

# AFRICAN INDABA

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Dedicated to the People and Wildlife of Africa

## 1 Hunters and Conservationists are Natural Partners!

By Gerhard R Damm

In 2003, I wrote an article for *African Geographic* with almost the same title. I thought then that this might be the first step towards some sort of dialogue between the publisher of African Geographic (Peter Borchert), his foremost anti-hunting columnist Ian Michler and the South African and international hunting community. A critical dialogue indeed, but based on facts, and not emotions, on scientific evidence and not personal assumptions! I presumed that this dialogue could and would lead towards focusing on what we have in common and show areas of compromise, were we stand apart.

In early 2006, Mr. Borchert invited me to write another article to contrast, as he said, a new Michler article "*Trophy Hunting – An Obsolete Obsession*". My article – coauthored with Peter Flack – was sent to Mr Borchert on April 21<sup>st</sup> (and I received a confirmation of receipt). From then onwards my emails remained unanswered and our article remains unprinted until today.

Michler seems to be fixed on the consumptive/non-consumptive use controversy. He does not want to see the fallacy of his arguments. The controversy is actually a myth, although one nurtured by Michler and colleagues, since conflicts, real or constructed, are better suited to keep readership interested than complex dialogued compromise.

There is just no such thing as non-consumptive use! All uses of nature are consumptive – one way or another. Just contemplate that the CO<sub>2</sub> we produce – our carbon footprint – comes from what we eat, the mode of transport we use and our daily lifestyle choices. Now put this statement into perspective when looking at a hunting block in Tanzania's Selous Game Reserve, or at a game ranch in Limpopo. Compare those to the luxury game lodges in the Serengeti, or to the proliferating luxury lodges in South Africa's Sabi Sands. Have a look at the ballooning "wilderness" share block developments in some private nature reserves adjacent to KNP with, more often than not, hundreds of occupants.

Who do you think is more "consumptive" and whose carbon footprint on the environment is greater?

The hunters, who hunt and kill a very low percentage of mature male specimens of the varied game populations; who use relatively rustic and unobtrusive camps, a couple of vehicles, and pay dearly for the privilege of some weeks of wilderness solitude) – or the eco-tourists, residing in luxury air-conditioned lodges, the swimming pool in front of the door, a generator creating 24 hours of electricity, twice a day fresh towels and linen and exotic food and fine champagne on the table.?

Think of all the water pumped and used, of the refuse dumps

behind the scenes, of the diesel burned, of the hundreds of acres of wilderness converted into manicured "romantic bush camps". On game drives, vehicles hooked on radio networks are speeding to "Big Five" sightings, in many cases lining up to wait their turn, following and disturbing hunting predators to get that grand photograph. Our eco-tourist income comes at a high environmental price. Non-consumptive? I've heard better jokes!

Eco-tourism is consumptive – the consumption pattern is just different.

With this article I am addressing all hunters and conservationists of good intentions. We need a civilized debate. It makes no conservation sense to continue the polemic consumptive/non-consumptive use controversy. This controversy is rooted on false premises – a fact eagerly exploited by those on both sides, who profit from bitter trench warfare.

Hunting and non-hunting conservationists have reached encompassing understandings elsewhere in the world – just look to North America, where many major conservation NGOs are working closely together with hunters and anglers.

The Nature Conservancy (<http://www.nature.org/>), an organization with more than one million members has a mission statement which says: "*The mission of The Nature Conservancy is to preserve the plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive*". Hardly the statement of a pro-hunting conservation NGO, you would think. But wait and read the Autumn-2006 issue of Nature Conservancy Magazine. There is a feature article explaining "*why American sportswomen and sportsmen are among the Nature Conservancy's valued allies*".

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1 Hunters and Conservationists Are Natural Partners

You can download Hal Herring's comprehensive article at <http://www.nature.org/magazine/autumn2006/features/art18601.html>. It offers a refreshingly different view from what we are used to hear from the anti-hunting lobby and their standard bearers in South Africa. Search results on "hunting" at the Nature Conservancy's website show 772 items – enough reading material for a while!

Other big "green" groups such as the **National Audubon Society** and the **Sierra Club** have never opposed hunting. In fact, they recognize the sport as a legitimate and necessary wildlife-management tool. Ted Williams writes in his article "**Natural Allies**" on the Sierra Club's website, that "*they are perceived as anti-hunting because of embarrassing behavior by some of their members*". And Sierra Club legislative director Debbie Sease says "*As the Sierra Club works to defend these places, we will continue to reach out to the hunters and anglers who have a stake in them. We're natural allies.*" You can read this at [www.sierraclub.org/huntingfishing/index.asp](http://www.sierraclub.org/huntingfishing/index.asp).

Even in South Africa conservation organizations are outing themselves as pro-hunting, although some still refrain from making the fact too obvious.

At the 3rd World Conservation Congress (2004) a recommendation introduced by the Game Rangers Association Africa (GRAA), the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) and South African National Parks "*accepting that well-managed recreational hunting has a role in the managed sustainable consumptive use of wildlife populations*" and "*condemning killing animals in small enclosures where they have little or no chance to escape*" was adopted by the plenum. WWF on a global level and WWF-SA have developed cautiously positive hunting policies.

The press release at the IUCN-sponsored African lion workshops in Johannesburg (2006) says that "*regulated trophy hunting is not considered a threat, but [a] way to help alleviate human-lion conflict and generate economic benefits for poor people to build their support for lion conservation. Foreign hunters bring millions of dollars each year into African economies.*"

Not many members of the South African hunting and angling community look like stereotypical environmentalists and unfortunately hunters and non-hunting conservationists often make each other nervous. In the past the lack of communication, irresponsible media reporting as well as irresponsible behavior of people from both camps created trenches once thought unbridgeable.

It is certainly true that the two groups may not see eye-to-eye on every issue, but what connects them is an understanding that healthy ecosystems mean healthy habitats for game animals. This has led to some sort of cooperation even between such diverse organizations as the Sierra Club and the National Rifle Association.

In South Africa, where hunting has driven the establishment of over 9,000 registered game ranches, covering over 16 million hectares, which is nearly three times the area covered by all the provincial and national game reserves in the country, such co-

*"I can't imagine not working with hunters and anglers—our shared values are too great."*

**Tom Cassidy**

Director of Federal Programs, The Nature Conservancy

*"Sportsmen are the original conservationists.  
You cannot do it without them."*

**Bart Semcer**

Fish & Wildlife Policy, The Sierra Club

operation is still sadly lacking.

Hunting and non-hunting conservation groups in South Africa need to recognize their common objectives and their natural alliance. Initial steps have been made, but the process is painfully slow.

A lot of paranoia still exists on both sides. With the hunters, because hunting has been beaten savagely for so long; not only by the few extreme animal rightists, but by the media and as a result by an underinformed society in general. With many conservation organizations, because they perceive that the more extreme animal rights organizations will have a field day in poaching their members, if they associate too closely with hunters. WWF's caveat at the end of the published hunting policy is significant proof: "*WWF does not run or derive revenue from any trophy hunting projects*". Nevertheless, in Namibia, WWF-LIFE was instrumental in establishing the hunting concessions for the Khwe community in the Bwabwata National Park, and WWF-Pakistan assists remote rural communities in establishing trophy hunting programs.

Another example is a recent move in South Africa to put game ranching under the umbrella of the Department of Agriculture. Game Ranchers celebrate the "South African conservation revolution" and their 16 million hectares of private conservation areas, but fail to see that the "revolution" has just begun and needs to be expanded with a triple-bottom-line approach and not

*"If only hunters, anglers, and environmentalists would stop taking potshots at each other, they'd be an invincible force for wildlands protection."*

**Ted Williams**

Conservation Achievement Award, National Wildlife Federation

a shortsighted focus on economics. Only DEAT can provide the structure and drive for that.

Partnerships in innovative approaches, clear norms & standards, effective self-administration and enabling tax legislation are needed to maintain and increase the conservation acreage. Eventually this may lead towards larger conservancies with joint management plans.

Fence-sitting behavior by either party plays into the hands of those who want to discredit the entire environmental movement. The South African conservation NGOs need to publicly clarify that, albeit some of their members might be against hunting, institutionally they are not. They must take a stand for the sake of our wild natural heritage, and they have to come out in public together with their foremost allies – the hundred thousands South African hunters and anglers and their associations.

**We have to stop allowing a few uninformed oddballs and card carrying members of the Flat-Earth-Society, in either camp, to be stumbling blocks to a true Natural Partnership.**

Yours Sincerely

**Gerhard R Damm**

Editor

## 2 Rebuilding the Wildlife Sector in Zimbabwe (Part 3)

Pre-feasibility study with action proposals for donors and NGOs by Dr. Rolf D. Baldus and Dr. Graham Child

*African Indaba brings you the third part of the article by Dr Baldus and Dr. Child (see African Indaba [Vol 4 Issue Number 3](#) for part 1 and [Vol 4 Issue Number 4](#) for part 2)*

*Download the complete paper at:*

[www.africanindaba.co.za/conservationafrica.htm](http://www.africanindaba.co.za/conservationafrica.htm)

### 6. Coordinating the Recovery and Technical Assistance

A programme to salvage what is left of the wildlife industry in Zimbabwe and to build it back into an important sector of the economy will require a carefully integrated programme. The core process should be a single coordinated effort and not a series of discreet projects managed in isolation from each other. It is envisioned that this should be provided by a coalition of donors working together and pooling their resources as a co-operative group with knowledgeable locals to provide a suitably equipped technical team with its own logistical support. This technical assistance can be broken down into a number of inter-related components or groups of experts. The following expertise might prove necessary to be provided.

