



# AFRICAN INDABA

DEDICATED TO THE PEOPLE  
AND WILDLIFE OF AFRICA  
Sponsored by the CIC



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

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## HUNTING IS CONSERVATION – BRUSSELS 2016

Editorial by Bernard Lozé, President of the CIC



The thoughts and prayers of the members of the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation were with the families who lost loved ones and with the many who suffered wounds during the terrorist bombings in Brussels on March 22nd, 2016. These tragic events and other recent terrorist attacks in France, Syria, Iraq, Pakistan and Turkey unite all people of good will to support the authorities of the civilized nations around the world in their relentless fight against the terrorist scourge.

Our 63<sup>rd</sup> CIC General Assembly in the heart of Europe honors the victims of the tragic events and serves as a show of strong support for our Belgian hosts.

I extend my warm and heartfelt welcome to our members, distinguished guests and hunters from around the world.

Hunters have historically been the vanguards of wildlife protection and conservation in Europe, Africa, North America, and indeed around the world. Hunters were at the forefront in the creation of most wildlife protection areas and the developing of wildlife laws.

Yet hunting is currently the subject of intense but often ill-informed debate. Those opposing hunting often intentionally conflate legal hunting, poaching and wildlife crime likely to obfuscate people than enlighten them. Anti-use activists used this obfuscation to induce airlines to ban or severely restrict the carriage of legal hunting trophies. Anti-use activists infuse misinformation in their moves at various levels to end or limit hunting, and use it in public smear campaigns of prominent hunters. A group of Members of the European Parliament recently called for the signing of a declaration to ban import of trophies into the European Union.

The honorable MEPs who campaign for signing this declaration apparently did not have access to or chose to ignore significant information and facts about hunting. Did these anti-hunting parliamentarians ever ask themselves as to what inspires people to support conservation?

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

A 2015 study by researchers at Cornell University<sup>1</sup> published in the Journal of Wildlife Management provides an answer: bird watching and hunting. The contributions of individuals who identified as both bird watchers and hunters were on average about eight times more likely than non-recreationists to engage in conservation. Those who practiced only bird watching were on average five times, and those who practiced solely hunting, four times more likely to engage in conservation. Both bird watchers and hunters were more likely than non-recreationists to enhance land for wildlife, donate to conservation organizations, and advocate for wildlife – all actions that significantly impact conservation success desired by a vast global majority.

In the CIC we have a strong component of members who engage in the conservation of migratory birds – and this engagement is certainly not limited to birds which can be hunted<sup>2</sup>. Our work encompasses all migratory bird species along the aeon-old flyways in the Americas, Eurasia and Africa – and beyond. The CIC has a permanent representative in the [Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds \(AEWA\)](#). We [work closely](#) with the [World Organization on Animal Health \(OIE\)](#), for example in combatting Avian influenza. Just recently the CIC co-sponsored a motion to prevent electrocution and collision impacts of power infrastructure on birds – with 14 other conservation organizations – to be presented at the World Conservation Congress in Hawai'i.

Show me the hunter who doesn't marvel at the majestic flight of a Lammergeyer over the highlands of Central Asia whilst hunting the wild sheep and goats. Show me the hunter who does not enjoy the sparkling dive of a kingfisher into the Zambezi River whilst taking a rest under the shadows of mighty Camelthorn trees after an exhausting morning on the track of a bull elephant. Show me the

<sup>1</sup> ["Are wildlife recreationists conservationists? Linking hunting, birdwatching, and pro-environmental behavior"](#) Cooper C., Larson L., Dayer A., Stedman R. and Decker D. The Journal of Wildlife Management Volume 79, Issue 3, pages 446–457, April 2015.

<sup>2</sup> See *"Working together for migratory birds and people across Africa and Eurasia"* in this issue

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hunter who is not looking towards the skies in awe whenever the trumpeting calls and distinctive flight patterns of migrating cranes catch the ear and eye!

The respected magazine Science Daily said on its website that the findings of the Cornell University study could assuage concerns about diminishing support for conservation in the United States and its historic ties (both socially and economically) to hunting. One take-home message is apparent from the study: The more time we spend in nature, the more likely we are to protect it.

Hunters spend a lot of time in nature – the connectivity with nature, with the regional fauna and flora, but also with fauna and flora of distant lands, is the basis of their passion.

Throughout Europe landowners – communal, state or private – work hand in hand with hunters to preserve or restore habitats; to protect or create living space for wild creatures. Hunters and anglers led the revolution to save wildlife on the North American continent and remain today its most stalwart legion of support; they cooperate with wildlife managers and biologists from federal and state agencies. Hunters and anglers provide most of the wildlife management funding through an intricate excise tax system, hunting licenses and huge private donations channeled through hunting clubs. In southern Africa tourism and trophy hunting are reliable conservation funding sources.

In contrast, the no-hunting model – as practiced for example in Kenya and India, exhibits low performance, since in both countries large wildlife species are in decline. Statistical evidence proves that the no-hunting model is not self-sustaining. Tourism revenues cover only half of the wildlife management cost in these two countries and the balance has to be shouldered by the governments respectively the tax-payer or international donors<sup>3</sup>.

In most of Africa, and Asia the worst threats to habitat and wildlife conservation are rural poverty and lack of knowledge. People, who live in poverty, as many rural Asians and Africans do, care little for wildlife aesthetics. This applies especially to those making a living from their livestock. They cannot afford to lose stock to predators; neither can they afford the competition for grazing associated with large numbers of wild ungulates. They have little in common, if anything at all, with the romantic views of nature of northern hemisphere city dwellers turned anti-use activists.

Rural peoples throughout the two continents have often been relocated, dispossessed of land, or restricted in its use or in the use of wildlife on the land. This limits or eradicates traditional income sources. The real solution to address multi-dimensional poverty is village-based tenure and/or private rights to forests, fish, wildlife coupled with a requirement for democratic process.

The high value of many wild resources gives us a broad range of tools for successful incentive-driven conservation. Science-based programs will make conservation in Africa and Asia – and over large parts of South and Central America – finally independent of the emotional approach and neo-colonial pressure tactics from northern hemisphere protectionists and their conditional funding.

I am the first to admit that weak governance, corruption, lack of transparency, excessive quotas, illegal activities, poor monitoring and other problems plague hunting in a number of regions. The CIC and its partners are active on this front too. We are in constant dialogue with our partner hunting clubs, professional hunting associations, wildlife researchers and managers, and importantly, with the governments of range states, to eradicate unacceptable practices. The European Sustainable Hunting Initiative for Birds was the result of an [agreement](#) between BirdLife International and our partner FACE (Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation of the EU). The [European Charter on Hunting and Biodiversity](#) was achieved with important inputs of the CIC. At present we are cooperating with a number of governments on the development of similar frame works for Africa and Asia. In its work the CIC relies not only on inputs from hunters – our organization counts amongst its

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<sup>3</sup> “Comparison of national wildlife management strategies: What works where, and why?” 2013. Pack S., Golden R. & Walker A., [Heinz Center for Science Economics and Environment](#). Washington DC.

leaders as well as amongst its rank and file a good number of non-hunting wildlife experts, scientists and university professors who help the CIC with constructive advice and expertise to take the right decisions.

When hunting – especially trophy hunting - produces a good financial return from a few hunted animals, it allows wildlife populations to be manipulated according to ecological rather than financial needs. This distinction is extremely important.

Prince William made a highly publicized reference to this recently (see the article of Drs. Knight and Emslie, both from the IUCN African Rhino Specialist Group, in this issue of African Indaba).

Good conservation does not stagnate; it produces surpluses – and on finite lands surplus should be used for the good of the people who live with wildlife. Hunting programs are therefore a means to an end. Within these programs animals are harvested at a reasonable rate, not only maintaining trophies quality within healthy populations, but maintaining the populations to which these animals belong and most importantly ensuring that the land will be kept for wildlife. When conservation of animals becomes valuable to people living nearby, those animals are assured respect and their habitat will be protected.

You may have heard it often – but let me point out a salient fact once again: Habitat loss and degradation are the primary drivers of declines in wildlife populations. The disappearance of natural habitat is the principal cause of biological diversity loss at every level – ecosystem, species and genes, all of them. Yet, demographic change of the human population is accelerating and corresponding demands for land for development are increasing fast. They are exacerbating tremendous pressure on wildlife. This is most noticeably in biodiversity-rich parts of the globe.

The need for viable conservation incentives becomes more urgent than ever. Well-regulated sustainable hunting has played, and is playing now and in future, an important role in this conservation game – at local level in front of your house door, or in foreign lands which you visit as a hunting tourist.

Well managed trophy hunting takes place in many parts of the world can and does generate critically needed incentives and revenue for governments, private and community landowners to maintain and restore wild lands and wildlife and to carry out multi-layered conservation actions and anti-poaching interventions. It can return much needed income, jobs, and other important economic and social benefits to indigenous and local communities in places where these benefits are often scarce.

In many parts of the world indigenous and local communities have freely chosen to use trophy hunting as a strategy for conservation of their wildlife and to improve sustainable livelihoods. Look to the Inuit in the Arctic, the community conservancy movement in Namibia, the village conservancies in Tajikistan and Pakistan, and many other shining examples around the world.

Hunting is Conservation – this is what inspires and drives us as members of the CIC and unites us with all hunters and conservationists around the world. Our debates in Brussels will demonstrate our commitment in the pursuit of excellence in hunting!

**Yours in Conservation and Hunting!**

***Bernard Lozé***

**President of the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation**

## PRINCE WILLIAM IS TALKING SENSE – TROPHY HUNTING IS CRUCIAL TO CONSERVATION

Richard Emslie<sup>4</sup>, Michael Knight<sup>5</sup> (first published at [Independent.co.uk](http://Independent.co.uk))

Well done, Prince William. He is talking sense. As hard as it is to comprehend that killing animals can be integral to their survival, the fact remains: without trophy hunting, many of Africa's iconic species would be worse off.

In South Africa and Namibia hunting has played a role in the significant expansion of wildlife outside Parks. Limited hunting has been credited with helping to encourage the increase in southern white rhino range and numbers.

When hunting started in 1968 there were only 1,800, but today there are over 19,230 white rhino in South Africa and Namibia which annually hunt small numbers of white and black rhino, and which currently conserve 94.4% of the species. A third of white rhinos in South Africa are now conserved on private and community land outside state parks. Numbers of black rhino have also increased by 52% in these two countries (up to 3,840) since the approval of small annual hunting quotas.



The reasons for this are manifold. Healthy game populations, tourism spectacles and lodges don't just fall out of the sky at no cost. Hunting can help generate the cash flow to help pay for protection, growing game numbers and building tourism infrastructure. Hunters also venture to the remotest areas or ones without spectacular scenery. Here closely regulated, ethical hunting can provide livelihoods and a good revenue stream – and importantly an incentive to maintain wildlife – for people living outside the tourism trail. In other words, hunting gives wildlife value for those who live in it. By contrast wildlife numbers outside parks have declined in Kenya since it banned hunting.

