about 1960 - when there were only about 7 500 elephants in the country. The current number is in excess of 140 000. This means the habitats are 1 750 percent overstocked with elephants - and the elephant population is still growing. It is, in fact, doubling its numbers every ten years.

Elephants are preferential grazers. That means they prefer to eat grass when it is green and palatable and nutritious. During the summer rains elephants eat grass in preference to woody vegetation. This means that during the wet season elephants are very serious food competitors for grazing animals such as buffalo, zebra, waterbuck, wildebeest, hartebeest and tsessebe, and by the end of the rains, given the huge numbers of elephants present in Botswana, there is then not much grazing left. During the dry season elephants readily and completely shift their attentions to woody plants - ignoring whatever dry grass then exists. This means that, during the cold winter and hot early summer period, elephants become serious food competitors of the browsing animals. The elephants' ability to completely switch their diet - from grass to woody plants - combined with their huge size, makes them uniquely adapted to totally out-compete any and all other herbivores.

The fact that the elephant population in Botswana has exceeded the carrying capacity of its habitat now for more than 40 years means that drastic changes have occurred to the original habitats. Species of plants have been eliminated in the principal habitat types and they have totally changed in character. So great has much of this change been that many sensitive animal species that have very special habitat requirements have also disappeared. This process of local extinction of both plant and animal species is still in progress.

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15 Lion conservation and lion hunting

A few species - like impala (which are also grazer/browsers) - have benefited from the changed habitats and numbers have increased. These animals have now joined the elephants as serious competitors for all available food. And as the habitats have changed, and as the numbers and biomasses of plant species in the habitats have been reduced or eliminated by the elephants (and impala), so the volume of plant food produced by the habitats each year has consistently declined.

What has happened in Botswana over the past years? The numbers of elephants have increased and - because the elephants eat most of the limited and constantly declining grass and browse produced each year - the numbers of the other herbivore species (grazers and browsers) have declined correspondingly. And these "other" herbivores represent the food base for the country's lion population! A reduction in grass and browse must reduce the numbers of the animals that depend upon these herbivorous foods to survive, so must the numbers of lions decline, too, when their prey-food base is similarly reduced.

Within this ecological circle ups and downs will occur. The constantly changing circumstances wrought by too many elephants may for a time, or from time to time, enhance the survival chances of animals like lions. Lions will benefit, for example, when, at the height of each dry season, young herbivores die of starvation. Food for the lions is then plentiful. But as their living food base becomes generally more diminished each year so the ability of the prey animals to maintain a sustainable large lion population declines correspondingly.

My own evaluation of the purported decline in the Botswana lion population - if it is true - therefore, is that the hugely expanded elephant population has much more to do with that decline than potential over-hunting by the safari industry. And if a decline in the lion population is not currently happening, it will happen sooner or later as the ecological syndrome I have outlined above. I have a gut feeling that Botswana's lion population has indeed declined in recent years. I say this because all the ecological indications have been manifest for decades. I sincerely believe that the ecological factors created by the fact of there being too many elephants in the country, is the principal and real reason why this has happened.

The best way to help the lions of Botswana recover their former numbers, therefore, is to drastically reduce the country's grossly excessive elephant population. Achieving and maintaining, by a system of pro-active management, a state of ecological stability between what is left of the elephant population after it has been seriously reduced by management, and the habitats that support it, will also save the country's overall bio-diversity which, currently, is taking a pounding.

What I am absolutely sure about is that prohibiting the "sustainable" trophy hunting of lions - no matter how low may be their numbers - will not help the lions to recover their former population numbers under the circumstances I have here described.

Paradoxically, the very people who called for the lion-hunting moratorium to be put in place in Botswana are exactly the same people who oppose the culling of elephants!

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14 Operation Black Ghost – The Quest for ...

these individuals.

In recent years new scientific methods have been developed that allow us to now do this passively, through spoor recognition and DNA analysis of the mucus layer surrounding fresh dung it is now possible to extract information about these individuals in a similar fashion to how forensic detectives build a profile of a crime scene. Using these methods only fresh signs of these animals are needed rather than the actual animal themselves. Past expeditions have failed as these rhino are dispersed over such a large area and move up to 50km a day so getting to within sight of these animals requires a large amount of time and effort, but now with these alternative methods it is possible to build a profile of this population by merely analysing where they have been.