#### Lead Group:

A group of up to three highly experienced top managers may be needed to assist the new Minister and to guide the whole process of rehabilitating the wildlife resource and re-establishing the wildlife sector as a major element of the economy. More specifically the team would be responsible for identifying suitable new members for the Board, facilitating their review of policy, legislation and basic procedures, and developing a system to enable the Board to audit all aspects of the executive agency's functions and report progress to the Minister. It should also work with the CEO of the agency to facilitate the orderly devolution of Parliamentary authority, from the Minister to the agency and on down through the agency to field level, as exemplified by the local management structure within the Estate and land holders outside.

The lead group should guide overall management in the agency that combines responsibility for conserving the nation's wild resources, and encouraging growth of an ethical wildlife sector, while itself striving for financial self-sufficiency. The team's members should combine innovative wildlife management with experience in top management, including the drafting policy and legislation, preferably along the lines of that in Zimbabwe. A second need is experience in the governance of regulatory organisations that provide a public service with expertise in how to ensure proper accountability and provide staff incentive structures within such organisations. The third requirement should be expertise in how to grow and develop businesses with a strong social and service commitment that must also seek to be profitable.

The lead group should work with the CEO of the management agency assisting and advising him on a day-to-day basis, on a range of issues, including:

- Re-establishing or upgrading private wildlife sector institutions to better represent, co-ordinate and, as far as is rea-

- sonable, to self regulate the sector;
- How to encourage the private sector by minimising unnecessary and costly bureaucratic controls and encouraging regular liaison and co-operation between the private and public sectors towards the more effective and efficient implementation of policy. This should include the maintenance of high ecological, ethical and service standards throughout the industry;
- Assisting and encouraging the private sector by capturing and relocating animals to restock and diversify the fauna where habitats are suitable but have been denuded;
- Prioritising management activities towards achieving policy goals and refurbishing the Estate's assets; and
- How to upgrade and diversify local management of the Estate to better reflect neighbouring attitudes and enhancing income generation to the local economy, without prejudicing the natural values for which the Estate was created;
- The setting and achieving of awareness and training objectives for Board and Management Committee members, the personnel in the executive agency and members of the private sector; and
- Other day-to-day issues as they arise.

#### Investigation Group:

Two or three highly experienced investigators, auditors and/or accountants are required to help the CEO analyse the financial and business situation of the organization and later weed out members of staff guilty of past corruption or incompetence. This exercise is bound to send ripples of upset through staff and for this reason and so that corrupt officials can be removed quickly, it is important that the exercise is concluded as fast as possible, by experts alert to the sensitivity of their mission. They should be hired from a consultant or chartered accountant with experience in the wildlife industry and high reputation.

#### Restructuring the Organisation:

This will be a substantial undertaking. The first phase should be to help structure a recruitment process for the agency so it can replace necessary posts that fall vacant as corrupt, ineffective and redundant staff is removed from office. Once policy and the organisation's mandate have been decided the next phase will be to design the structure of an organisation to implement this mandate in consultation with the CEO and Board. This may be a staged process taking into account the organisation's likely annual budget. Experience in Zimbabwean has taught that staff emoluments should not exceed 55% of total budget if the organisation is to be reasonably effective and financially efficient.

This phase of the programme should also prepare:

- Initial position charters for all categories of staff;
- A post by post set of job descriptions and staff contracts with adequate flexibility to suit the functions of the agency;
- Levels of training, experience and skills needed for an officer to qualify for a given post;
- A comprehensive staff incentive programme;
- Codes of conduct and instructions on how to prepare work plans and different types of reports for higher authority; and the like.

The aim should be to make the agency into an effective and efficient operating unit, and to provide it with a range of manuals to this end.

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## 2 Rebuilding the Wildlife Sector of Zimbabwe

### Interim Administration:

Around nine highly experienced field managers will be needed for between six months and four years to assist the executive agency to tide over the transition period and until they can be replaced with qualified local officers. With help from the programme as a whole and working with local management committees representing the local wildlife sector, the experienced field managers should evolve and implement management programmes for their geographic area or field of responsibility. Priority areas requiring experienced field officers during the transitional period include:

- Hwange National Park (based at Main Camp);
- The Victoria Falls/Matetsi/ Zambezi National Park area (based at Victoria Falls);
- The Matusadona/Chete/Chirisa/ Chizarira complex (based in one of the areas);
- The Lower Zambezi Valley incl. Kariba (based at Marongora);
- The Inyanga Special National Park (based in the Park);
- Matopos Special National Park (based in the Park); and
- Gonarezhou National Park (based in the Park).

The major responsibilities that need initial supervision include:

- Reorganisation of the various facets of income generation for the Parks and Wildlife Estate;
- Maintaining ecologically stable wildlife populations.
- Liaison with CAMPFIRE and other game producers, to generate planning information and provide advice, assistance and seed animals, where these are needed, with a view to growing a financially and ecologically sound ethical wildlife sector on communal and commercial land.

This transitional management team and such local personnel as are suited to the task should assume responsibility for directing management in accordance with the policy approved by the Minister in the various parts of the country or for the tasks for which they are responsible. As soon as possible the transitional managers should be integrated fully into the organization or hand over their responsibility to local counterpart staff, remaining on as advisors to these staff for as long as this is advisable.

### 7. Priorities for Implementation

Priorities for action would appear to be as follows:

- Technical support to the Ministry and the Authority; positioning of interim advisors/managers to assist the agency during the early transitional period.
- Reviewing and revising policy, legislation, utilization and any other activities and institutions that may need to be updated.
- Restructuring of the executive agency.
- Introducing a structured training programme to meet the needs of both the executive agency and personnel from the private sector, refurbishing the Mushandike staff training college,
- Support to CAMPFIRE/CBNRM and the private commercial wildlife sector
- Rehabilitation of the protected areas and support to the field force including equipment, transport, communication etc. in order to make the law enforcement force and the park managers effective in the field again.

### 8. Donor Assistance

Rehabilitating the wildlife sector in Zimbabwe and assisting it to better serve the nation in general and disadvantaged rural people in particular is a major challenge. It is an aspect of national development in which poor parts of Zimbabwe globally have an inherent comparative economic advantage. Growth in this promising sector has been halted and reversed in recent years by destructive political elements with a determination to cling to power at all costs. While considerable damage has been done it can be repaired and growth restarted in a viable and ethical wildlife industry relatively quickly, but this will need considerable outside assistance in the form of both funding and expertise.

Donors traditionally tend to focus on state/communal/NGO sectors and to avoid the private sector. But the private sector has borne the brunt of the damage in the past few years and is going to need help to play its role in reconstruction.

It is a venture with a high chance of success in environmental conservation, national and local income generation, and the alleviation of poverty in geographically disadvantaged areas. It is the sort of situation in which donor assistance is likely to be cost effective in a high profile demonstration of measures to advance the welfare of poor people while also conserving the biosphere and the biodiversity on which future prosperity on a broad geographical front is likely to depend. It is a matter of helping to restore, upgrade and implement a home grown institutional framework that has already been successfully but needs help to take off afresh. The former wildlife sector probably earned the equivalent of over US\$300 million p.a. and benefited at least 5% of the total population of Zimbabwe who received cash directly from the industry. It is doubtful if the surviving remnants of the industry are earning as much as US\$100 million. The aim should be to restore the lost US\$200 million in earnings and to grow this figure and those benefiting directly from wildlife.

Tourism is one of the sectors of an economy that can most quickly be turned around and thus play an important role in the reconstruction of the country.

It is desirable that interested donors should start now to plan for a wildlife sector support programme and should not wait until a democratic government is in place. As soon as possible they should commit themselves to a joint co-ordinated effort to achieve the desired objectives and should form themselves into a steering team. It is also desirable that this team should plan and agree its strategy for action early enough to be in a position to take immediate action as soon as possible. This is necessary for ensuring that the transitional period of damaging confusion between governments is minimised. To this end the donors should also identify a pool of key technical assistance personnel who can be fully briefed in confidence and mobilised for deployment in Zimbabwe as soon as possible after the formation of a new government. Given the high level of indigenous experience which once existed in the country, it is more important to revive this and bring it back into the sector instead of employing expatriate staff from abroad.

#### Disclaimer

The paper reflects the personal opinion of the authors only and not necessarily the views of institutions they work for. We thank a number of persons who have received and commented on earlier drafts, without bearing any responsibility for the content.

### 3 Mozambique Elephant Trophy Import Permit Applications Denied for US-Hunters

By John J Jackson III, Chairman, Conservation Force

After 6 long years, the USF&WS has finally acted on all of the outstanding Elephant Import applications from US hunters that have taken elephant in Mozambique. The Service has denied them all. Conservation Force represented nine applications that were filed between 2000 and 2005. The reasons given for the denials are disappointing.