A South African private reserve, which can't be named for security reasons, provides an illustrative case study. Like many reserves, it receives no government grant and its conservation efforts have to be self-funded. This reserve has been a conservation success story with strong growth in numbers of many species over the years including white rhino and elephant. Hunting of small numbers of big game has been absolutely integral to its success by contributing the most towards funding its conservation efforts. From 2000-2010, limited big game hunting contributed over three times more income than tourism to fund protection and conservation efforts.

The reserve has a policy that all proceeds from rhino hunting must be spent on rhino conservation. For example, the killing of two old white rhino in 2012 paid for 49% of a \$377,000 high

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<sup>4</sup> Richard Emslie serves as Scientific Officer of the IUCN SSC African Rhino Specialist Group. At the IUCN meeting in February 2012 in Abu Dhabi, Richard received the Harry Messel Award for Conservation Leadership.

<sup>5</sup> Mike Knight is Head of Planning & Development of South African National Parks. He has extensive experience in large mammal ecology and ecophysiology, park development and animal re-introductions. He has also worked in a number of African countries and serves as Chairman of the IUCN SSC African Rhino Specialist Group.

tech security fence upgrade along a vulnerable border. Now, when there is a breach, anti-poaching units are alerted and rapidly deployed greatly enhancing the security of rhinos in the reserve.

As the numbers who practice trophy hunting are so small, its environmental impact is actually very low compared to ecotourism, which attracts a much greater volume of people. With minimum impact and maximum revenues, it must be welcomed by those who are serious about conserving Africa's wildlife.

Provided it is correctly regulated and conservationists are strategic about animals selected for hunts, hunting itself can directly stimulate population growth. If, for example, a dominant male is infertile, his death can allow more bulls to move in and impregnate females in the area.

Hunting isn't, however, without its problems. Often the hunting industry could do better at policing what is going on and there are unethical practices that need to be stopped such as canned hunting. In 2010 and 2011 there was also an increase in numbers of "pseudo-hunters" from Vietnam who sought white rhino hunting permits in South Africa with the intention of obtaining and exporting rhino horn to illegal markets in South East Asia. Hunting applications peaked in 2011(231), but following law changes in 2012 the problem has mostly been dealt with, and applications have returned to normal levels. In 2015, 62 white rhino and only 1 black rhino were hunted in the whole of South Africa representing less than a third of a percent of total rhino numbers in the country.

A few individuals legally hunted each year is a small price to pay for the transformative benefits that trophy hunting brings. The public may recoil at pictures of rich white men beaming beside the corpses of felled rhinos and lions. These reactions are understandable. But the welfare of entire communities and ecosystems surely trumps any queasiness grounded in sentimentality.



#### VISIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE HUNTING

Research on the impact of hunting on biodiversity has shown that hunting can be a force for good in conserving biodiversity. There is evidence that hunting can achieve goals for biodiversity because of the conservation focus many hunting systems have.

Read more [HERE](#)



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## PRO-HUNT CAMPAIGNING

Gerhard R Damm, President CIC Applied Science Division and Publisher of African Indaba

When an anti-hunting crusade or anti-sustainable use message spreads across the web, many ordinary folks feel compelled to post their support on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and so on within minutes. They may feel that they will be noticed if they don't show empathy with the animals; that they don't appear as nature lovers. In many cases they fall for cleverly made-up stories which touch hearts and emotions. The nature of the social media prevents many users taking time to evaluate facts, background, context and consequences. A compassionate urban public seems to accept complex issues at simplified headline value, especially if the anyhow scant information is manipulated by skilled media artists into easily digestible and emotion-touching denominators; complex problems are reduced to 140 character tweets. The story of Cecil is a case in point!

On the other side the millions of hunters apparently are too complacent to support pro hunt drives or engage in countering anti-hunting messages. Probably they also don't want to be noticed; they may fear potential smear attacks or other niceties from the opposition. Hunters also apparently expect the good news to be delivered by their associations and clubs, complain if they get bad news, or just simply put their head into the sand, saying "I still can hunt, so why rock the boat!"

This must change! Hunters have the better arguments and scientific evidence on their side!

In an article in New York Times I recently read that the omnipresence of social media has created a new sort of shame culture. The author said that *"in a guilt culture you know you are good or bad by what your conscience feels. In a shame culture you know you are good or bad by what your community says about you, by whether it honors or excludes you. In a guilt culture people sometimes feel they do bad things; in a shame culture social exclusion makes people feel they are bad."*

The article explained that the world of social media is a world of constant display and observation. The desire to be embraced and praised by the community is intense. People dread being exiled and condemned. In this environment, moral life is not built on the continuum of right and wrong; it's built on the continuum of inclusion and exclusion. In traditional shame cultures the opposite of shame was honor or "face" — being known as a dignified and upstanding citizen. In the new shame culture, the opposite of shame is celebrity — to be attention-grabbing and aggressively unique on some media platform.

Until now hunters did not actively fight this "new sort of moral system" that the anti-use spin doctors propagate; we did not aggressively dispute their unfounded claim to moral authority and their definitions of correct and incorrect action or behavior. Hunters rarely appear in public podium discussions and talk shows to showcase their superior conservation results in the field!

I submit that we need to debate with our adversaries publicly, often and consistently. We also need to include into these debates more representatives of indigenous people who have freely chosen trophy hunting as their conservation model.

The millions of individual hunters should actively engage anti-hunting activists. Hunters should disseminate on all networks the indisputable facts underpinning good conservation! Disseminating factual information wide and far can counter the emotionally-loaded anti-use propaganda. Talk to your neighbors, friends, and colleagues, whenever there is an opportunity!

We need to use all personal and social networks available – create campaigns and petitions, and show presence on discussion forums! Only if we show the world the hard facts, figures and science of conservation in an understandable form will we be able to reach the hearts and minds of people of good will. Well-meaning people, who rightfully care about and advocate for wildlife, need to have access to factual and science based information and have a right to know how real conversation works

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in the remote and not so remote regions of the world. These good people are – just as the hunters – concerned with the environment; they care for wildlife and nature.

The fact that hunting involves the killing of animals may be unsettling to many non-hunters and nature lovers. One doesn't have to like hunting, but even if hunting doesn't coincide with somebody's own beliefs such individual aversion does not imply that hunting is amoral. Therefore it is essential that hunters use every opportunity to conclusively explain the differences between conservation and preservation and show that good conservation produces surpluses and that surpluses produced by nature can and need to be harvested.

Ultimately, we need to reverse the present "hunters vs. non-hunters" situation, since both groups care for and love wild places and wildlife. Shane Mahoney, known to most readers from his columns in African Indaba and other publications, advocates this cooperation. "Hunters need to take the lead in a broad-based conservation coalition, ... and once again welcome all those who care for wildlife, helping them to understand hunting or to accept its contribution, even while they remain less than totally comfortable about it", he said.

Mahoney also repeatedly said that hunters need to evaluate their actions in the field and from this individual insight discover and establish their own personal True North; their individual vision of an ultimate good like Fair Chase standards and respectable sustainable hunting practices worth defending even at the cost of unpopularity and exclusion! Importantly, hunters have to internalize all the good arguments for their daily dialogue with non-hunters.

If we don't go out and argue facts and figures with a strong knowledge and with conviction; if we don't passionately fight for what we believe in, we will lose the war. We need to constantly involve non-hunters in public debates! Hunters have the better arguments! Hunters care deeply for wildlife and wild spaces. This unites us with most of the non-hunters.

## **THE HUNTING DEBATE: HUNTERS CONSERVE WILDLIFE**

**Wednesday, May 4, 2016 6:45-8:30 PM**

The debate is organized by Intelligence Squared U.S. (IQ<sup>2</sup>US), a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization, founded in 2006 to restore civility, reasoned analysis, and constructive public discourse to today's often biased media landscape. The debate is part of the nationally syndicated radio program Intelligence Squared and will be aired on 200 public radio stations as well as webcast and podcast. The Hunting Debate will be moderated by John Donvan Author & Correspondent for ABC News and will pit the proponents of the Motion **Hunters Conserve Wildlife** (Antony Licata, Editor-in-Chief, Field & Stream and Catherine Semcer, COO, Humanitarian Operations Protecting Elephants) against two of the most vocal opponents of hunting (Wayne Pacelle, CEO & President, Humane Society of the United States and Adam Roberts, CEO, Born Free USA).

**MAKE SURE YOU CAST YOUR VOTE PRIOR TO THE DEBATE AT**

**<http://intelligencesquaredus.org/debates/upcoming-debates/item/1496-hunters-conserve-wildlife/1496-hunters-conserve-wildlife?tab=2&limitstart=0>**

**Vote and show that hunter care for and conserve wildlife**

This is the very reason that I recommend that hunters from around the world vote on the motions of the debate in New York City (4<sup>th</sup> May 2016) between two very eminent representatives of our hunting community and two of our most vocal opponents – HSUS president Wayne Pacelle and Borne Free CEO Adam Roberts. The high stake of this live debate is the public perception of hunters and of our actions (see box on this page).

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Teddy Roosevelt once said “*People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care*” – the founder of the National parks movement in the United States and the great conservationist Roosevelt knew that hunters do care for wild landscapes and biodiversity. He was a passionate hunter all his life!

**It is up to us to prove to the world that hunters care for wild landscapes and wildlife!**



## EUROPEAN SUSTAINABLE USE GROUP ESUG

<http://esug.sycl.net/links.aspx>

The name European Sustainable Use Group is a proud reflection of its origin. [ESUG](#) is governed by its members, who delegate responsibility between general meetings to an elected Chairperson, currently Prof Robert Kenward of the UK, and elected Committee, currently Dr Tetiana Gardashuk (Ukraine), Mrs Despina Symons (Belgium), Dr Zenon Tederko (Poland), Prof Mari Ivask (Estonia), Dr Julie Ewald (UK), and Ms Jennifer Ailloud (France); Robin Sharp CB is Chair Emeritus. The Group has a part time Secretariat c/o EBCD, Rue de la Science 10, 1000-Brussels. ESUG works through [projects](#) to produce knowledge tools for conservation through sustainable use of biodiversity, either as policy documents and instruments for governments, or software tools, including web-portals, to distribute knowledge.

Currently there are 87 individual expert members of ESUG from 33 European countries. A majority are also members of IUCN thematic groups for either the [Sustainable Use and Livelihoods \(SULi\) Specialist Group](#) of IUCN and the thematic group for [Sustainable Use and Management of Ecosystems \(SUME\)](#).