Operation Black Ghost was initiated in 2002 after the WWF's project was dropped. Early this year we travelled to Cameroon sponsored by Conservation Force, the Dallas Safari Club, and Houston Safari Club and with help and support from SCI. In this trip it was possible to meet with all the key players in this conservation effort as well as to direct our focus towards obtaining an affordable solution to take this project to the next level. The Western Black Rhino is arguably the most endangered large terrestrial animal on earth, the Chinese tiger although also highly endangered itself it is often reported as being the most endangered subspecies on earth but there population estimates are as high as 30 in the wild while as many as 60 survive in captivity. No captive Western Black Rhino survive in captivity while population estimates put the last remaining wild population at between 8 and 15 individuals.

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The Basis for Hunting is Conservation

- Hunters harvest species which permit sustainable use
- Hunters strive for wildlife and habitat equilibrium
- Hunters accept responsibility for non-game animals
- Hunters are actively engaged in the conservation and the protection of species

Hunters Observe a Code of Ethics

- Hunters respect the rules of fair chase
- Hunters respect and obey all laws
- Hunters set high ethical parameters and strive for excellence in the field
- Hunters ensure humane wildlife harvesting practices
- Hunters constantly hone their skills

Hunters & Hunting Project a Positive Image

- Hunters are reliable and competent partners to the public and conservation organizations
- Hunters respect the needs and requirements of others for enjoyment of nature
- Hunters cooperate with indigenous communities supporting their right to the sustainable use of nature
- Hunters inform the public and the media of their objectives, about problems, solutions and achievements

16 African Lion – What the hunter can do!

African Indaba Vol. 1 # 3 carried an article by HO de Waal, African Large Predator Research Unit (ALPRU), University of the Free State, South Africa with the title “Measuring large African predators”. ALPRU’s objective is the establishment of a continent wide database for the African Lion and professional hunters and outfitters (as well as visiting hunters) were asked to contribute a little time and effort towards the establishment of this database. In Vol. 1 # 2 we also published information about the field work and models of Karyl Whitman and Petri Viljoen with regard to sustainable safari hunting of the African lion.

This issue of **African Indaba** is taking up the topic once again – and the reasons are obvious. You just have to read the article “**Another debate – this time the African lion**” on page two. Notwithstanding the fact that Professor David Macdonald may have quoted some wrong figures on BBC and on the WildCRU website, the hunting community must show goodwill and cooperative spirit in lion conservation. Last not least, we still want our sons and daughters to experience the thrill of a genuine African lion safari during the next decades. In times where public opinion is easily swayed, and where emotions of a generally under-informed or miss-informed public may turn against any form of hunting, hunters must proactively show their commitment to conservation and sustainable use!

With a view to CITES CoP 13 (Conference of Parties) in 2004, hunters must be aware of the distinct possibility that the African range nations may face immense pressure for up-listing the African lion to Appendix 1. What that means for hunting trophy lion can easily be imagined; but what it means for the rural communities who live with and next to the free-ranging lion is somewhat more difficult to fathom out. It will essentially mean that the lion will lose most of its economic value to these rural people and the cost of having lion in the vicinity will increase manifold. Their economic equation will balance even less than before. The result? Lion will be prosecuted and killed; relentlessly and mercilessly – by any means available. What does that mean to the African lion? Outside of formally protected areas, the lion will be seen as vermin without economic value, even with a very negative economic value! It will meet its destiny and disappear from these areas!

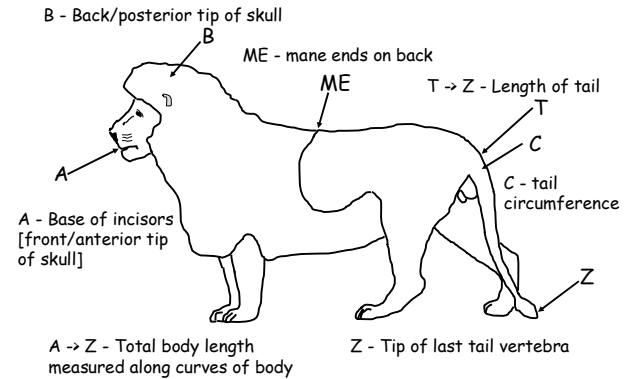
Neither we as hunters nor any scientists conducting research on lion want that outcome. And I believe firmly, neither do the rural communities in Africa. So what can we do?