There may be other hunters that were not directly represented by Conservation Force. It is important that any applicants that Conservation Force do not know of contact Conservation Force immediately so that they can also be included in the request for reconsideration and appeal as necessary. Conservation Force provides this as a free public service.

It is necessary for the Division of Management Authority and the Division of Scientific Authority to each separately approve elephant trophy import applications. The Division of Management Authority decides if hunting "enhances" the elephant population under a special rule of the ESA because elephant are listed as "threatened". The Division of Scientific Authority determines if the "purpose of the import" is not detrimental to the species because of its CITES Appendix II listing. Both divisions decided unfavorably. In our opinion, neither determination was legal, sound or in the best interest of the species.

There have been 5 reasons for the 6 years of delay which all rest on the shoulders of the Service. For the first 2 years, the Service did not begin the processing of the permits because they said it was a "low priority". Much later we were told that the hold-up was that the Service had sent a letter of inquiry and was waiting for a reply from the Mozambique Authorities. The Mozambique Authorities repeatedly searched but could not find any such letter. When we made repeated attempts to get a copy of the alleged letter it was discovered that no such letter existed.

Only after we filed a letter of grievance with the Director of USF&WS was a letter of inquiry sent to Mozambique. The Mozambique Authorities quickly responded, so we waited again for the USF&WS. The Service sent a second letter inquiring further about a few of the 51 points they raised in their first letter. We were not told of the second letter or sent a courtesy copy. Ultimately when we learned of the second letter, Mozambique said it had answered all questions. The Service, however, said it had not. When we finally got a copy of the letter to give to Mozambique, they said that it was already answered. Turns out their reply had been given to the US Ambassador in Mozambique as is the practice with foreign correspondence but the USF&WS claimed not to have received it. The Mozambique Authorities provided another copy of their response to the Service and the permit process apparently began.

All of the information had been supplied in the original permit applications and was referred to in each of the subsequent applications. The Service said it most certainly would not grant any permits if the foreign country authorities would not correspond with them directly. The Service has never communicated to any of the applicants that it needed more information. Under the law,

it is the applicants, not the export country that must furnish the information. In another new protocol, the denials state that the applicants can't submit any additional information in the reconsideration process. That statement directly contradicts regulations required to be attached to the denials which explain the applicant's right to reconsideration and that it should include "any new information or facts pertinent to the issues". This is very important because neither the Service nor the applicant know what more information is needed when the permit is filed. The Service decides that while making the review when the permitting is for a new hunting destination such as Mozambique. These illegal "catch-22s" are not making it easy for applicants.

The reasons for the denial are even more disappointing. The Division of Scientific Authority examined the biological status and management information to determine whether the "purpose" of the imports would be detrimental when the "purpose" is not a biological consideration. This is contrary to the intent and spirit of CITES and specifically Resolution 2.11 adopted at COP 9. Under CITES the biological and management review is intended to be made by the exporting not the importing country.

The Service's denials state that "there is apparently no scientific basis upon which these quotas have been established each year and the actual elephant population in Mozambique is currently not known." To the contrary, there is no scientific basis to deny the permits. First, the elephant hunting areas have been surveyed, in part even with USF&WS funding. There was only a nominal quota of 10 elephants for 1999 through 2004. 8 of the 9 denied permits were taken during this period.

Even if all ten elephants from the annual quota had been taken in one hunting concession it would have been less than 1% of the surveyed population in any one area. Moreover, the wildlife authorities allocated no more than one or two per block per year. For example, in the first year only two were allocated for the entire country. There is no scientific support for the view that the taking of two bull elephant in a year is biologically significant!

The Service also did not find that the hunting "enhanced the survival of the elephant in Mozambique," Yet it stated that a program "that would provide local communities with a stake in the management and conservation of elephant" could be enhancement. That is exactly what exists in Mozambique. The elephant were taken in project areas established at the cost of millions of dollars in which the entire trophy fee goes to the local villages. The Service neglected to even acknowledge the existence of letters from the village chiefs and the articles and reports of the project authors.

The hunting areas are modeled after CAMPFIRE and were established by the Chairman of the Regional Sustainable Use Specialist Group of IUCN, Brian Child. It is a model communal based natural resource management plan.

The reasons for the denials are rambling and confusing. In one instance, the Service states that "there is no information to show what measures, if any, were being taken to deal with human-elephant conflict, to reduce poaching and illegal take, or to maintain wildlife populations." That is exactly what Mozambique's written *National Elephant Management Strategy* explains with regards to tourist elephant hunting.

Conservation Force has not yet filed any import applications

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3 Mozambique Trophy Elephant Import Applications Denied...

from Niassa Game Reserve, though we are in the process; consequently none have been denied.

In 2005, the Mozambique quota was increased from 10 to 40 elephant, primarily to incorporate the Niassa Reserve. The Niassa Game Reserve is a model project in Northern Mozambique that relies heavily upon elephant hunting. The elephant population is documented in bi-annual surveys to be increasing and the area has an intensive management plan addressing all of the issues through safari hunting.

So what do we do now? Conservation Force will ask for reconsideration of the permits and take this matter all the way. We will consult the top elephant experts in the world to re-educate the Service. The processing and denials of the permits leave no question that there are underlying problems within the USF&WS divisions that conduct permitting. Conservation Force will continue to fight the hunters' battles.

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## 4 Book Review: Kai-Uwe Denker's "Along the Hunter's Path"

By Don Causey, Editor/Publisher [The Hunting Report](http://www.huntingreport.com)

There are not many hunting books, in my view, that deserve to be described as blockbusters, but *Along The Hunter's Path* is certainly one of them. Written originally in German by Namibian PH Kai-Uwe Denker, and only now translated into English, it is a huge sprawl of a book that is at once a wonderful collection of hunting tales... a hymn to wild and solitary places... and a celebration of the very act of hunting itself.

Before I began to read this book, a fellow hunter who had already enjoyed it, told me it is like three, four books in one. And indeed it is. In all, there are literally dozens and dozens of tales about past hunts for everything from lesser kudu to warthog to Denker's favorite animal, the elephant. While the heart and soul of the book is given over to tales about hunting the vast, dry reaches of northern Namibia - specifically, to the hunting of elephant there - the book touches on hunting in just about every major hunting country in Africa, including Cameroon, Tanzania and Zimbabwe.

Just make no mistake - these are not amateurish first-person hunting accounts. They are well written, evocative stories with absolutely riveting images of lordly kudu with sun glinting from their horns... of close-up, startled elephants, ears flared, staring down their tusks... of gemsbok lost in the heat shimmer of bone-dry salt flats. There is an awkwardness of language here and there in some of the accounts, due no doubt to Denker being more comfortable with German than English, but what comes through is sheer, raw writing talent.

Indeed, Kai-Uwe Denker can write. He is a wordsmith of the first order, who has a keen eye for detail, a sense of story and an indefinable knack for finding the right words to convey his passion for African hunting. If you have been trying to kick your Africa habit, beware this book! It will hopelessly re-ignite your

addiction. Worse, it may infect you with a passion (or inflame an already existent passion) for elephant hunting.

There is one section of this book alone that is worth the price of the whole volume. It tells the true story of a wild half-breed Bushman who terrorized an entire region with his medicine and his wild behavior. I won't spoil the story for you by even hinting at what happens, but I will tell you the complex portrait Denker paints of that Bushman is a literary *tour de force*. Parts of that section will give you chill bumps. I came away from it feeling I had been afforded a glimpse into the inner sanctum of an old-style African tyrant's soul - a would-be Shaka Zulu born too late and into the wrong environment.

Sprinkled among the hunting stories, Denker ruminates on hunting - why it has such a hold on many of us, how it should be done, what is going to happen to it in a world that is becoming ever more estranged from nature. He is no optimist about the future of hunting. Far from it. But the overall tenor of this book is such that I put it down feeling wonderfully reassured about the future of hunting. A passion this important simply can't die, I concluded. Maybe you will, too.

As mentioned above, this book is not new. What's new is, it has been translated into English for the first time. By special arrangement, *The Hunting Report* has gained the right to offer a limited number of copies on a first-come, first-served basis. If you order a copy and we run out of stock, we won't charge your card.

*Along the Hunter's Path* is an attractive 506-page, hard-cover volume measuring 6 x 8 5/8 inches. It's printed on glossy paper and illustrated with dozens of four-color photographs. This is not a coffee-table book; it is a book to be read and savored and passed down to those you want to inflame with a passion for hunting. I recommend this book like no other I have read in some time.

You can order your copy of "Along the Hunting Path" at [www.huntingreport.com](http://www.huntingreport.com) for US\$120.00. The Hunting Report ships the book to any place in the world

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### African Indaba eNewsletter

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## 5 News from Africa

### Colorado/USA

Colorado officials are debating the use of hunters to help thin elk herds on Federal land. Hunting by private hunters is not legally allowed on Park lands but the State is looking into the idea of using hunters as agents of the state Division of Wildlife in order to accomplish its goals for example in the Rocky Mountain National Park. According to some estimates, this would save the State \$18 million dollars. Colorado is also working with its federal congressional delegation to change the law prohibiting the use of hunters on federal lands if the efforts are designed to help the overall management and conservation of elk. (Source: Denver Post)

### Congo DR

The Ministry of Environment and Conservation of Nature, Waters and Forests has gazetted the Faunal Reserve of Lomako-Yokokala. This new 3,625km<sup>2</sup> Faunal Reserve is important for the protection of one of the worlds best studied Bonobo populations and it harbors critical populations of the endemic Congo peacock, golden cat, giant pangolin, and about ten species of primates. The African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), an international conservation organization working across Africa and headquartered in Kenya, has been supporting ICCN through the gazettelement process, and is now committed to supporting the implementation of a participatory management plan including the development of scientific tourism as a major source of local income.