The IUCN European Sustainable Use Group publishes links to several useful reports on their [webpage](#). These articles, papers and videos are also very valuable to put some perspective into the polarized discussions between the pro-use and anti-use camps and should be of special interest to the Members of the European Parliament who drafted and signed the [Declaration against Trophy Hunting](#). Below you can find a list of relevant publications. Click on the link to access the article.

### Newspaper Articles

- [Jon Hutton on CITES in 1997 remains just as relevant today](#)
- [Ivo Vegter on Africa's hunting policies](#)
- [Community rights for forest management in Liberia – thanks to Norway](#)
- [Simon Jenkins, economics column in The Guardian, talks sense on Cecil](#)
- [Brian Child on rhinos](#)
- [Hawaii: Who would kill a Monk Seal?](#)
- [Alaska: Why would anyone want to shoot a Sea Otter?](#)

### Scientific Papers

- [Namibian conservancy income from hunting complements tourism](#)
- [Hutton & Leader-Williams: Sustainable Use and Incentive-driven Conservation](#)
- [Kenward et al. Identifying governance strategies that effectively support ecosystem services, resource sustainability, and biodiversity](#)

### Reports

- [Dan Challender on Trophy Hunting in European Parliament 24 Feb 2016](#)
- [Robert Kenward Report for Hunting in Protected Areas](#)

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## Video

- [Brian Child explains differences between SU & Animal Rights](#)

[**Editor's Note:** Although the two articles “Who would kill a monk seal” (The New York Times, May 2013) and “Why would anyone want to shoot a sea otter” (The Guardian, March 2015) do not have any direct connection to Africa they make fascinating reading. Both articles are eye-openers! I also recommend the rather old article by Jon Hutton on CITES – it has not lost any relevance indeed – especially in the year of the 17<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties of CITES in Johannesburg!]

## AN ANTI-HUNTING IDEOLOGUE ON A FLIGHT OF FANCY

Ivo Vegter

**A recent editorial [in The Daily Maverick] by a constitutional law professor, David Bilchitz, makes the false claim that “rhino hunting is not compatible with conservation”. This is an extremist position, supported by absurd philosophical sophistry but contradicted by the empirical evidence.**

Calling for the protection of a species, while advocating its sustainable use as a resource, involves a contradiction, [in the mind of David Bilchitz](#), professor at the University of Johannesburg and director of the South African Institute for Advanced Constitutional, Public, Human Rights and International Law. “Rhino hunting is not compatible with conservation,” he states unequivocally. He finds it “hard to see how one can promote conservation of a broad, abstract concept such as a species without respecting the individuals who comprise it.”

One can only assume he has never worked on a game farm or in a nature reserve. His view is strictly one of moral idealism: he finds it distasteful that animals appear to have no legal standing beyond the extent to which they are useful to people.

About South Africa’s policy that permits trophy hunting, he writes: “There is an extremely close link between legal hunting and poaching, which the minister is unwilling to acknowledge,” and adds: “Conservation, for the minister, is only about ensuring there will be rhinos in the future that we can exploit.”

There is indeed a close link between legal hunting and poaching, and the survival of rhinos as a species seems like an admirable policy goal to me. However, the correlation between hunting and poaching runs in the opposite direction to what Bilchitz would have us believe. Legal hunting reduces the incentives for poaching, and increases the incentives to protect animals from poachers. The same is true for Bilchitz’s difficulty in reconciling legal hunting and conservation. It might be plausible to make an argument that conservation of a particular species does not *require* hunting, but it goes against all empirical evidence to suggest that hunting and conservation are incompatible and contradictory.

Bilchitz’s argument is entirely premised on the emotive view that animals ought to have rights that ought to be protected. He offers no factual support for his view, at all.

This stands in stark contrast to the evidence presented in [Saving African Rhinos: A Market Success Story](#), a case study conducted by environmental economist Michael t’Sas-Rolfes. It is an easy read and deserves to be read in full, but in essence it makes the case that the recovery of rhino populations, and particularly the white rhino – from a low of 20 individuals to 20,000 today – is a direct consequence of a change in the law in 1991 that permitted private game ownership and trophy hunting.

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Writes t'Sas-Rolfes: "Despite clear evidence that strong property rights and market incentives constitute the most sensible model for rhino conservation in Africa, many international conservationists and policymakers do not recognize this. Through institutions such as CITES, they continue to pursue a command-and-control approach that depends on regulations or bans to restrict wildlife use. This approach now threatens to undermine the success achieved thus far, as the extraordinarily high black market price for rhino horn has fueled a new poaching drive."

One of the few cases to which CITES points as success stories, the Peruvian relative of the llama known as the vicuña was saved from extinction not by a trade ban, but by trade. The turning point came when ownership of the animals was transferred into the private hands of the community and commercial exploitation of the species was permitted. Tanya Jacobson, a rhino conservation campaigner, drew [a parallel between vicuña and rhino](#) in a paper she wrote a few years ago.

About the same time, a proposal was floated to prohibit the hunting of [three species of antelope in Texas](#), all of which were extinct in the wild in their native Africa. The irony of the matter was that thanks to American sport hunters, the populations of two addax, nine dama gazelle, and 32 oryx in the 1970s grew to thriving herds of 5,000 addax, 800 dama and 11,000 oryx, roaming large Texan ranches.

The investigative television show *60 Minutes* examined the question of whether [hunting can save endangered species](#). You're welcome to hear all sides of the argument and come to your own conclusions, but it seems clear to me that without hunting revenue, these animals would simply have no home, and certainly not in such numbers.

Another case study that confirms the benefits of hunting can be found in the [Bubye River Conservancy](#) in Zimbabwe. Once an industrial-scale cattle ranch, one of the largest in Africa, it raised beef until the late 1980s. Like in South Africa, legislation that established private ownership of game in Zimbabwe made it commercially viable to return this vast reserve to its former glory and re-establish wildlife there.

Without the prospect of much ecotourism, venison and sport hunting were the only sustainable sources of revenue to fund the conservancy's animal translocations, electric fencing, and anti-poaching efforts. Today, after one of the largest rewilding projects ever in Africa, what was once a vast, dusty cattle ranch hosts thriving populations of 35 species of big game, including all of the Big Five.

In the aftermath of the outrage over the shooting of Cecil the lion in Zimbabwe, Rosie Cooney, chair of the IUCN's Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy, [wrote](#): "Bans on trophy hunting in Tanzania (1973-78), Kenya (1977) and Zambia (2000-03) accelerated a rapid loss of wildlife due to the removal of incentives for conservation. Early anecdotal reports suggest this may already be happening in Botswana, which banned all hunting last year."

These case studies all prove that Bilchitz's central thesis, that conservation and hunting cannot be reconciled, is pure casuistry. In lay terms, it's bullshit. In fact, the opposite is true: hunting bans do not contribute to the conservation of species, and are often correlated with long-term decline in game numbers because of poaching.

Can conservation be done without hunting? In some areas, probably yes. If a region is attractive, safe and famous enough to sustain photographic ecotourism, there may be no need for hunting, even if poaching remains a threat and game management requires culling. But not all of nature is conveniently photogenic, and local populations also have claims on the land on which they live, including to the use of the plant and animal resources the land provides. In many regions, sustainable use that extends to hunting – both for meat and for sport – is the only way to square the cost of conservation with people's material needs. The alternative is simply more land under cattle or the plough, and less nature conservation.

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The [academic paper](#) on which Bilchitz's piece is based, presented at the Harvard Conference on Animals and the Constitution, provides no more empirical evidence than his editorial. It is limited to abstruse legal and philosophical verbosity about animal rights, a subject not addressed in South Africa's constitution or environmental law, and engaging in an "interpretive exercise" to make it seem otherwise.

Bilchitz begins by quoting former president Thabo Mbeki's famous "I am an African" speech: "...I have wondered whether I should concede equal citizenship of our country to the leopard and the lion, the elephant and the springbok, the hyena, the black mamba and the pestilential mosquito." Bilchitz adds: "Indeed, far-sightingly (sic), he suggests the conferral of equal citizenship upon nonhuman animals, a suggestion that has only recently been defended strongly in the academic literature."

Perhaps that is because you could only get away with such philosophical absurdity in academic literature. In fact, Mbeki's last example gives the lie to the entire notion of animal rights as equal to human rights. Certainly, it is reasonable to protect animals from cruelty and needless harm, but if you're going to extend "equal citizenship" even to a malaria-bearing mosquito, you're saying you do not value human life. It would make veganism mandatory by law, make pet ownership unlawful, and ensure that experimental new medicines can only ever be tested in human subjects. If the mosquito would get such protection, why not extend the same rights to the malaria-causing Plasmodium parasites themselves?

Bilchitz neatly dodges the problem of farming and animal husbandry, too. One must assume, given his views, that he is either a vegetarian or a massive hypocrite. However, if you're going to make a sweeping argument that animals have a constitutional right to "dignity, equality and freedom", as Bilchitz does, you might want at least to touch on the inconvenient fact that this would also apply to cattle, sheep, chickens and fish.

That Bilchitz can hang an entire paper about ethics on this notion is testament to how far removed from reality academics can be. Why anyone would rely on such a naïve flight of fancy to formulate public policy is beyond me, and government is quite right to ignore his silly idealism.

It is unfortunate that while this country could use experts to defend the constitutional rights of its people, Bilchitz chooses to devote his taxpayer-funded time to the absurd idea of elevating animals to equality with humans and granting them human constitutional rights. His philosophical reasons for claiming that hunting and conservation cannot co-exist are no more than intellectual masturbation, and the claim itself is simply wrong.

First published by [The Daily Maverick](#) on March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016

## **CULLING TO CONSERVE: A HARD TRUTH FOR LION CONSERVATION**

**Michael Schwartz**

**People that don't live in Africa tend to learn about wildlife conservation in easy-to-understand terminology. But safeguarding animal species like lions is often more complex than mainstream media sound bites would have their audiences believe.**

The *National Post* recently [reported that management from Zimbabwe's Bubye Valley Conservancy was considering a controversial move to cull upwards of 200 lions](#) out of a rough population of 500 in order to ensure the reserve's wildlife biodiversity.

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It was also reported that since the growing calls to end trophy hunting, due in large part to the [killing of Cecil the lion](#) in Zimbabwe's Hwange National Park last year, conservancies like Buby Valley are no longer seeing the funding necessary to adequately cover conservation costs, which includes fence maintenance, financing local schools and health clinics, and providing meat to local people.

Given the many challenges conservationists face in Africa, coupled with culling and trophy hunting being such contentious issues, I decided to reach out to Dr. Byron du Preez, a Buby Valley Conservancy project leader and member of the [Wildlife Conservation Research Unit \(WildCRU\)](#), in the Department of Zoology at Oxford University.