The scientists must make sure that the public is receiving factual and unbiased information – and in cases where the media do not fulfil their role as unbiased communicators, the African Lion Working Group is commended for its recent publication, “**African Lion Database**” and supported in its efforts as a watchdog and as a source of factual information.

The hunters in turn also have to shoulder their responsibility. It makes no sense for hunters to bury their heads in the sand and pretend to wait for the storm to pass. For this storm – if not fought with facts and scientific principles in time – will not pass. If we do not secure the continued existence of a viable African lion population, the economic future of many a

Picture 1: Body Measurements

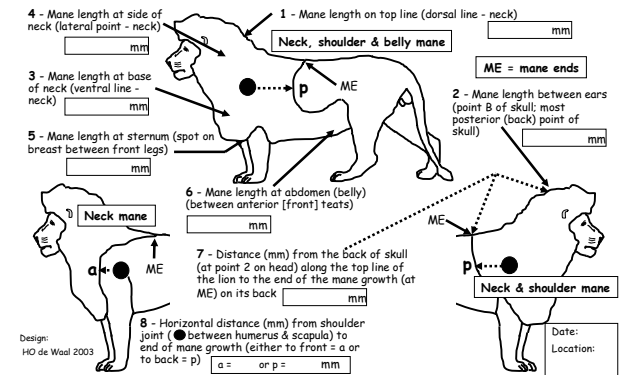
ALPRU Procedure 1c - measuring the length of the body and tail of African lions (*Panthera leo*)



Picture 2: Mane Assessment

ALPRU Procedure 2b - measuring the mane of African lions (*Panthera leo*)

Mane length is measured at 6 defined positions (1-6). It is measured as the average length of a tuft of mane hairs, comprising a group of several individual hairs held closely next to a ruler (if no mane is present at a location, indicate with an X in the appropriate block). The extent of mane development is measured at defined positions 7 & 8.



Enlarge these pictures by cutting and pasting them on new word documents and then clicking a corner to enlarge or contact ALPRU on Tel: +27 (0)51 4012210, Fax: +27 (0)51 4012608, Mobile: + 27-(0)834065998, E-mail: dewaalho@sci.uovs.ac.za for a full set of originals

safari operator will also hang in balance and hunters around the world will lose the possibility of hunting lion in Africa.

All hunters must join forces – visiting sport hunters, professional hunters and outfitters – in order to show a serious commitment towards the conservation and sustainable use of lion. I therefore commend the **International Foundation for the Conservation of Wildlife (IGF)** and its director, Dr Philippe Chardonnet, who together with his colleagues and John Jackson’s **Conservation Force** brought out the book “Conservation of the African Lion – Contribution to a Status Survey” (details see page 5, this issue). But we certainly need more work and commitment at grassroots level – all visiting hunters and most of all, all professional hunters and hunting outfitters have to join in.

In some quarters, there is a growing concern that trophy quality of African lions is declining. It is therefore the obliga-

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16 African Lion – What the hunter can do

tion of the hunter to co-operate in collecting reliable data of trophy quality, area, habitat and prey availability which can be evaluated and integrated into game management plans. Hunting can only be sustainable if it involves an ongoing process of adaptive management of the natural resource. The hunter is a key element in this process and must not shy away from this responsibility.

This is where ALPRU fits in. In February 2002 ALPRU started a database on the body mass and dimensions of large African predators. Standardized procedures to measure specimens and record data collected from dead or immobilized large African predators were developed. The procedures proposed by ALPRU will assist professional hunters to measure all variables on all hunted large predators. Similarly scientists will collect data on immobilised animals across the continent. Samples of mane and body measuring instructions are shown in sketches on page 17 of this **African Indaba**.

There is a simple rationale for the professional hunter and outfitter to join in such a continent wide effort to establish a meaningful database (other than the mere “record book entry” – see Dieter Schramm’s remarks about “world records” on page 4, this issue) and sustainable hunting quotas: It will give an economic incentive to rural communities to tolerate lion on their land, it will ensure the presence of viable lion populations on non-formally protected land, it will provide mature trophy lion for the visiting hunter and it will guarantee the economic future of safari companies!