### Mozambique

The elephant population has recovered steadily in recent years considering the fact that that species and others had been close to extinction as a result civil war that devastated the country for 16 years. The war ended in late 1992 and illegal poaching has also been brought under control. Bartolomeu Souto, National Director of Conservation Areas, says there are currently between 18,000 and 20,000 elephants in different Mozambican parks.

### Namibia

Deputy Minister of Environment and Tourism, Leon Jooste said that trophy hunting in Namibia continues to record an annual growth of 20%, making it the fastest growing and lucrative area in the country's tourism sector. This makes trophy hunting one of the exciting ventures for the ministry as well as for participants according to Jooste. Namibia is also pioneering a trophy hunting system which endeavors not to take "undersize" or immature animals. Currently, Namibia has 55 professional hunters with big game qualifications, 195 normal professional hunters, 232 master hunting guides and 187 hunting guides. In addition, there are 94 registered hunting farms and 19 registered conservancies where trophy hunting takes place. "Trophy hunting is well-regulated and trophy hunting guides go through stringent examinations before they get registered," assured Jooste and he appealed to all the stakeholders to respect the law, show respect to nature and apply ethical practices.

### Namibia

The government has approved the criteria and conditions for a wildlife breeding stock loan scheme administered by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism. The criteria and conditions of the wildlife breeding stock loan scheme provide for historically

disadvantaged persons who have land, acquired under the resettlement program, Affirmative Action Loan Scheme or through leaseholds on communal land that is suitable for the program will qualify under the high priority category, while disadvantaged persons who acquired suitable land by other means will qualify under the second priority category. The third priority category will include corporate or joint owners of land where the proven ownership of persons who are in the historically disadvantaged category amount to at least two thirds of the equity. The statement said the criteria require that a land unit must be able to keep a viable population of the selected species, not be smaller than 1000 hectares and that the land unit must be properly fenced to restrain the species within its boundaries.

### Namibia

A veld fire destroyed about 5 500 ha of grazing on the farm of NAPHA president Danie Strauss. He stocks zebra, kudu, gemsbok and springbok on the farm, which forms part of the Dordabis Conservancy. Strauss said that a private veterinarian had advised him that the animals were already stressed and in shock and relocating them would only worsen the situation. He said a number of farmers had offered him grass to sustain his stock, and he would suspend trophy hunting on the farm until the next rainy season. Sixteen farms, covering more than 40 000 ha fell victim to the massive veld fire, but Kowas was the worst affected, according to Strauss. The other farms include Farm Neuhoof, Guxab and Doornpoort.

### Namibia

The Namibian Cabinet approved a seal-culling quota for Southern African Cape Fur Seal of 85 000 pups and 6 000 bulls for 2006. The harvesting season will run from July 1 to November 15 and they hope to reduce seal predation of the hake. The most recent stock assessment of seals, based on an aerial survey which covered Cape Frio, Cape Cross, Wolf/Atlas Bay, Sinclair Island, Lion's Head and Sylvia Hill, estimated the number of pups at 184,103 and adults at 700,000. Scientists estimated that seals consumed just under 985,000 tons of fish in 2005 while the total annual catch of the Namibian fishing industry was generally between 500 000 and 600 000 tons per year

### Kenya

The country's wildlife policy is "outdated, and no longer meets the aspirations of Kenyans". The crisis within the Kenyan wildlife sector is not only a perception but a fact. Another perception, with strong animal rights' support, that the current policy statement originating in the Sessional Paper No.3 of 1975 is adequate under today's circumstances is decidedly erroneous. These international animal rights organization moved vast amounts of money and international as well as national media to lobby against the Kibaki-Bill – against the will of the Kenyan people and against their elected representatives, who have clearly opted for an overhaul of the outdated wildlife policy and hopefully also a clearly inefficient Kenya Wildlife Service.

Michael Wamithi, formerly a KWS CEO and said to be heavily supported by the anti-use organization International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) recently recommended to postpone a wildlife policy review until after the review of the Kenyan Constitution is completed. In an article in the East African Standard, Wamithi admits that much is wrong in Kenyan wildlife management: "*The frustrations are legion: failure to address human*

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wildlife conflicts; inadequate and untimely compensation for loss of human life and injury; lack of compensation for loss of property and crops caused by wildlife; lack of visible financial benefits from wildlife to local communities such as revenue sharing; drastic declines in wildlife due to poaching and loss of habitats, and failure to attract private sector investment into management of protected areas and other areas rich in biodiversity to reduce demand on taxpayers' money". Welcome to the "Flat-Earth-Society", Mr Wamithi and IFAW – that Kenyans and their wildlife deserve better is of little concern to them it seems.

#### Kenya

Four people were killed in two separate incidents by lions in the Garissa District of Kenya. Witnesses said the lions mauled three children in Modogashe and killed a farmer in Bura. The attack brings to eight the number of residents killed by lions in two months.

#### Rwanda

The last Black Rhino, (*Diceros bicornis michaeli*), was recently found dead in Akagera National Park. Field staff reported the Rhino's death in the Kirara Plain. Investigations to establish the cause of its death are underway. In September 2003, an operation to search and locate the black rhino in Akagera National Park was carried out. The single remaining female black rhino was successfully identified, immobilized and equipped with a radio transmitter.

#### Tanzania

Working in close association with Maji-Tech Engineering Ltd, the Arusha-based Friedkin Conservation Fund (FCF) is undertaking a long term borehole drilling initiative throughout the country. Longido Secondary School will now be the first to receive a borehole as part of this plan. FCF has a close association with the school since the mid-nineties. The list of donors to the project includes the Sackman, Bowman and Holland families from the United States and the Lemman family from Brazil/Switzerland. Organizations such as the New York/Tri-State chapter of the SCI Sables and a consortium of Toyota dealers from the southern United States completed the list of donors.

Next in line was Mpeta Village from Kigoma District in the south-western corner of Tanzania. Paul Hobby, a hunting client of Tanzania Game Tracker Safaris (TGTS) funded the drilling of a borehole close to the Uvinza Open Area and FCF used the Tanganyika Christian Refugee Services Water Development Unit from Kikondo to complete the project.

Recently TGTS acquired a borehole drilling rig and now FCF is in a strong position to continue to provide boreholes to areas in need through generous contributions of clients and associates of Tanzania Game Tracker Safaris and Wengert Windrose Safaris, as well as expand services in all areas of community conservation and anti-poaching.

#### Tanzania/Taiwan

In July, Kaohsiung Harbor officials discovered an estimated 350 tusks in two containers said to contain sisal fiber that had originated in Tanzania and where en route to Manila. The ivory weighed around 2,500kg and valued at more than US\$3,100,775. The tusks were mostly from full-grown elephants, with the longest one measuring 180cm. The last time the country

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## 6 PHASA Disciplinary Actions

Source: PHASA

**Editor's Comment:** PHASA president Stewart Dorrington and the PHASA Executive Committee have to be congratulated for the decisive actions taken. Please see also the article "The Shooting of Captive Bred Lions" on the next page.

The Disciplinary Tribunal of PHASA – the Professional Hunters' Association of South Africa – arrived at a judgment in the two disciplinary cases against Mr Dawie Groenewald (Out of Africa Adventurous Safaris) and Mr Kryz Wessels (Kukuzans Hunting Safaris). According to the judgments, the PHASA memberships of Mr Groenewald and Mr Wessels have been terminated with immediate effect. Both will be able to reapply for PHASA membership in four and three years' time respectively and if they do reapply, PHASA will have to be satisfied that there are no outstanding complaints against them.

The lawyers of Mr Wessels have lodged various objections against the findings of the Tribunal centering on the perception that the Tribunal did not afford Mr Wessels all his rights during his hearing. PHASA has in the meantime decided that the implementation of the disciplinary findings against Mr Wessels will be suspended pending a report to PHASA and the Tribunal by ECE (Pty) Ltd about whether or not there is substance to the objections of Mr Wessels. Both PHASA and the Tribunal believe that disciplinary process, which PHASA re-instituted in 2005, is on the right track and the independent review of Mr Wessels' case re-confirms PHASA's commitment. The Tribunal will also study and respond to the objections of Mr Wessels.

The Tribunal and PHASA are very mindful of possible consequences resulting from an expulsion or membership suspension. If a member feels there has been a failure of natural justice, the Tribunal and PHASA take such concerns very seriously. They also stated it would only be fair to such person(s) to investigate the concerns and that until the Tribunal and PHASA are in a position to respond to the said concerns, the implementation of the expulsion should be suspended. The aim is for Mr Wessels' case to be completed by the end of September 2006.