Specifically, I was hoping for clearer answers regarding the potential paradox that increasing calls for hunting bans in Africa have on existing lion populations, and how that may be playing out within the recent culling conundrum. Fortunately, Du Preez went one step further by clearing up what was initially reported, clarifying the proposed cull, explaining how culling works, and elaborating on the dangers of promoting single species management. The following is his official statement:

**Clarification on the Proposed Lion Cull:** I am an independent scientist working on the [Buby Valley Conservancy](#), focused on lion ecology, which actually means just about every aspect of the ecosystem, such is the influence that lions have. I am neither pro- nor anti-hunting. I simply focus on practical conservation solutions that actually work in the real world.

We are hopeful that we will be able to translocate some lions, although all previous attempts to translocate lions out of the Buby Valley Conservancy have been derailed by factors entirely out of our control. However, if the species was in as much trouble as the sensationalist reports like to focus on, one would think that it would be a lot easier to find new homes for these magnificent animals than it actually is. *'There is basically no more space left in Africa for a new viable population of lions.'* The fact remains that habitat destruction is their biggest enemy, and there is basically no more space left in Africa for a new viable population of lions.

**The Science of Culling:** A cull is not a once-off fix (neither is translocation, nor contraception), but would be more of an ongoing management operation conducted on an annual basis. When given adequate space, resources, and protection, lion populations can explode, such as they have done on the Buby Valley Conservancy.

Reducing numbers to alleviate overpopulation pressure does nothing to permanently solve the problem, nor halts the species' breeding potential; [it] only slows it down for a relatively short time until their population growth returns to the exponential phase once again.

Culling is a management tool that may be used for many species. That includes: elephants, lions, kangaroos, and deer, basically animals that have very little natural control mechanisms other than disease and starvation, and that are now bounded by human settlements and live in smaller areas than they did historically.

As responsible wildlife managers who have a whole ecosystem full of animals to conserve (not just lions), we have therefore discussed culling as an option for controlling the lion population, but have agreed that, for now, this is not necessary just yet and we will continue to try and translocate these animals until our hand is forced.

As already mentioned, there is very little space left in Africa that can have lions but doesn't already. Also, where lions do occur, especially in parks and private wildlife areas, they often exist at higher densities than they ever did historically.

This is mainly due to augmented surface water supply resulting in greater numbers of non-migratory prey that now no longer limit lion nutrition and energy availability, allowing the lion population to rapidly expand.

For example, successful hunting to feed cubs all the way through to adulthood and independence is one of the greatest stresses for a lion, and often results in dead cubs and reduced

population growth. In turn, a high density of lions can severely reduce the density of their prey, ultimately leading to the death of the lions via disease and starvation—far more horrific than humane culling operations conducted by professionals.

**The Dangers of Single Species Management:** Lions are the apex predator wherever they occur, and as such exert a level of top-down control on the rest of the ecosystem. Lions prey on a wide variety of species, and we are starting to see declines in even the more common and robust prey such as zebra and wildebeest—not to mention the more sensitive species such as sable, kudu, nyala, warthog, and even buffalo and giraffe.

Apart from their prey, lions are aggressively competitive and will go out of their way to kill any leopard, cheetah, wild dog, or hyena that they encounter, and have caused major declines in these species, not just on the Bulyebe Valley Conservancy, but elsewhere in Africa where lion densities are high. According to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), cheetah are listed as vulnerable, and wild dogs are endangered.

It is easy to simply focus on the number of lions remaining in Africa that has fallen steeply over the last century from ~100,000 to ~20,000 today, but which is directly linked to the reduction in available habitat.

Simply focusing on increasing the abundance of one species at the cost of another cannot be considered a conservation success—assuming that holistic conservation for the benefit of the entire ecosystem is the end goal—no matter how iconic that species is.

Luckily, lions kill lions, resulting in more lion mortality than any other species—including man on the Bulyebe Valley Conservancy—and in an ideal world the lion population would level off at a putative carrying capacity where lions control their own numbers (deaths from conflict equal or exceed new births). However, it is possible and probable (man-made water points increase the carrying capacity of — and therefore also the competition and conflict between — all wildlife species) that this would still be at the cost of certain other sensitive species.

Ecosystem stability is related to size (and conversely ecosystem sensitivity is inversely related to size) and smaller areas need to control their lion numbers a lot more carefully than large areas such as the Bulyebe Valley Conservancy, which is over 3,000 square kilometres [1,160 square miles]. In fact, small reserves in South Africa alone culled over 200 lions in total between 2010 and 2012, according to the 2013 report from the Lion Management Forum workshop.

**Understanding Carrying Capacity:** The Bulyebe Valley Conservancy does not rely on trophy hunting to manage the lion population. I will discuss the economics of hunting in brief. The most recent and robust lion population survey data calculate a current lion population on the Bulyebe Valley Conservancy of between 503 and 552 lions (it is impossible to get a 100 percent accurate count on the exact lion number — which also changes daily with births and deaths).

Carrying capacity is an extremely fluid concept, and changes monthly, seasonally, and annually depending on all sorts of factors including rainfall, disease (of both predator and prey), and economics.

It is estimated that 500 lions eat more than U.S. \$2.4 million each year (the meat value used is a very conservative \$3 per kg – compare that to the price of steak in a supermarket, and then remember that the Bulyebe Valley Conservancy used to be a cattle-ranching area, and if wildlife becomes unviable, then there is no reason not to convert it back to a cattle ranching area once again).

To give the question of carrying capacity a fair, if necessarily vague, answer, I would personally estimate that the upper carrying capacity of lions on the Bulyebe Valley Conservancy would be around 500 animals—assuming that they are allowed to be hunted and therefore generate the revenue to offset the cost of their predation.

Remember, lion numbers can get out of hand. And if there was no predation, then thousands upon thousands of zebra and wildebeest and impala would need to be culled to prevent them from over grazing the habitat, leading to soil erosion, starvation, and disease.

The ecosystem is a very complex machine and whether anyone likes it or not, humans have intervened with cities, roads, dams, pumped water, fences, and livestock. The only way to mitigate that intervention is by further, more focused, and carefully considered intervention, for the sake of the entire ecosystem.

It is important to bear in mind that the wildlife here, and in the majority of other wildlife areas in Africa (hunting areas exceed the total area conserved by Africa's national parks by more than 20 percent), does not exist as our, or anyone else's, luxury.

The Buby Valley Conservancy is a privately owned wildlife area, or to put it another way, it is a business. The fact that it is a well-run business is the reason why it is one of the greatest conservation successes in Africa, converting from cattle to wildlife in 1994 (only 22 years ago) and now hosting Zimbabwe's largest contiguous lion population at one of the highest densities in Africa, as well as the third largest black rhino population in the world (after Kruger and Etosha).

This is only possible because it is a business, and is self-sufficient in generating the funds to maintain fences, roads, pay staff, manage the wildlife, pump water, and support the surrounding communities—all extremely necessary factors involved in keeping wildlife alive in Africa.

***Michael Schwartz, a freelance journalist and African wildlife conservation researcher, is also an honorary member of the Jane Goodall Institute and International Institute for Environment and Development's Uganda Poverty Conservation Learning Group. Article is reprinted with permission.***

## **ZIMBABWE TRADITIONAL CHIEFS AND EU AMBASSADOR VAN DAMME IN WILDLIFE TALKS**

**Gerhard R Damm**

EU Ambassador to Zimbabwe Philippe van Damme reassured members of the Zimbabwe Council of Chiefs that he will work towards convincing members of the European parliament to reject the proposed declaration to ban the import of hunting trophies into the European Union.

ZCC Chief Fortune Charumbira said after the meeting that the consequences of adopting the proposed declaration will cause unnecessary suffering for the people of Zimbabwe, as the revenue from regulated trophy hunting is being used to develop infrastructure and assist vulnerable local communities. The Chief also said that any shortcomings in trophy hunting regulations and practice will be addressed in cooperation with Minister Oppah Munchinguri-Sashiri.

The Zimbabwe Council of Chiefs had briefed the Ambassador on the situation of trophy hunting in Zimbabwe and EU representatives had discussed the issues with Government and other stakeholders, conservancies and parks authorities. It was reported that the EU Delegation will be looking at how the European parliament can be briefed on sustainable trophy hunting in Zimbabwe so that EU parliamentarians can fully understand the conservation, social and economic impacts of regulated trophy hunting. Ambassador van Damme urged Zimbabwe to fully comply with international standards regarding wildlife trade in order to win the confidence of the international community.

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## **NAMIBIA: SIGNIFICANT INCOME STREAM FROM TROPHY HUNTING PROJECTED**

[The Southern Times](#), Namibia

Professional hunting activities are expected to bring in more than N\$ 4.3 million to the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) this financial year, according to the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) for the 2016/2017 to 2018/2019 financial years tabled by Minister of Finance Calle Schlettwein. Estimates include N\$3.8 million from wildlife utilization permits and N\$150,000 from the registration of professional hunters, while other registration and licenses is estimated to rake in about N\$42, 000 during this financial year. The total number of conservancies in the country stands at 83 and benefits more than 300,000 rural Namibians. A total of 71 were awarded wildlife utilization quotas and trophy hunting, which has become the most important contributor of income to conservancies after photographic joint venture tourism.

“The Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) program has again proven that it can contribute towards the alleviation of poverty and the plight of rural communities. Development of enterprises to diversify income opportunities in many conservancies has been a key target and this was achieved under the CBNRM program,” a summary assessment of recent past performance achievements in the MTEF stated.

Concerns and debates around the role of trophy hunting in conservation areas raged last year after the killing of ‘Cecil the lion’ in Zimbabwe and an endangered black rhino in Namibia. These two incidents triggered the demand to ban trophy hunting in Namibia and throughout Africa, and some major airlines last year banned the transportation of hunters’ animal trophies. Meanwhile, the Namibian Cabinet directed the MET to actively campaign against such attempts to ban or restrict hunting and the export of wildlife products.

## **US COURT OVERTURNS BID TO STOP IMPORTATION OF NAMIBIAN RHINO TROPHIES**

Gerhard R Damm

The Washington DC District Court has ruled that American hunters can import endangered black rhino trophies from Namibia into the United States despite opposition from two groups which argued that allowing the export of the trophies would encourage rhino poaching in Africa.

Delivering judgement in the joint lawsuit filed in the Washington DC District Court in April 2014 in which US-based Friends of Animals and the Zimbabwe Conservation Task Force (ZCTF) sought a court interdict against the two black rhino hunts conducted in Namibia, Washington DC District Court Judge Amy Berman Jackson ruled that there was no legal basis for the challenge. [Conservation Force](#) acted as legal representative of the Republic of Namibia’s [Ministry of Environment and Tourism](#) and [Dallas Safari Club](#).