During discussions amongst experts it became evident that techniques to capture and record morphometric data from hunted animals in Africa are either non-specific, inadequate or non-existent. As a result valuable data as substantiation of sustainable use of wildlife, especially large African predators, and as contribution to conservation efforts are lost to science.

At the first glance it may seem that the measuring of large animals is difficult. For that reason, or because it is simply not regarded as necessary or a priority by professional hunters or visiting hunters, very few authenticated measurements are available to science.

In my article “Another debate – this time the African Lion” I have criticized recent alarmist media reports, but I also called for cooperation between science and the hunting community. I challenge ALL HUNTERS – PROFESSIONALS, LOCAL AND VISITING – to recognize not only their obligations towards the age-old traditions of hunting but also for the needs of scientific conservation activities. Join the ALPRU effort and contribute the data of the game you hunt to the benefit of science, conservation and sustainable use.

In case of the African lion the procedure is less than difficult – it just needs a bit of time. To sacrifice that time must be in the interest of all genuine hunters! With this issue of **African Indaba** you receive the ALPRU Field Data Sheet as separate mail to record variables of the hunted lion as well as other relevant information. The ALPRU Field Data Sheet has been developed to universally suit all large African predators and has been tested successfully with several species by ALPRU – so you may also want to use it for leopard, etc.

In addition, ALPRU has designed graphic presentations to assist the operator in the field with the task of measuring the

animal. A complete set of these instructions is available from **African Indaba** or directly from ALPRU.

I see that you are of goodwill and ready to cooperate with ALPRU – but how do you weigh a big lion in the field? It is actually quite simple – Dr Brian Bertram already used this method in 1975:

“I carried six lengths of angle iron and four wooden planks 30 cm wide; all were 120 cm long, and so fitted conveniently into a small vehicle. These components could be bolted together in 4 min to produce a platform roughly 120 cm by 200 cm. This was placed close to the back of lion, which was then rolled over onto it and pushed to the centre of the platform. A set of low flat bathroom scales was placed underneath each end. With the platform with the lion then balanced on the two sets of scales, the reading of each scale was taken; their sum, minus the weight of the platform, gave the weight of the lion. With this system, it was possible to weigh a lion of 200 kg alone and without assistance, and with a minimum of disturbance. A slightly larger platform with four sets of scales would enable one to weigh considerably heavier animals.”

It should not be too difficult for a safari operator to perform these chores – last not least the hunted lion is normally brought back to camp, were all the utensils for weighing and measuring (and the time to do a proper job) are available.

Biological samples can be collected with a simple procedure, since ALPRU only require hair samples for DNA analysis to accompany the physical data set. The hair is plucked between thumb and forefinger from the skin at the base of the tail. The hair must still contain its follicles (roots attached). The hair sample is placed in a paper envelope; the envelope is inserted in a small plastic bag or a pill box to keep it dry and stored in a cool place or refrigerator. Clearly mark the container with the corresponding identifying information from the ALPRU Field Data Sheet. Once ALPRU has been informed about the number of hair samples, the necessary arrangements and quarantine procedures for export/import of pathology specimens will be issued. Better still, be prepared and contact ALPRU timely in advance for more details before the 2004 hunting season starts.

Any conscientious safari outfitters and professional hunters gain another two advantages by participating in the scheme – the bath room scales can be used in the hunters’ tents to show how much weight is lost on a strenuous African safari, and the visiting hunter is being supplied with hitherto unknown detailed statistics of the trophy and an ALPRU certificate recognizing the hunter and the outfitter will be issued.

Please cooperate in this important issue – it is your action now which will determine the success of scientific conservation efforts. Your action will contribute towards maintaining viable African lion populations and continued lion hunting. For more information or discussion on how you may cooperate contact either Gerhard Damm gerhard@muskwa.co.za or ALPRU (Prof HO de Waal) at fax +27-51-401-2608; email ALPRU@sci.uovs.ac.za or ALWG (Sarel van der Merwe) mwnatura@mweb.co.za.

IMPORTANT NOTE: PDF files of the ALPRU Field Data Sheet and A4 size instructive photos/sketches for measuring will be provided by email on request. All data submitted to ALPRU will be treated with the utmost discretion.