The PHASA Executive Council proposed amending Paragraph 6 of the PHASA Constitution "Application for membership" with the criteria to be followed by PHASA when a person applies for membership which compels PHASA to have regard to any complaints against any applicant and imposes a duty on any applicant to disclose to PHASA any complaints they are aware of. If a complaint(s) is/are not disclosed and it comes to PHASA's attention after the application for membership has been granted, such membership will automatically be terminated.

"Application for membership shall be made to the Association in the form that may be prescribed from time to time. In considering the application the committee shall apply such procedure, will use such criteria and will take cognizance of any relevant fact consistent with the Bill of Rights, as it deems fit."

*"Hunting has underpinned conservation policies over so great a span of history and across so wide a range of cultures that this record alone makes a powerful case to continue it. [Hunting] is still the most general and powerful force for conserving."*

Ian Parker, author of numerous wildlife books and articles, former Kenya Game Warden (2004)



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seized a large amount of smuggled ivory was in May 2000, when Kaohsiung Harbor discovered 332 tusks, weighing 2,160kg.

#### Tanzania

Members of the Tanzanian Parliament expressed their concern on the poor performance of the Wildlife Department in a parliamentary debate in Dodoma. The opposition Civic United Front accused the government of poor management of the country's natural resources. The shadow minister for natural resources and tourism Ms. Magdalena Sakaya pointed out that the recent transfer of the Director of Wildlife that was later rescinded for reasons that were not well explained, tasted of "bad governance". As a result of the problems in the Wildlife Division, several foreign donors, like the German GTZ, who are financing projects run by the department, have withdrawn their sponsorships. Ms. Sakaya also asked the government with regard to the management of the country's hunting blocks to specifically state how many hunting blocks have been designated as such between 2004 and 2006, and she wanted to know to which safari operators such blocks were allocated as well as the areas in which the registered hunting safari companies operate. MP Mgana Msindai questioned the whereabouts of the Wildlife Bill which was discussed by the MPs in a workshop three years ago and requested information when the Bill will be tabled in the House. In Msindai's opinion, the problems experienced in the Wildlife Department have their root cause in the delay of enacting the Wildlife Bill.

#### Zambia

Aerial and ground surveys of Nile crocodiles have been undertaken in the month of November 2003 in major water systems for the purpose of estimating the density of crocodiles. The surveyed areas were mainly National Parks/Game Management Areas where safari hunting is permissible. The program involved a combination of aerial and ground counts. Preliminary results estimated the population of the species at 13,702 animals for the surveyed selected water systems to allow for the annual hunting quota of 300 animals per annum since 2004.

#### Zambia/Philippines

Zambia Wildlife Authority (ZAWA) disclosed that a container with six tons of elephant ivory believed to have originated from Zambia that was seized in Manila, Philippines last year has gone missing. ZAWA and the Lusaka Agreement Task Force (LATF) undertook a verification trip to Manila to establish the origin of the seized elephant ivory, but discovered it was stolen whilst in the custody of the Philippine Bureau of Customs. The Bureau of Customs had insisted on keeping the tusks despite the Department of Environment and National Resources' (DENR) repeated requests to turn the contraband over to them.

#### Zimbabwe

The Parks and Wildlife Management Authority has, with immediate effect, suspended ivory sales to all dealers until a proper monitoring system has been put in place. The decision to suspend the ivory sales was reached at a meeting between the authority and the ivory dealers' association. The suspension will only be lifted once a committee set up by the two parties had completed drafting a working document to be used in ivory trade on the local market. Under CITES, Zimbabwe can only sell worked ivory for domestic use and not for commercial purposes.

## 7 The Shooting of Captive Bred Lions

PHASA Policy Statement issued May 2006

PHASA has always been opposed to the shooting of captive bred lions. Last year the executive committee took a strong stance against this practice and stated it would take action against any member who took part in any such hunts. However before any disciplinary action can be taken, a complaint needs to be laid against and investigated.

There have been very few complaints laid although the practice still continues. The PHASA executive has decided to inform the members that such practices will not be tolerated any further even if no complaint is laid. Thus any member who may be involved in the shooting of captive bred lions is requested to refrain from such activities or resign your membership of PHASA. Furthermore, PHASA is going public with this stance. A letter will be sent out to the media letting them know what our stance has always been and now to what extent we will act.

PHASA members should be aware that it is fraudulent to offer a captive bred lion as a free ranging lion on a hunt and that PHASA will act upon information that implicates any member in such activities.

#### PHASA Canned Lion Shooting Policy Issued 1999

1. PHASA hereby states categorically and unequivocally that it does not consider the practice of "canned lion shooting" to be a form of hunting.
2. The legislation in some countries (or some provinces of countries) in Southern Africa does not adequately address the issue of "canned lion shooting" thus making the practice of lion breeding for shooting purposes and the actual shooting of such lion under a variety of conditions perfectly legal.
3. PHASA is in agreement with civil society that adequate legislation should be introduced by the relevant authorities in order to put an end to "canned lion shooting".
4. PHASA deems an animal to be "canned", when that animal cannot sustain itself, breed freely and be hunted under the principles of fair chase.

More than 60 articles, papers and documents relating to incentive-driven-conservation and hunting on the African Continent from international authors can be downloaded at

<http://www.africanindaba.co.za/conservationafrica.htm>

## 8 Hyaena: Scavenger or Predator? The Human Influence on Hyaena and Lion

By Steve Pope

Since the 1970's there have been some dramatic animal population fluctuations in world-renowned game regions, including predator population crashes, brief explosions of prey numbers and unnatural establishment of hyaena packs, where the latter have changed their habit from scavenging to predation and thereby profoundly affected both predator and prey populations. I argue that these fluctuations are a direct result of human influence through culling, poaching, hunting and food made available to animals from camps.

In Mana Pools impala were culled every year from 1969 until the bush war intervened in 1973, but by 1980 there was a balance between prey and predator, lasting until 1989. In that year, however, the predator populations crashed and the impala population exploded, coinciding with hyaena packs becoming established.

In the early 1980s it was possible to see three different lion prides on an early morning drive. Leopard were prevalent and at one time we frequently saw six cheetah. Tourists do not visit a game reserve to view large herds of impala or troops of baboons. Elephants are an attraction, but what really stirs the adrenaline and brings tourists back is the sight of predators hunting and feeding.

So, what happened to the predators? Right through the 1980s they were plentiful, but since the early 1990s it has been difficult to see them. From 1982 until 1989 I had only two safaris without sighting lion, in the next year alone we had two safaris with no lion sighting, and by 1991 we were lucky to see them at all. Hyaena that were rare in the early 1980s, by the mid to late 1980s were being photographed as frequently as the predators.

In 1987 I noticed that only one pride of lion on the river terraces had new cubs. I became concerned the next year when I again noted that there were no new cubs, only those born in 1987, and in 1989, by mid dry season again there were no new cubs, the only young lion being the sub-adults born in 1987. The lion population had crashed and leopard and cheetah numbers dropped dramatically as well. The result was an explosion in the impala population during 1990 and 1991.

I started the 1992 season already disillusioned, only to discover that National Parks was planning to cull impala. Viv Wilson, in his book "Lions, Leopards and Lynxes" (1981), states, "as a result of extensive culling of impala, wildebeest and elephant in the Wankie National Park the hyaena population had increased tremendously and they were completely unafraid of humans and, for that matter, even of lions." Mr M G Hornocker's "10-Year Study of Mountain Lion" published in the National Geographic of July 1992, states, "A Mountain Lion's territory is determined by the food supply". Since, according to ecologist Kevin Dunham impala were the predators' main food supply, I thought it made sense to attempt to stop the cull. With the predator population already under increasing threat from the hyaena, I argued that to reduce the main predator food supply would be disastrous and that instead hyaena numbers should be reduced.

However, there were so many impala that they had become known as "Mana Goats" in a derogatory manner. In a degraded environment goats are seen to be numerous and to do well, and are mistakenly thought to have caused the degradation. The goats do well because their diet is so varied - they browse on trees and bushes and even feed on most weeds. The fact that impala are 50% grazers and 50% browsers was ignored; the fact that their numbers were high because the habitat could support them was ignored, and so 5000 impala were culled. Large numbers were wounded and not recovered, providing an unnatural food supply to the hyaena. There were reports of up to 30 hyaena following the cull vehicle and running off with carcasses before they could be recovered.

Events in the Zambezi Valley provided further evidence that human influence had led to the increase in hyaena numbers. In 1984, when 4,000 elephant were culled, a meat contractor, having processed what he could from the 14.7 shot everyday, left hundreds of kilograms as an unnatural, abundant food supply for the hyaena, initiating the increase in hyaena numbers. This unnatural supply was augmented by canoe safaris bringing in rubbish, by hyaenas thieving meat from unwary campers, and by the feeding of hyaenas for photographic purposes.

Lion had also benefited from the elephant cull but given their social behaviour where abundant food equals cub survival, but poor food supply equals cub mortality, when hyaena deprive lions of their kills then cub deaths go up and the population crashes. Also, lion do not raid dustbins.