Judge Jackson said the importation of rhino trophies did not constitute a threat to the preservation of the black rhino because they were issued by the Namibian government after considering the possible impacts on conservation.

Earlier, Namibian Information minister Hon. Tjekero Tweya announced that his government had resolved to reject all calls by groups opposed to its policy of allowing hunting of animals which include rhinos. “Cabinet directed the Ministry of Environment and Tourism to actively campaign

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against any attempt to ban or restrict hunting and the export of wildlife products from Namibia. Cabinet took note that a code of conduct for conservation hunting is being developed, accompanied by improvements in the regulation of hunting and strengthening the link between hunting and conservation," Tweya said. In line with the policy, Namibia has directed all government ministers and agencies to campaign against the ban on trophy hunting.

In 2012 the Namibian Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) and the Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organization (NACSO) were awarded the prestigious [CIC Markhor Award](#) for the introduction and supporting of the Communal Conservancy Program in Namibia, which allows rural communities to facilitate the sustainable use of wildlife on communal land. As self-governing entities, the Namibian Communal Conservancies enjoy the same rights over wildlife and tourism that private farms do; as collectives they earn money on conservancy lands from hunting tourism and game sales as well as from joint ventures with lodge operators. As a consequence wildlife numbers increased dramatically.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concluded on extensive assessments of the conservation and management programs of black rhinos in Namibia, that the import of two sport-hunted black rhinoceros trophies from Namibia will benefit conservation of the species. The black rhino hunts associated with the imports of two sport-hunted trophies are consistent with the conservation strategy of Namibia, a country whose rhino population is steadily increasing, and will generate a combined total of \$550,000 for wildlife conservation, anti-poaching efforts and community development programs in Namibia. According to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service director Dan Ashe U.S. citizens make up a large share of foreign hunters who book trophy hunts in Africa and he concluded that "gives us a powerful tool to support countries that are managing wildlife populations in a sustainable manner and incentivize others to strengthen their conservation and management programs." Ashe also said that "the future of Africa's wildlife is threatened by poaching and illegal wildlife trade, not [by] responsible, scientifically managed sport hunting", and that "the Service remains committed to combating wildlife crimes while supporting activities that empower and encourage local communities to be a part of the solution."



**Namibian Minister of Environment and Tourism  
Hon. Pohamba Shifeta**

In response to the judgment of Judge Jackson, the Namibian Minister of Environment and Tourism, Hon. Pohamba Shifeta pleaded with environmental lobby groups against hunting to put an end to what he explained would be detrimental to the conservation of rhinos and elephants. He said "the NGOs jointly applied to ban the importation of black rhino products which was dismissed, not on merit but on legal standing." Making a case for hunting, Shifeta argued, "our programs are known to be good projects. Our species of both black and white rhino are on an increase and there is nothing to worry about. Our conservation

efforts are clearly known. We have ethical hunting programs." He added, "conservation programs will be harmed if hunting stops," explaining that hunting supports 82 conservancies and accounted for 60% of income. "Imagine if you take that away. In accordance with our legislation and policies, the proceeds generated by means of trophy hunting should be reinvested into the conservation of that species. This fund pays for black rhino conservation projects approved by the Fund's board, such as law enforcement and anti-poaching units, community benefits and surveys. Our story has been hailed across the globe as it also seeks to empower Namibian citizens, particularly those in rural areas through employment creation and income generating activities" Shifeta concluded.

For further information on the rhino hunts please read the following articles

- [Black rhino hunter 100% certain he's helping survival of the species African Indaba 06-2015 Vol 13-3](#)
- [African Indaba interviews Corey Knowlton African Indaba 06-2015, Vol 13-3](#)
- [Can rhinos profit from trophy hunting? African Indaba 02-2014, Vol 12-1](#)



### The Importance of Hunting towards Conservation

**Namibia Professional Hunting Association Position Paper (4 March 2016)**

With this position paper the executive committee of the Namibia Professional Hunting Association (NAPHA EXCO) wants to factually contribute to a better understanding of hunting, which, if conducted sustainably and ethically, hugely contributes to the protection of wildlife and its habitat. **Contact NAPHA CEO Tanja Dahl at [ceo@napha.com.na](mailto:ceo@napha.com.na) for your copy of this document**



## WORKING TOGETHER FOR MIGRATORY BIRDS AND PEOPLE ACROSS AFRICA AND EURASIA

Jacques Trouvilliez, Executive Secretary of the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds ([AEWA](#))

One lesson that has been well and truly learned in nature conservation is that for policies to be really effective countries have to collaborate to address common problems. Within the UN system it is also recognized that this applies to the different Programs, Conventions and Agreements set up over the years. That each of these bodies has a distinct niche and a clear role does not justify a bunker mentality. By synergizing, cooperating and collaborating they can find common cause with natural allies and seek compromises with those whose agendas do not necessarily match their own.

[AEWA](#), the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds, is a prime example of an organization that embodies this approach. It is a daughter agreement of the [Convention on Migratory Species](#) and specializes in waterbirds that use similar habitats and face similar threats along the African-Eurasian flyway. It was negotiated by countries from different continents, rich and poor, developed and developing, with territories in the frozen north through the temperate zones and the Tropics and across the Equator.

The coalition backing the Agreement includes governments and some NGOs with diametrically opposed perspectives – conservationists from [BirdLife International](#) and hunters from the [International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation \(CIC\)](#). It is a constituency united around

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sustainable use, recognizing that the survival of species is paramount and that for those threatened by extinction, hunting has to be restricted or even banned. AEWA contributes to broader environmental objectives such as the [Aichi Targets](#) adopted under the Convention on Biodiversity and to sustainable development. One example is a community initiative in Uganda, which is helping to protect the shoebill from poachers – while the birds benefit from the conservation efforts, the local community benefits from the income generated by ecotourism.

AEWA can help through capacity-building, transferring financial resources, expertise and skills available in Europe to facilitate training and conservation work on the ground in Africa. AEWA's African Initiative aims to improve countries' self-sufficiency, part of the flyway approach that recognizes that the chances of the species surviving are much greater when they and the habitats upon which they depend are protected the whole length of their migration routes. These can stretch from the Arctic through Europe, across the Mediterranean and the Sahara to southern Africa.

Benefiting from the cooperation between Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands, the [Wadden Sea](#) is inscribed in UNESCO's World Heritage List. But all the efforts to develop the area's ecotourism and maintain the habitat of the 10 million and more waterbirds using it as a staging post on their annual migrations will be in vain, if other key sites along the flyway such as the [Bijagos Archipelago](#) are lost. With migratory species, the disappearance or degradation of just one site or inadequate protection or law enforcement in one Range State can have devastating results if the integrity of the chain is comprised and the birds cannot complete their journeys.

But birds are also threatened by problems that affect the whole planet – climate change and overfishing for instance. Some birds can adapt – warmer northern winters mean that some birds leave for Africa later and return sooner – but disruptions to the natural order lead to new competition between species and whether one species will win out at the expense of another or some new equilibrium will be established is unknown.

Climate change is likely to be the main driver for biodiversity loss and AEWA wants to see mitigation measures in place. Renewable energy is a potential solution as it should reduce the amount of both fossil fuel being burnt and greenhouse gases emitted. But renewable energy is not without risks – an example being birds colliding with the rotor blades of wind turbines, and whether energy is generated by wind, solar, nuclear, coal, gas or oil is irrelevant if birds are being electrocuted on badly designed, poorly insulated and inappropriately located powerlines.

Simple and often inexpensive modifications to power infrastructure and enacting and enforcing environmental impact assessments that take account of the needs of wildlife can contribute to reducing if not eliminating the death toll of migratory birds and other animals.

**Editor's Note:** AEWA is the only inter-governmental treaty administered by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) dedicated to the conservation and sustainable use of migratory waterbirds – such as pelicans, cranes, storks, terns, ducks, geese, waders and flamingos – as well as their habitats throughout their range. With currently 75 Parties out of 119 Range States, it is the largest regional instrument of its kind developed under the framework of the [Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals](#) (CMS). The 6th Meeting of the Parties to the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) was held in November 2015 under the theme "Making Flyway Conservation Happen" at the United Nations Campus in Bonn, Germany, twenty years after the treaty was concluded. For more information on MOP 6 please go to <http://www.unep-aewa.org/ns/?title=mop6-newsroom&lang=en>

## THE BIGGEST OBSTACLES FOR AFRICA'S BIG CATS

[Michael Schwartz](#)

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Almost every obstacle surrounding big cat conservation in Africa is symptomatic of human population growth and the conversion of rangeland to reduce poverty. On a slightly contrarian note, Africa's surge of human inhabitants is actually good news—at least insofar as the state of the human condition is concerned.

At long last, significant portions of a continent long beleaguered by death, disease, and destitution are showing promising signs of improvement, thanks largely to 21<sup>st</sup> century advancements. And what's more, Western civilization has played a fairly substantial role in the continental baby boom by providing the means to engage in large-scale food production.

All in all, such progress is a tad ironic when considering how often animal activists unfairly rake Africans over the coals for their role in the defoliation of wilderness and the disappearance of wildlife. But that argument is neither here nor there.

The fact remains that Africa's green revolution and expanding human population are the biggest juggernauts for feline conservation. And like it or not, bans on the sustainable use of wildlife have all but removed the incentive for landowners with properties that don't attract tourists to invest in maintaining wildlife habitats.

More to the point—a growing demand for vegetable cultivation to bolster economic development means less room for lions, leopards, and cheetahs.

### **A Changing Landscape**

According to the [Institute for Security Studies \(ISS\)](#), “the demographic size of Africa in the world [grew] from nine percent of the total in 1960 to 15 percent in 2010. By 2050, its share of global population will reach 23 percent and it will be considerably larger than either China or India.” Furthermore, ISS observes that while population growth rates across the continent aren't uniform, East and West Africa are seeing the most significant upticks in annual fertility rates. Ultimately, the entire “African population may not approach stability until, near, or even shortly after the end of the century, by which time it could be about 3 billion people, or 32 percent of the global total.”

While such high growth rates could spell an increase in urban poverty, the most noticeable change will occur on available lands that are homes for Africa's big cats.

Mike Norton-Griffiths, a wildlife ecologist in Kenya, points out three factors that underlie these dramatic changes in land management. “First, the growth in the human population creates an ‘internal’ market for higher production—more mouths to feed off the same area require higher productivity and, therefore, investment in land management. “Second are the burgeoning ‘external’ markets—local markets in neighboring towns and, more recently, the vast urban markets of Nairobi and other large towns. “Finally, and most important, is the evolution of property rights from the customary tenure regimes of the 1930s to private, freehold tenure, with secure property rights enshrined in and enforced by secular law (specifically the amendments to the Registration of Titles Act of 1959).”