By 1990 the hyaenas were so numerous that they had become self-subsisting. Adopting the tactics of Painted Hunting Dogs, they could now hunt for themselves and could drive a pride of lion off a fresh kill. Hyaena cubs, raised in dens, were protected from lions, whereas the greater number of hyaenas made it more difficult for lioness to protect and feed their cubs.

Following is an account, by Miles Bennet, of a lion/hyaena incident in Mana Pools in June 1994: - "The week before we arrived four lions had killed a buffalo but, within an hour of the kill, had been chased off by at least 20 hyaena. Despite numerous game-drives we did not see any lions until our last day when, at Long Pool we came across several excited hyaena running in and out of a dense thicket near the pan. We spotted a lioness hiding and could hear another male nearby calling to her. A number of hyaena would respond to the lion's calls by rushing out of the thicket to look for the lions, then rushing back into the thicket where there was obviously a kill. This carried on until the lioness broke cover. At once all the hyaenas (we counted 21) left the kill and chased the lioness. They surrounded her and took turns attacking her from behind, and as she turned to defend herself, others would attack her from the rear. A large male lion ran in from the tree line to help the lioness. He sent one hyaena somersaulting for some 10 meters, but he too ended up being surrounded with the lioness, being attacked on all sides. The male we had heard calling to the lioness earlier now broke from cover and went to help the two, as did an elderly lioness from the southern side. A fierce fight erupted between the four lion and 21 hyaena, with the hyaena eventually returning to the kill. The lion, all looking exhausted, lay down and rested before moving off. The kill was a young elephant, about 3 years old. We are of the opinion that the lions made the kill and were chased off by

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the hyaenas".

It is generally claimed that one adult pride male lion present at a kill is often enough to deter and prevent hyaena from taking over. The above description illustrates that hyaena were so dominant that not even two males could defend the kill.

In 1992, when National Parks first allowed visitors to Chitake Spring, I discovered, on two reconnaissance trips, a large pride of 22 lion and no sign of hyaena!! Here was an isolated ecological oasis that hadn't been culled, hunted, poached or hosted tourists. The few hyaena do not challenge the lion at all. Ten years later, they have never been seen in numbers of more than seven, which means that they are still fulfilling their traditional role as scavengers. I have often proposed that Chitake be regarded as a norm for comparison.

I discovered that the same scenario of burgeoning hyaena and falling numbers of lion had occurred in the hunting concessions. I was told that in the early 1980s, if an elephant was shot, a pride of lion would appear, but by the early 1990s it would be a pack of hyaena. Lion were so scarce that the Mashonaland Hunters' Association hunters put a voluntary ban on hunting them. At the same time, there were such large packs of hyaena that they were put on license to be hunted. Writing of the effect on lions of the theft of their kills by hyaena, Rob Oostindien proposed that Parks introduce a management cull operation for the harvesting of hyaena.

In the meantime, I studied numerous documentary films, mostly filmed in Botswana Savuti, portraying hyaena as predators. They are not scientific studies but they showed Spotted Hyaena attacking a large pride of lion and depriving them of their kill. What was happening in Botswana was exactly the same as was happening on the river terraces at Mana Pools. Worse, the filmmakers were claiming that lion and hyaena were eternal enemies, and that the hyaena were super predators. What had happened to the notion that hyaena were scavengers? I knew that to argue this point I would have to show that the hyaena in Botswana had also benefited from an unnatural food supply.

In Gus Mills' report on his study of Spotted Hyaena in Namibia, he shows that when hyaena hunt, two thirds of their kills are young, rather than adult. The film, "Patterns in the Grass" claims that the ecological damage from the slaying of a zebra foal by hyaena is far less than that from the loss of a full-grown zebra killed by lion, stating that "many more adults are killed by lion" and "as older mares and stallions are cut down, knowledge accumulated over countless seasons of migration are lost". This implies that it is ecologically better to have packs of hyaena than prides of lion!!

The film shows a hunting party shooting a zebra and removing the skin for trophy, leaving the entire carcass for scavengers. It then blames the decline in zebra numbers, from 48,000 to 7,000 between 1981 and 1991, on poachers. It seems far more likely that hyaena packs, established on hunted and abandoned zebra carcasses, are responsible.

There are hordes of hyaena in the Masai Mara in Kenya, and in Serengeti and Ngorongoro in Tanzania. In the early 1900s these areas were the venue for most of Africa's hunting. It is reasonable to presume that these hunts provided an unnatural food supply to the hyaena. It is argued that prides of lion do co-exist with these packs of hyaena, but those regions are open

grassland plains with a much greater biomass of prey animals. Recently, a Mrs. Jenna Sutton informed me that in 2001, a lodge where she was staying in the Masai Mara was feeding a pack of 30 hyaena.

In January 2002 a meeting was called in Zimbabwe to discuss the status of lion in the Zambezi Valley. There was talk of banning hunting of lion in Botswana and both National Parks and the hunting operators were concerned that pressure would force Zimbabwe to take the same action. I presented a paper to demonstrate that packs of hyaena hunting for themselves and harassing prides of lion were abnormal, and were caused by human action, and that the hyaena should be controlled. I also tried to show that the hyaena had evolved as a scavenger. In "The Safari Companion" Richard D Estes says that the Spotted Hyaena utilizes carcasses more efficiently than any other carnivores. Bones, horns, hooves, even teeth are digested within 24 hours. In "The Behaviour Guide to African Mammals" Estes goes further to say that the desiccated corpses of wildebeests that died months earlier are consumed and yield protein, fat, calcium, phosphorous and other minerals sufficient to suckle young. No true predator would even survive on such a food supply. This description of a highly efficient digestive system is of an animal that spent millions of years evolving as a scavenger, utilizing a food niche unused by predators.

My paper was generally well received; the authorities said that more statistics were required. Of greatest interest to me was the information gathered from hunters, all claiming that in their concessions the lion populations had recovered since hyaena had come on quota. Bill Bedford provided hunting statistics for lion and hyaena, presented in a graph below. The graph illustrates clearly that in the early 90's very few lion were hunted (in 1994 none at all) but as the number of hyaena offtake increased so the number of lion, on quota and hunted, also increased.

Some would not accept my proposal that hyaena are supposed to be scavengers and should not be dominating prides of lion. Someone claimed that the hyaena has a consistently larger heart relative to the lion, and a foot structure suitable for covering long distances because it is a 'marathon hunter'. My response is that the hyaena has to cover long distances because it is a scavenger, whereas the lion's relatively smaller heart is because it is an efficient predator.

The contention that packs of hyaena are normal and have always occurred is an assumption. Bill Harvey was a Game Ranger in Tanganyika (Tanzania) from 1928 to 1938. He writes "I traveled many thousand of miles by car, on foot and by canoe to cover my new range making careful notes containing detailed observations of all wild life in the provinces". Harvey's description of hyaena is that of a scavenger: "they are heavily built animals with very strong shoulders and necks. Their skulls are wide and deep and their powerful jaws equipped with muscles and molars capable of crushing almost any bone excepting the biggest bones of an elephant . . . In spite of their size, strength and powerful jaws, they seldom attack any living creatures bigger than themselves and then only if the victim is asleep or sick ... They are solitary and nocturnal in their habits ... Being cowardly creatures they live almost entirely on carrion ... No matter what state of decomposition of a carcass they will return night after night until every bit of rotting meat is eaten and then they will

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break up and eat the bones ... As a rule they do not hunt in packs and I have never come across an instance of this nature ... They travel long distances in a night."

The 1964 edition of Collier's Encyclopaedia states that the hyaena is a carrion feeder; that it is a solitary roving animal and that a large percentage of its food is from kills by lions; but no hyaena would dare approach until the lion had satisfied its hunger and left the kill. Since the 1970's our concept of hyaena has changed from the above description to believing that what we now see in these recent wildlife films is normal behavior.

How long is it going to be before logic prevails and effective conservation of Africa's true predators begins? It will not be sufficient to merely stop feeding hyaena through culling, poaching and hunting, or by safari camps that feed them their leftovers. It is my contention that, through controlled hunting/culling of hyaena, and returning them to a scavenging role, populations of prey species will recover in a very short time and the predator populations will follow.

For comments please contact: Steve Pope of Chipembere Safaris, e-mail: [chipsaf@zol.co.zw](mailto:chipsaf@zol.co.zw) ([www.xtremesafari.com](http://www.xtremesafari.com))

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## 9 Reclaiming Land for Wildlife

By Stewart Dorrington

Private land use practices will always be tending towards that activity that provides the best economic return on that land. Our own farm history shows exactly that.

Our family farm was undeveloped and devoid of wildlife when my grandfather acquired it in 1918. On the savannah veld he started crop farming. He then switched to commercial cattle for export beef. Later my mother started stud farming and became nationally recognized as a leading stud breeder and cattle judge. As a consequence of the cattle operation the property was divided by fences into 35 camps. Wild game had little or no value. Farmers in the district entertained guests and clients by offering free hunting. The weekends saw the postmaster, bank manager and others partaking in the hunt. Very few animals were actually killed since there were very few!

Most properties were still growing crops. Wheat in winter, and *mielles* in summer; some grew vegetables too. The green winter crops were too great a temptation for many wild animals. The few remaining animals that roamed the bush were easy targets in these fields, and quite legally, as the farmers would simply get a *skade* (damage) permit to shoot animals that entered his fields. From a purely economic perspective this is quite understandable. You have to see the damage that some animals can do to crops to appreciate the farmers' standpoint.

During the years my mother ran her stud cattle on the farm, we had a small population of kudu and warthog. Bushbuck were very scarce, as were impala. We never hunted them. We tried to protect what was left and leave them undisturbed. Some of our neighbors cursed us for sheltering these pests.

I joined my mother on the cattle farm in 1984 and dreamt to

converting our 5,000 hectares to a game farm, but we just could not afford it! The capital outlay for game fencing would be enormous and the cost of building a camp was another inhibiting factor. There was little or no economic gain or prospect seen in an investment in wildlife. The value of wildlife was negligible – a white rhino cost 800 Rand at that time – and Nature Conservation gave away excess game from their reserves for a nominal charge, mostly just to cover the cost of catching and translocation.

Around this time some of our farming friends admitted that they were making a bit of extra cash with local hunters. The concept of paying for hunting was just starting to catch on in South Africa. Hunting was also becoming a fashionable corporate entertainment activity.

This development looked encouraging; if we could earn money from hunting, we could possibly make enough to cover the fencing costs. There was a severe drought during this period in the bushveld and we had translocated our cattle to Natal. Back home, we were left with an almost empty property and a labor force with no work.

We now made a life-changing switch, sold one of the stud herds and used the proceeds to fence the property according to the standards required by Nature Conservation. At last the game on our property was ours and we could look after it. It is amazing how quickly the kudu population increased now that they weren't being shot out in the fields.

Two years later I booked the first couple of hunters. Their hunting didn't seem to impact on the growing populations of kudu and impala and so the next year we booked some more. The income derived from the safaris was used to build a basic camp. The cattle were still earning the income to cover the running costs of the farm. The hunting income was an added bonus and enabled us to look at investing in wildlife species that used to occur in the district.

Eland were next to arrive and then gemsbuck and hartebeest from Namibia (a practice that soon may be prohibited). We even managed to buy zebra and tsessebe. There was so little demand for game at this time that Nature Conservation kept a waiting list of people wanting game. When they had to remove excess game they called on the waiting list and sold much of the game at low prices.

Over the next few years it became increasingly difficult to make a profit from cattle. The internal cattle fences proved to be a hazard for game. Moreover the wild animals were constantly breaking the fences making stud farming impossible. We decided to stop stud breeding and just breed commercial beef. Game populations began to compete with the cattle for space and forage and we realized soon that the farm became overstocked. There were only two options: we either had to reduce the cattle numbers substantially or start culling game.

Economics became very important. With a labor force to maintain, vehicles, pumps, water lines, firebreaks, insurances and a host of other expenses that nobody ever considers, we had to make sure we could make ends meet. The property had been in the family since 1918 and I didn't want to be the one to blow it all because of my passion for wildlife.

We had a sale of cattle and re-invested these funds into rare game species. We bought five disease-free buffalo. In money

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### Society for Conservation Biology (SCB)

The Society for Conservation Biology (SCB), in collaboration with Blackwell Publishing and Elsevier Publishing, announces that online access to *Conservation Biology*, *Conservation In Practice*, and *Biological Conservation* is now free to SCB members in developing countries. Elsevier has also added *Ecological Indicators*, *Ecological Complexity*, and *Ecological Informatics* to the free publications. SCB is also negotiating to acquire similar access to a suite of other conservation-related journals from a variety of publishers, including additional titles from Blackwell and Elsevier. Thanks to a grant from The Nature Conservancy (TNC), SCB is able to offer free memberships to a large number of conservationists in developing countries and therefore provide access to the growing list of free conservation publications.

More information on the SCB website <http://conbio.org> or contact Dr. Alan Thornhill, Society for Conservation Biology at [athornhill@conbio.org](mailto:athornhill@conbio.org)

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#### 9 Reclaiming Land for Wildlife

terms, each of the five buffalo equaled about 40 cows! Many of our neighbors thought that we had "lost the plot" How long would it take to get an economic return from five buffalo - two bulls and three cows? All the remaining cattle was brought to a leased farm nearby, and our own property was used exclusively for wildlife. The income from the cattle during these transition years was vital for economic survival. It also allowed the game numbers to build up to a level where we could start hunting on a sustainable basis.

Within two years from starting hunting, the income had grown substantially. I now started to look at the trophy hunting market. With the sliding Rand, the idea of earning hard Dollars became very attractive. In 1988, I passed the professional hunter and outfitter exams, but never conducted any hunts until 1990, when I had my first US client.

It was not just my neighbors who now wished that they also had a game farm. Many farmers around the country were noticing the changes. Those that could afford it also began fencing and purchased game. We were able to capitalize on this trend. Game prices were rising rapidly and we found ourselves in the fortunate position to sell game into this market. After a mere four years of fencing, we needed to remove about sixty kudu per year. Only half of that number was hunted. When we switched to trophy hunting, we were able to sell even more live game, as the sustainable trophy take off was a mere 5% and the population growth for antelopes normally hovers around 25%.

One of the biggest advantages we found with game farming was that our income did not drop drastically in periodic drought years. The demand for hunting remained constant. Cattle on the other hand saw prices of livestock drop and feeding costs rocket during drought years. We were re-investing any profits back into game. We brought in more rare species like sable antelope from Zimbabwe and another group of sable from Hoedspruit. We added another three buffalo to our herd of nine and last but not

least, we brought five white rhino to the farm.

We were now firmly established in the hunting market, both locally and with a growing demand internationally. In 1998 we decided to sell the remaining cattle on the leased land and become totally dependant on our game. The transition into a game reserve was complete. The change was funded largely by hunting. The maintenance and operation of the reserve is funded entirely by hunting. We thought costs would drop dramatically with game, especially items like feed, veterinary expenses, tractor and property maintenance etc., but it doesn't happen that way - costs merely shift. Now we have marketing expenses like brochures and overseas exhibition booth costs, maintenance of the camp and hunting vehicles, we still have tractors and there is additional staff like professional hunters, catering and camp staff.

Private ownership of game and the ability to trade it has been the key to the South African wildlife resurgence. Give game an economic value, and the conservation success of the species increases with its market value. Remove this incentive and you reduce conservation initiatives on private land. The rest of Africa's wildlife is in decline. Why? The game is *res nullus* and as such subject to the consequences of the "Tragedy of the Commons". There is no benefit for the local population in its conservation and therefore they don't conserve it.

A question I am asked often is why hunted? The animals are so beautiful and the farm is so peaceful; don't you prefer looking at a live animal than killing it? Why not ecotourism? Tourists pay to repeatedly to photograph an animal rather than shoot it once. Let us look at the alternatives to hunting:

In our case it is cattle ranching. The end of the road for beef cattle is the feedlot, the truck to an abattoir, and finally the animal is pushed down a chute and shot in the head with a retractable bolt while standing in a crush. The end of the road for a game animal in its natural surroundings is the crack of a rifle or the twang of a bowstring, coming out of nowhere and usually ending the life of the targeted animal in an instant. In most cases it is not aware of the human presence.

Earlier, I mentioned my neighbors. They produced cash crops. Any animal that entered their fields was shot on sight. In the evenings they would park on the edge of the lands and any warthog or kudu venturing out was shot as damage causing. At night they would shoot duiker and bushbuck, porcupines too. Their intention was to rid the area of these "pests." On top of that, the ground was ploughed and fertilized; crops were sprayed with herbicides and pesticides. These all have the effect of directly or indirectly killing animals, insects and birds. The cost in blood to produce these crops is high, not to mention the ecological damage done by agricultural chemicals when they leach into the soils and threaten our river systems

But strangely, many people have no problem buying bread made from wheat, onions, and what other agricultural products. They don't believe that the agricultural production kills wildlife as they don't see (and don't want to know) how the crops are produced. There is no visible bleeding carcass, and yet by buying these products consumers are supporting a mean killing machine. Nobody, absolutely nobody who reads this article can claim innocence. Think about where your food comes from and how its production impacts on wildlife. It is no coincidence that

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the areas that produce the most food are also areas that had their highest carrying capacity for game. Game that has been wiped out and has been replaced by crop or stock farming!

I say to those who claim to hold the moral high ground, those who condemn hunting, but close their eyes and support the environmental killing machine: Hunters are supporting and funding wildlife by paying to hunt it! We nearly all eat chickens, bacon and beef without blinking. Hunting is the cleanest and least cruel of all the alternatives. The media have focused the public's attention on some of the worst aspects of hunting. But how can we criticize hunting alone or single it out when we are all contributing to the destruction of biodiversity and our natural resources?

But why not ecotourism? It simply comes down to economics. Ecotourists want to see the Big Five. In order to have the Big Five you need a huge tract of land. Very few farmers have that land available. They also need a lodge, preferably a so called up-market luxury lodge and appropriate game viewing vehicles. That requires an investment of many millions of Rand. Most farmers don't have that either. Ecotourists prefer to be on or near a world-renowned tourist route, like the Kruger Park. The reality is that most farmers are stuck far away from all those things. If you look at who is investing in these luxury game lodges you will find corporate groups or businessmen who do not have to make a living from their investment. In fact, it is often subsidized from their core business outside the farming sphere.