### **Culture of Population Growth**

On the cultural end of the spectrum, it's important to note that while polygamy is no longer as widely practiced, the measure of married—and unmarried—couples throughout Africa is still weighed in the number of children they have. Bottom line: more offspring means greater social status for men and women.

The problem, however, is that excess children being born into impoverished communities exacerbates poverty—ergo, unsustainable harvesting of natural resources to feed a surplus population and escalating instances of human-wildlife conflict resulting from habitat encroachment shouldn't come as a surprise.

This is an especially sensitive issue that must involve conservationists, social workers, healthcare practitioners, and other experts who aren't ethnocentric when working with those who hold to different cultural values.

### **Land Rights**

Human population growth and alternative land-use are the biggest variables associated with wildlife population declines. But to argue that they are mutually exclusive from the removal of wildlife's economic viability is to deny reality. Prior to being outlawed, sustainable use in Kenya occurred on 60 percent of the total wildlife range, whilst tourism covered only five percent. Today, significantly less rangeland remains.

Norton-Griffiths states, "As Kenya demonstrates so clearly, people do what they do in response to economic incentives, but their ability to respond efficiently depends on the security of their property rights." That wildlife belongs solely to the Kenya government is a picture-perfect illustration of [disastrous land use policies](#), evidenced by some of the worst annual decline rates in wildlife populations on the continent. (It's worth noting that while Kenya's elephants may be faring a bit better, [lion populations have dropped significantly](#).)

Kenya's burgeoning tourism industry is one key example. With 95 percent of all wildlife tourism taking place in the national parks and reserves (known as service revenues), less than 1 percent of gross revenues goes to landowners (producer revenues) living with wildlife.

But while sustainable use may work in countries like Namibia, calls to reintroduce the practice in Kenya are out of the question since the damage was already done by banning it in the first place. It's also fair to point out that not all methods of sustainable use fall under a true definition of conservation since they do not promote biodiversity (canned hunting – sic – *editor's note canned shooting would be a better name*).

### **Payment for Ecosystem Services:**

One novel approach that can offset encroachment is payment for ecosystem services (PES), which means leasing land from the rural poor to keep it in its natural state. By receiving regular payments from lessees, rural landowners receive fiscal benefits not normally seen from the influx of tourists that pay the state directly.

Calvin Cottar, a Kenyan conservationist, wrote that, "Lease payments on a regular 'per hectare/year' basis can be at values equal or higher than that possible from alternative land uses such as agriculture and monoculture domestic stock. "In return, the landowners give the PES lessee the rights to the land use, and allow the keeping of wildlife and natural habitat intact." As it stands, there are roughly eight conservancies with a combined total of [227,949 acres near the Maasai Mara National Reserve that utilize the PES system](#).

According to the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa, "More than 800 families benefiting earn more than U.S. \$ 3.6 million annually, now paid directly to households on a flat rate based on land holdings." But in spite of what is perceived as a win-win scenario, PES remains tenuous.

Not all rural communities are landowners living adjacent to protected areas, and as such, cannot reap the same rewards that those whose lands hold more wildlife do. This invariably leads to future wilderness encroachment. Additionally, the PES model requires more investment from the international private sector in order to secure wilderness that would otherwise be converted to cash crops or cattle pastures.

With progress comes the inevitable demise of the natural world. But that doesn't mean that the West should cease helping the less fortunate, nor should those whose major motif is protecting African wildlife ignore the fact that poor people living alongside them are only trying to survive.

Since many African people still live in poverty, they sometimes resort to less preferable methods of dealing with dangerous animals like lions and leopards—methods that aren't popular in the court of public opinion.

Unfortunately, some activists seem content stereotyping impoverished Africans as one monolithic group of poachers without addressing the root of the conservation problem. Likewise, they fail to acknowledge that economic survival is the driving force for rural African communities, much in the same way it dictates the lives of American suburbanites.

The difference is that those fortunate enough to live in the comforts of the developed world don't have to worry about competing as heavily with dangerous wildlife on a daily basis. Many Africans, meanwhile, do not have that luxury.

All told, the loss of remaining wilderness remains a problem, as does falling wildlife populations. But again, these are symptoms, not sources. With that in mind, finding balance between these two diametrically opposing forces is the greatest challenge that conservationists face in 21<sup>st</sup> century Africa. Continued poverty reduction strategies, addressing the population growth dilemma, mitigating competition for space, and redressing policies that take away incentives for safeguarding wildlife need to be dealt with, and dealt with soon.

At the end of the day, bellicose rhetoric about saving Africa's predators and other wildlife from the big bad humans greatly oversimplifies all that is truly involved in realistically preserving nature. Put simply, conservation requires just as much compassion for people as it does for animals. One cannot exist without the other, and sometimes sacrifices must be made to achieve the greater goal. It's high time to stand up for what is right in lieu of what feels good.

When that perspective becomes the cornerstone of conservation efforts, it will break the ongoing destruction of the natural world. When we choose compassion for people, the survival of wildlife will greatly improve.

## NEWS FROM AND ABOUT AFRICA

### Africa – Conservation Force (USA)

[Conservation Force](#) created a new Chart summarizing community revenue sharing benefits from regulated hunting in Africa. The Chart will be updated annually. It thoroughly refutes the circulating misrepresentations that communities get little benefit from safari hunting. Conservation Force has also issued educational materials to refute the false and malicious information. Conservation Force campaigns to clarify the difference between licensed, regulated hunting and poaching to educate legislators, media, and others.

In October 2015, Conservation Force sued Delta Air Lines for its unlawful embargo on transport of hunting trophies. Delta moved to dismiss the complaint at the end of December 2015. The motion was fully briefed in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2016, and now it is on the court to decide. Contact Conservation Force for details at [jjj@conservationforce.org](mailto:jjj@conservationforce.org)

### Congo DR

Two park rangers were captured by rebels "before being summarily executed" in Virunga National Park in an attack which is believed representing a new coalition of Mai Mai rebels specifically targeting Virunga's rangers. Virunga NP is a 7,800-square-kilometer UNESCO world heritage site, which borders Rwanda and Uganda. A third ranger is missing. In a counter attack armed forces killed

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five rebels. A total of 150 rangers have now been killed in the past decade in Virunga said the park's director Emmanuel de Merode.

### **DR Congo - Switzerland**

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), supported by partners including the Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN) and the Zoological Society of London (ZSL), has published the first-ever coordinated global strategy to protect the unique and elusive okapi (*Okapia johnstoni*) from extinction in the wild. The 10-year strategy, guided by a detailed review of the species' status through a range-wide, multi-partner conservation effort, calls for urgent government and international commitment to support the integrity of key Congolese protected areas from armed militia and illegal extractives activities. Read more [HERE](#)

### **DR Congo**

Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) announced that park ranger Oscar Mianziro was fatally shot in Kahuzi-Biega National Park in eastern Congo. The park guard was killed while investigating a truck that had been looted and left on the side of a park road. WCS supports efforts to protect Grauer's gorillas in Kahuzi-Biega.

### **Kenya**

Community conservation efforts in northern Kenya are bringing back the world's most threatened antelope from the edge of extinction. Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT) reports that numbers of [Critically Endangered Hirola \(\*Beatragus hunteri\*\)](#) in the Ishaqbini Hirola Sanctuary, Kenya have doubled in just 3 and-a-half years. Read more [HERE](#)

### **South Africa**

The Black Mamba Anti-Poaching Unit, a South African ranger group operating in the Balule Private Game Reserve consisting mostly of women has been named as one of the winners of the Champions of the Earth award, a top United Nations environmental prize. "Community-led initiatives are crucial to combatting the illegal wildlife trade and the Black Mambas highlight the importance and effectiveness of local knowledge and commitment," said UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner. (Source: UN News Centre)

### **Tanzania**

A Dar-es-Salaam court sentenced two Chinese poachers to 30 years for illegally possessing 706 elephant tusks. Xu Fujie and Huang Gin had the option to pay \$24.6 million each to avoid the jail term. They had collected the ivory loot from their accomplices, who brought it from Mtwara, Lindi and Ruvuma regions. Members of the public became suspicious of vehicles coming in and out of a yard at Biafra one of the criminal hotspots of Dar. A day before the two were sentenced, a Manyara court sentenced 3 poachers to 20 years each and Rebecca Julius was sentenced to 25 years by a Serengeti court. She was arrested with four pieces of elephant tusks. On March 7, eight poachers were jailed for 20 years each. Two of the convicts were policemen (Source: The Citizen Tanzania)

### **Zambia**

President Lungu has expressed concern about the high levels of poaching and has directed all security agencies in Zambia to stop wildlife crimes. The Head of State said there is need to protect animals as they contribute effectively to the growth of the country's tourism sector. Mr Lungu also said "those that may be planning to venture into poaching or planning to illegally settle

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in any of our protected areas should refrain as [we] will deal with them sternly". Government is also pleased that the annual revenue of about K7 million to K12 million is raised [from] trophy hunting of elephant alone and that wildlife-based tourism creates about 10 percent of jobs in Zambia, mostly for the remotely located rural communities who depend on the wildlife industry for employment (Source [Daily Mail](#))

### **Zimbabwe**

On January 21, 2016, Zimbabwe's Minister and Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Water, Climate, and Environment and the Director-General of ZimParks signed the National Elephant Action Plan. The plan replaced Zimbabwe's 19-year old plan, which was a primary cause of the USF&WS elephant import suspension. This is the culmination of two years of hard work of Conservation Force and its allies. Now Zimbabwe has the most up to-date elephant action plan in Africa, including 4 regional plans. Conservation Force introduced a new program providing rewards for information leading to the conviction of poachers. Conservation Force also helped fund the hiring of Zimbabwe's first National Elephant Coordinator. A New USF&WS finding enhancement on Zimbabwe's elephant is pending.

### **Zimbabwe**

Claudio Chiarelli and his son Max Chiarelli died instantly when caught in the mistaken fire of a National Parks patrol of three rangers at about 3.30 pm on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> March. Claudio and Max, together with Francesco Marconati were providing voluntary support to deploy two National Parks anti-poaching patrols consisting of 6 rangers with the intention of uplifting the three rangers who were in the field following fresh spoor of poachers. The group had parked their vehicle on the side of the road in the middle section of the Mana Pools National Park to await the arrival of the three Park rangers who had been tracking poachers in dense bush since 9.00 am that morning. The intention was to meet at the road and hand over three fresh rangers to continue the follow-up.

Claudio and Max Chiarelli with Francesco Marconati took the opportunity to open the bonnet of their vehicle to inspect the engine. Meanwhile, the six park rangers they were transporting had dismounted from the vehicle and arranged themselves next to it while waiting for their three colleagues to arrive. Unbeknown to them, the vehicle had been parked within just 15 meters of where the poachers' tracks had crossed the road. Meanwhile, the anti-poaching patrol in hot pursuit, heard voices, crouched down, and slowly moved forward through the thick undergrowth. Through a gap in the bushes, they saw part of a blue shirt. They assumed this was a poacher and let off a burst of gunfire. Tragically, both Claudio and Max were killed instantly. As the anti-poaching patrol rangers were crouched, they were unable to see the road at all. Fortunately, the six rangers awaiting deployment did not return fire.

Richard Maasdorp, Strategic Director of The Zambezi Society stated: "Today (Monday 14th March 2016), we witnessed a thorough on-site investigation by the Zimbabwe Police CID and members of the National Parks Investigations Branch and Senior Management. The Zimbabwe Parks & Wildlife Management Authority and other state organs now, more than ever, need support and resources to contain their battle against wildlife poaching. We, the Zambezi Society, extend our very deepest sympathy to Mrs. Chiarelli and her daughter and the family on this terrible tragedy. We posthumously thank Claudio and Max Chiarelli, as a father and son combination, for the years of dedication that they have shown in support of wildlife conservation in Zimbabwe. This tragedy is deeply regretted." E-mail the Zambezi Society at [zambezi@iwayafrica.co.zw](mailto:zambezi@iwayafrica.co.zw)

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## HUNTERS AND ANGLERS PAY FOR CONSERVATION IN USA

### Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation

The American System of Conservation Funding as a unique “user-pays, public-benefits” program has generated billions of dollars for conservation since 1937; Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration (WSFR) programs are a key component. Hunters and anglers are the primary funders of wildlife conservation, providing upwards of 80% of the funding for state fish and wildlife agencies. They also financially support conservation through the purchase of hunting and fishing licenses and permits, Duck Stamps, firearms, ammunition and archery equipment, philanthropy, and the creation of organizations whose sole mission is the restoration and enhancement of wildlife species.

The tremendous contribution toward the restoration and conservation of our wildlife resources remains largely unknown to the general public. This situation is exacerbated by the media's broad-based use of the term “conservationist.” They are unable to distinguish between individuals and organizations that financially support wildlife conservation and those that don't. The latter include animal rights and anti-hunting organizations, those whose funding is spent primarily on litigating resource management decisions and those that promote a preservationist “don't touch” philosophy in wildlife management. These groups and through their interaction with the media seized upon the term “conservationist” in order to cloak their preservationist, anti-consumptive use philosophy and to reverse the political and societal credibility that they were beginning to lose in the 1990s.

It is critical that we educate the American public about the fact that hunting, angling, recreational shooting, and trapping are closely related to fish and wildlife conservation. The term “conservationist” must be rightfully applied. Using phrases like “hunters and other conservationists,” or “hunter-conservationists” when describing ourselves accurately characterizes the relationship between hunters and anglers, and natural resources. “Conservationist” is a title hunters and anglers helped create, work hard to maintain, and are proud to rightfully claim. They truly earned and deserve this distinctive designation. The community of hunters and anglers must take every available opportunity to educate the public and the media on what the term “conservationist” means, who the conservationists are, and what conservationists have achieved in making American wildlife resources the envy of the world.



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## DECISIONS OF THE SCIENTIFIC REVIEW GROUP ON TRADE IN WILD FAUNA AND FLORA

Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 establishes a [Scientific Review Group \(SRG\)](#) consisting of representatives from the Member States' Scientific Authorities. The role of the SRG is to examine scientific questions relating to the application of the Regulations and it has specific tasks relating to Articles 4.1.a, 4.2.a and 4.6 of the Regulation. The Commission conveys opinions of the SRG to the Committee. Those relating to import controls are also published on the internet in a database managed for the Commission by UNEP-WCMC in Cambridge, United Kingdom. It is understood that these opinions are also those of each Member State's Scientific Authority and will be reflected in any opinion. These opinions will remain valid unless or until circumstances related to the trade or conservation status of the species change significantly.

The Scientific Review Group of the European Union took the following decisions relating to wild specimens (information current as of April 1<sup>st</sup> 2016) For a definition of SRG opinions click [HERE](#).

- **Negative opinion** for import of specimens including hunting trophies of **African Lion (*Panthera leo*) from Mozambique**; recommendation based on the following guidelines: The species is in trade or is likely to be in trade, and introduction to the Community from the country of origin at current or anticipated levels of trade is likely to have a harmful effect on the conservation status of the species or the extent of the territory occupied by the species. (SRG 74<sup>th</sup> meeting 15 December 2015)
- **Positive opinion** confirmed for import of specimens including hunting trophies of **African Lion (*Panthera leo*) from Tanzania** (SRG 75<sup>th</sup> meeting 7 March 2016)
- **Positive opinion** for import of specimens including hunting trophies of **African Lion (*Panthera leo*) from Zambia** (SRG 75<sup>th</sup> meeting 7 March 2016, modified from a no opinion expressed at the SRG 73<sup>rd</sup> meeting 15 September 2016).
- **Positive opinion** for import of hunting trophies of **African Elephant (*Loxodonta africana*) from Zambia** (SRG 73<sup>rd</sup> meeting 15 September 2015).
- **Negative opinion\*** for import of hunting trophies of **African Elephant (*Loxodonta africana*) from Tanzania** confirmed/maintained – NOT to be formalized in the Regulation prohibiting the introduction in the EU (SRG 75<sup>th</sup> meeting 7 March 2016).<sup>6</sup>
- **Negative opinion\*** for import of hunting trophies of **African Elephant (*Loxodonta africana*) from Mozambique** confirmed/maintained – NOT to be formalized in the Regulation prohibiting the introduction in the EU (SRG 74<sup>th</sup> meeting 15 December 2015).<sup>1</sup>
- **Positive opinion** for import of specimens of **Nile Crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus*) from Zimbabwe** (W, R) (agreed on 25/01/16). All applications to be referred to SRG: The species is not currently (or is only rarely) in trade, but significant trade in relation to the conservation status of the species could be anticipated (SRG 74<sup>th</sup> meeting 15 December 2015) .
- **Zimbabwe African Elephant (*Loxodonta africana*) and African Lion (*Panthera leo*) trophies have both a positive opinion of the SRG.**

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<sup>6</sup> Recommendation based on the following guidelines: The species is in trade or is likely to be in trade, and introduction to the Community from the country of origin at current or anticipated levels of trade is likely to have a harmful effect on the conservation status of the species or the extent of the territory occupied by the species.

Hunters who want to import the trophies of the above mentioned species into the European Union are advised to supply prove of the date when the specimen was taken and check if the date of take was before the respective SRG opinion was formulated. This applies especially to Mozambique lions.

In this context readers should also take note that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on December 23, 2015, listed African lion from Western and Central Africa as “endangered” and Eastern and Southern as “threatened” [under the Endangered Species Act](#). They also promulgated a “special rule” requiring an enhancement permit to import Eastern and Southern African lion. The enhancement import permit requirement became effective January 22, 2016. Furthermore, on March 15 2016, the USF&WS announced a 90 day finding on two petitions to up-list all African elephant from “threatened” to “endangered.”

Hunter advocacy organization Conservation Force has developed a three-year plan to reestablish import into the United States of lion trophies from Eastern and Southern Africa. In this context Conservation Force contracted consultants in Tanzania and Zambia assisting with answering questionnaires from the USF&WS. Conservation Force is also working with safari operators throughout Africa to develop Operator Enhancement Reports to submit to the USF&WS. These reports will provide hard data on the significant anti-poaching, community assistance, and revenue benefits of hunting.

**References & Explanations:** [SRG 73th Meeting](#) (15 September 2015), [SRG 74th Meeting](#) (15<sup>th</sup> December 2015), [SRG 75th Meeting](#) (7<sup>th</sup> March 2016) (The negative opinion for African Elephant trophies originating from Tanzania and Mozambique was formulated at the [72<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the SRG](#) on 2 July 2015. A negative opinion for the same species originating from Zambia was formulated at the [71<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the SRG](#) (9 April 2015) and then withdrawn at the 73<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the SRG)

## DIANA-AIRGUNS SUPPORT CIC ANTI POACHING PROJECT

At the occasion of its 125th anniversary Diana Airguns of Germany have produced a lavishly engraved model, called "THE ONE AND ONLY", which was auctioned off, and found a fan and collector at 10,000 Euro. This amount will assist training game wardens as drivers and car-mechanics in the Selous Game Reserve in Tanzania. This park was particularly affected by poaching and its elephant population has fallen in recent years, from 70,000 to 15,000 now. At the IWA Outdoors Classic in Nuremberg Wiebke Utsch of the Blaser Group, and Diana's CEO, Michael Swoboda, handed over the check to the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC) represented by Dr. Rolf Baldus. Since CIC's Global Summit „[Hunters United Against Wildlife Crime](#)“ at the General Assembly in Milano in 2014 the organization has supported anti-poaching in the Selous and the Tanzanian Wildlife Authority. Tanzania is a state member of CIC. Fortunately the steep decline of elephants could be halted meanwhile.

### **9<sup>th</sup> International Wildlife Ranching Symposium & 2<sup>nd</sup> African Buffalo Symposium**

**Safari Hotel Windhoek/Namibia 12-16 September 2016**

Details on the Wildlife Ranching Symposium from Amélia Wassenaar

Tel: +27 (0)12 335 6994 [amelia@iwrs.co.za](mailto:amelia@iwrs.co.za) or

Details on the 2<sup>nd</sup> African Buffalo Symposium under the hospice of the IUCN Antelope Specialist Group and the African Buffalo Interest Group - AfBIG from coordination team

Alexandre Caron, Philippe Chardonnet & Daniel Cornelis email [alexandre.caron@cirad.fr](mailto:alexandre.caron@cirad.fr)

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## RHINO POACHING: WHAT IS THE SOLUTION?

Michael t' Sas-Rolfes

Rhino poaching is a serious contemporary global concern. Significant recent growth in demand for rhino horn in Asian consumer markets has driven black market prices to extraordinary levels, undermining attempts to conserve wild rhinos and enforce a worldwide trade ban. A closer analysis of countries that have succeeded in conserving rhinos reveals that they owe much of their success to policies that enhance the direct economic benefits flowing from rhino protection and link these to relevant local people and institutions. If trade ban enforcement alone cannot save rhinos, then other solutions must be considered. As one alternative, international conservation NGOs typically support campaigns aimed at changing consumer behavior, arguing that poaching will end when consumers stop buying rhino horn products. Skeptics of this approach argue that it would be better to displace existing demand for illegally sourced horn either with genuine horn from sustainable sources or with a synthetic substitute. All three approaches deserve careful consideration, both individually and in possible combination.

### Key Concepts

- Rhino poaching can be viewed as an economic problem: as rising consumer demand drives up prices for rhino horn, incentives for illegal activity increase relative to the incentives to protect live rhinos.
- Where wild rhino populations have survived, this has been due to adequate enforcement spending and rhino-related economic benefit flows to relevant local people, not necessarily because of restrictions on rhino horn trade.
- Campaigns aimed at changing consumer behavior may ultimately reduce black market rhino horn prices, but fail to address the economic aspirations of the local people who control the animals' destiny.
- Legalizing trade in rhino horn has the potential to raise much-needed funds for rhino protection and create more lasting incentives for conservation, but faces opposition from advocates of demand reduction and requires significant institutional reforms that do not enjoy widespread political support.
- Introducing a synthetic substitute product to the market provides a third option, sharing both certain advantages and disadvantages of each of the two other approaches.

*Michael t' Sas-Rolfes is an independent conservation economist based in Cape Town, South Africa. He has been actively involved in wildlife conservation for most of his life. His academic background includes a Bachelors in Business Economics and two MSc degrees, in Environmental Resource Economics (UCL) and in Biodiversity Conservation and Management (Oxford). He has specialist knowledge of the application of economic analysis and business principles to the biodiversity conservation sector, and has conducted detailed work and analysis on wildlife trade issues (especially relating to rhinos, big cats, elephants, and bears) and on innovative approaches to financing and managing both public and private protected areas.*

Read the full article of Michael t' Sas-Rolfes in Solutions (Volume 7, Issue 1, Page 38-45, March 2016) – a non-profit print and online publication devoted to showcasing bold and innovative ideas for solving the world's integrated ecological, social, and economic problems. This is the solutions Website with the article: <http://www.thesolutionsjournal.com/node/237452>

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## TWO “FAMOUS” LIONS KILLED IN NON-HUNTING KENYA

Gerhard R Damm

Two more lions – both of them “named and famed” – have been killed in Kenya in the waning days of March, although hunting is prohibited since 1977. “Mohawk the most famous lion of Kenya”, the other one called “Lemek”, which [Maasai leaders](#) said that residents speared the two-and-a-half-year-old near Old Kitengela township road, 12 miles south of Nairobi, and roughly two miles south of the Nairobi National Park southern tip. “Lemek” was apparently seen roaming about in the plains outside the Park, not having raided any cattle yet.

Consequently these two killings cannot be blamed on hunters, nor can the human-lion conflict be laid at the hunters’ doorstep. The killings simply confirm the fact that humans do not tolerate large predators in their neighborhood – and that proper wildlife management and adequate responses to a real or perceived threat are not in the repertoire of the Kenya Wildlife Service. “This was the third time in two months that lions had escaped from Nairobi National Park. One found its way to a military barracks, another to a strip of land near the international airport” said [The Washington Post](#) and added “Where the lions once would have wandered peacefully, they now encounter suburbs, farms and commercial buildings”.

Kenya Wildlife Service spokesman Paul Udoto said “the lion escaped from Nairobi National Park and ended up in Isinya town, 12 miles away [sic]. Veterinary teams headed to Isinya after they got word on Mohawk’s whereabouts. But noise and commotion from bystanders agitated the animal, prompting it to attack the man [sic]. In order to save lives, rangers shot it to death before veterinarians arrived with tranquilizers.”

Congratulations to the Kenya Wildlife Service for a “decisive and consequent action” one might try to say. This is competence squared!

“Mohawk”, reportedly 13 years of age (*Editor’s note: it usually takes qualified scientists and a laboratory to determine a lion’s true age by analyzing some teeth*), came to an admittedly gruesome end. If you have the stomach, watch the video clip of the killing on CNN at this link <http://edition.cnn.com/2016/03/31/africa/kenya-mohawk-lion-killed/> .

The story of the lion from the fairly small town of Isinya reverberated all around the world. It was broadcast originally by KTN Kenya but quickly found its way on to the net and across the front pages of national and international newspapers. “In a country that has invested millions in protecting its wildlife, Kenyans are trying to figure out what went wrong” asked [The Washington Post](#). “The uproar over the death of Mohawk mirrored a similar outcry in South Africa, where South African National Parks officials said that they had decided to kill a lion known as Sylvester who had escaped from Karoo National Park” chimed the [New York Times](#). [The Dodo Website](#) titled “Beloved Lion Killed Because People Wouldn’t Leave Him Alone” adding “the news of Mohawk’s death prompted swift internet outrage, echoing concerns about another beloved lion you may remember named Cecil”. We shouldn’t forget the anti-use activists who came board in their thousands with comments and online petitions like “[Fire the rangers who killed Mohawk the lion!](#)” – conveniently forgetting that the rangers are not to blame, but the wildlife management system of Kenya and the Kenya Wildlife Service.

Kenya has a poaching problem for many years; ever since regulated sustainable use was banned in 1977 most of the wildlife species there have declined in unimaginable percentages. The decline was demonstrably not caused by hunting, since there was no legal hunting!

A golden opportunity was available in the 1970s for Kenya Wildlife Service to establish community conservancies in the same area where the deadly conflicts between man and wildlife are occurring. The area’s open plains were only utilized by the Maasai for grazing their livestock. Had KWS

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had the foresight and courage to make its own decisions without animal rights NGO pressure and made beneficial arrangements with the landowners and those who utilized their land for their stock, the area would be teeming with wildlife and there would have been real benefits to the local people. The lack of firm vision resulted in what is now a concrete jungle right at the doorstep of Nairobi National Park to the south and the sad loss of wildlife thru conflict and a clear lack of any appreciation of the wildlife from the Park.

Already in 2003, the late Imre Loeffler former Chairman of the East African Wildlife Society said in an article “... over the years, public attitudes towards the parks have become increasingly hostile, particularly because of the consequences of the growth in human population: as the numbers of people have trebled, land, water and wood have become scarcer and human-animal conflicts have increased manifold... With Nairobi being the seat of numerous conservation NGOs confessing various shades of imported animal welfare philosophies, the government and the agency responsible for wildlife were always under pressure to eschew any form of wildlife management and utilization other than tourism. Tourism, even under the best of circumstances, is not capable of generating enough revenue to vouchsafe the survival of wildlife. Moreover, tourism is concentrated in a few areas and, particularly in its mass variety, is detrimental to the environment. All in all, Kenya's conservation efforts have failed and wildlife numbers have plummeted.”

And in another article published in 2004, Loeffler said with some foresight “without providing economic benefits, conservation cannot succeed. For now, Kenya is the last remaining bastion on the entire eastern half of the African continent for conservation concepts of the old fashioned kind. And it is the NGOs concerned mainly with animal welfare and animal rights – and not with people – that are mobilizing their resources to stop Kenya from embracing husbandry as the way forward for wildlife and forest management.”

Imre Loeffler was right!

## **STATEMENT ON CAPTIVE-BRED LION HUNTING AND ASSOCIATED ACTIVITIES**

**Sarel van der Merwe, Chairman, African Lion Working Group (Dated 17/02/2016)**

It is the opinion of the African Lion Working Group (ALWG) that captive-bred lion hunting, which is defined by ALWG as the sport hunting of lions that are captive bred and reared expressly for sport hunting and/ or sport hunting of lions that occur in fenced enclosures and are not self-sustaining does not provide any demonstrated positive benefit to wild lion conservation efforts and therefore cannot be claimed to be conservation.

In addition while more data are still needed, the international lion bone trade that is currently being supplied by the South African captive-bred lion industry may fuel an increased demand for wild lion bones elsewhere. This could negatively impact wild lion populations and hinder conservation efforts. The recent dramatic increase in lion bone trade should be reason for concern.

The estimated 8,000 lions in South Africa currently being maintained and bred on game farms as part of this industry should not be included in any assessments of the current status of wild lions. Captive breeding of lions for sport hunting, hunting of captive-bred lion and the associated cub petting industry are not conservation tools. In our opinion they are businesses and outside the remit of the African Lion Working Group and should be dealt with accordingly.

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

## ABSTRACTS OF RECENTLY PUBLISHED WILDLIFE PAPERS

Compiled by Gerhard R Damm

### THE CUSTOMER ISN'T ALWAYS RIGHT—CONSERVATION AND ANIMAL WELFARE IMPLICATIONS OF THE INCREASING DEMAND FOR WILDLIFE TOURISM

**Tom P. Moorhouse, Cecilia A. L. Dahlsjö, Sandra E. Baker, Neil C. D'Cruze, David W. Macdonald.** 2015 PLoS ONE 10(10): e0138939. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0138939.

Tourism accounts for 9% of global GDP and comprises 1.1 billion tourist arrivals per annum. Visits to wildlife tourist attractions (WTAs) may account for 20–40% of global tourism, but no studies have audited the diversity of WTAs and their impacts on the conservation status and welfare of subject animals. We scored these impacts for 24 types of WTA, visited by 3.6–6 million tourists per year, and compared our scores to tourists' feedback on TripAdvisor. Six WTA types (impacting 1,500–13,000 individual animals) had net positive conservation/welfare impacts, but 14 (120,000–340,000 individuals) had negative conservation impacts and 18 (230,000–550,000 individuals) had negative welfare impacts. Despite these figures only 7.8% of all tourist feedback on these WTAs was negative due to conservation/welfare concerns. We demonstrate that WTAs have substantial negative effects that are unrecognized by the majority of tourists, suggesting an urgent need for tourist education and regulation of WTAs worldwide.

Download at <http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0138939>

### UNEXPECTED AND UNDESIRE CONSERVATION OUTCOMES OF WILDLIFE TRADE BANS—AN EMERGING PROBLEM FOR STAKEHOLDERS?

**Diana S. Weber, Tait Mandler, Markus Dyck, Peter J. Van Coeverden De Groot, David S. Lee, Douglas A. Clark.**

2015 Global Ecology and Conservation, Elsevier B.V.

CITES regulates international trade with the goal of preventing over-exploitation, thus the survival of species are not jeopardized from trade practices; however it has been used recently in nontrade conservation measures. As an example, the US proposed to uplist polar bears under CITES Appendix I, despite that the species did not conform to the biological criteria. Polar bears were listed as 'threatened' under US ESA in 2008, in response to loss of sea-ice and warming temperatures. In Nunavut, where most of Canada's polar bears are harvested, the resulting trade ban did not decrease total harvest after the ESA listing but reduced US hunter participation and the proportion of quotas taken by sport hunters from specific populations. Consequently, the import ban impacted livelihoods of Arctic indigenous communities with negative conservation — reduced tolerance for dangerous fauna and affected local participation in shared management initiatives. The polar bear may be the exemplar of an emerging problem: the use of trade bans in place of action for non-trade threats, e.g., climate change. Conservation prospects for this species and other climate-sensitive wildlife will likely diminish if the increasing use of trade bans to combat non-trade issues cause stakeholders to lose faith in participatory management.

Download at <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2351989415000074>



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