The biggest disservice we can do for wildlife is to make it dependent on a welfare scheme. If game cannot compete financially for land use, it will disappear eventually and by subsidizing game on the land, as many corporates and businessmen do, its future is less than secure. The future of wildlife in Africa is dependent on those people who need the income that game can provide.

The farmer living on his farm simply does not have the vast amounts of money to invest. I have seen more than once that those farmers who were lured into making the investment with large bank loans end up losing it all. For us, the farm is our home – and we value our privacy. Do we really want a bunch of demanding tourists criss-crossing the veld on the back of comfortable game viewing vehicles, disturbing the regular life patterns of the animals? Don't ever think that ecotourists are eco-sensitive, and that ecotourism does not do environmental harm!

For the majority of farmers, the choice is between commercial stock or crop farming and game farming. On the average game farm wildlife is utilized through hunting and/or by live capture and game sales, usually to another hunting farm. The local tourist usually wants an inexpensive, self catering, weekend getaway and the income generated through this tourism sector does not come near to covering running costs. In most cases it can only be viewed as a small sideline. And areas like the Springbok Flats, the remote Karoo, and large parts of the Highveld are not sought after tourism destinations. So don't look at tourism as the alternative for most game farmers.

As mentioned I am passionate about wildlife and wild areas, more so than I am about hunting. It is the best method to return wildlife to the land. I do have a problem, however, with hunting done in the incorrect manner. Unfortunately, the boom in the game industry has often resulted in economic consideration supplanting the principles of fair chase and good conservation

practices. This has resulted in the captive breeding of lions and canned shooting, the breeding of exotic species, movement of game to areas where it never occurred historically, the genetic manipulation and crossbreeding of species and a couple of other issues. This has also come about because of the lack of a sound policy by the authorities on game farming and hunting. For the past few years there has been little dialogue between the industry and the government. Game farming and hunting was regarded as a white, male elitist industry and channels of communication and cooperation were dismantled. I am happy to see these communication channels are reopened. It seems that there is now a framework being laid down for game farming and hunting which will go a long way to help clean out bad practices and establish South Africa as a world leader in hunting and conservation.

As we see game areas declining in the rest of Africa, game populations have grown tremendously here with many benefits to tourism. Hunting has been the main driver, so don't knock hunting, support it for the sake of our wildlife.

## South African Falconry Association (SAFA)

The South African Falconry Association (SAFA) is an umbrella body that represents South African Falconers. Its membership is comprised of the seven Provincial Falconry Clubs (Cape Falconry Club, Eastern Cape Falconry Club, Limpopo Falconry Club, Mpumalanga Falconry Club, Natal Falconry Club, Free State Falconry Club, Transvaal Falconry Club).

The purposes of SAFA are to uphold and develop the standards of falconry practiced in South Africa, to improve communication between falconers throughout South Africa, to represent South African falconers and their interests nationally, regionally and internationally, to encourage and facilitate the participation of falconers in conservation work and scientific research with respect to raptors and the environment and to represent South African Falconers in negotiation and collaboration with Conservation Authorities.

More details can be found on the new SAFA website at: [www.safalconry.org.za](http://www.safalconry.org.za)

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# 10 Population Estimates of Mountain Nyala on the Rise

By Paul Evangelista

**Editor's Note:** Click [www.africanindaba.co.za/photographs.htm](http://www.africanindaba.co.za/photographs.htm) for some interesting photos of Mountain Nyala - I am very grateful to Paul Evangelista of the Natural Resource Ecology Laboratory at Colorado State University for having given us permission to publish this article and the photos.

The mountain nyala (*Tragelaphus buxtoni*) is endemic to the highlands of Ethiopia and only known to inhabit the eastern side of the Rift Valley. First reported in 1908 by Major Ivor Buxton, the mountain nyala is considered to be the last large ungulate species discovered in Africa. Nearly a century after its discovery, scientists still know very little about the population or distribution of the species, which at times has impaired management and conservation strategies. The first significant surveys of the mountain nyala were conducted by Leslie Brown in the late 1960s. Brown was the first to attempt to define the mountain nyala's full range, and determine population densities at both local and regional scales. In 1969, he reported that the total population of mountain nyala was probably between 7,000 and 8,000, not likely to be less than 4,500, and as high as 12,500 at best. As a result of Brown's report, the mountain nyala was taken off IUCN's Red List of Endangered Species from 1969-1974, for the first and only time since it was first listed in 1945.

The next significant population estimate was conducted by Chris Hillman in 1988. Hillman's work, largely conducted in the Bale Mountains National Park (BMNP), suggested that mountain nyala populations totaled between 2,000 and 4,000. Since then, population estimates have continuously declined with some recent estimates suggesting populations as low 1,000 with 95% of these residing within the BMNP. Once again, there is new interest and concern over the status of the mountain nyala, and both Ethiopian wildlife managers and international conservation groups are actively seeking accurate population estimates to facilitate proper management initiatives and insure the long-term survival of the species.

Mountain nyala populations are fragmented throughout Ethiopia, and in many cases isolated to mountain peaks or rugged terrain that deter human encroachment. The most northern populations of mountain nyala are found in the Chercher Mountains, also called the Ahmar Mountains, specifically in the Kuni-Muktar Wildlife Sanctuary, and in Din Din and Arba Gugu Controlled Hunting Areas. In 1998, the mountain nyala was thought to be extinct from Kuni-Muktar which fueled the concern that the species was declining to dangerously low numbers. This was not the case however, and in 2003 the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Department (EWCD) confirmed their persistence, suggesting that the Kuni-Muktar population is around 200. I visited the area in 2005 and found that local communities and wildlife managers have been proactive in maintaining the sanctuary, and were engaged in an extensive reforestation campaign. The most recent surveys of Kuni-Muktar, Din Din and Arba Gugu would put the total population of mountain nyala in the northern range at about 350.

The central Southern Highlands are dominated by the Arussi

Mountains, and are also known to have only a few remnant mountain nyala populations. The best known area is the Galama Mountains, which was made famous by early safari hunters and explorers such as Major Buxton, Gertrude Sanford, Sidney Legendre, and James Mellon. I participated in a landscape assessment of the Galama Mountains in 2001, and was disappointed to find the area heavily degraded by annual burning, soil erosion, and large numbers of livestock. Mountain nyala populations and critical habitat in the Galama Mountains were decimated by civil unrest following the collapse of the Derg government in 1991, and have never fully recovered. Using three game scouts to survey Galama Mountains for a ten week period, we estimated mountain nyala to number about 100.

West of the Galama Mountains is the Munessa-Shashamane State Forest, which is intensively managed for sustainable and multiple-use of natural resources. Mountain nyala populations here were also impacted by the change of government in the early 1990s, but made a rapid recovery. The forests are a mix of old-growth native trees and plantation style timber production that is well protected from communal exploitation. Recent surveys of Munessa by EWCD and the Oromyia Regional Government (ORLNRAD) estimate the numbers in this forest to be around 330. Other areas in the Arussi Mountains that are known to have smaller populations of mountain nyala, mostly limited by available habitat, include Mt. Kaka, Gambo State Forest, and possibly Mt. Kubsa. These areas have not been recently surveyed to my knowledge.

The most southern range of mountain nyala are in the Bale Mountains, most commonly reported in the northern parts of BMNP near the town of Dinsho, the Park Headquarters, and Hanto Controlled Hunting Area, sometimes called Lajo-Spur. BMNP was established in the early 1970s primarily to protect mountain nyala and Ethiopian wolf populations. Areas near Dinsho and the Park Headquarters were surveyed in 2003 by Befekadu Refera, a student from Addis Ababa University. Using direct counts, Refera's highest count for mountain nyala was 732, while the adjacent Hanto area was estimated to have 375 by EWCD and ORLNRAD. Historical accounts indicate that mountain nyala populations were more prevalent in the upper Web Valley and Senetti Plateau. These areas still have mountain nyala populations, but densities have thinned as a result of human settlements and livestock grazing. I have been unable to find any survey data for either of these areas. The southern portion of the BMNP is covered by the Harena Forests where several previous reports suggest that mountain nyala are absent and have never inhabited the area. In 2000 and 2001, new mountain nyala populations were discovered on the eastern escarpment of the Bale Mountains, but remain largely overlooked by many recent population estimates. However, EWCD and ORLNRAD have established three Controlled Hunting Areas, Odo Bulu, Abashabe-Demero, and Shedem Berbere, and have conducted multiple surveys in these areas since 2000. Combined, the most recent surveys on the eastern escarpment put populations over 1,200 animals without taking in consideration large tracts of forests outside the hunting areas.

Not including Mt. Kaka, Mt. Kubsa, Gambo State Forest, Senetti Plateau, and the upper Web Valley, the most recent population surveys total over 3,100 mountain nyala. This infor-

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#### 10 Population Estimates for Mountain Nyala on the Rise

mation was not difficult to find; yet too often, population estimates tend to overlook some of these areas or fail to thoroughly investigate an area. Throughout my investigation of mountain nyala populations, I have found that the most conclusive estimates have been conducted by the EWCD and ORLNRAD. Unfortunately, these agencies are rarely acknowledged for their work or results by non-Ethiopian researchers. EWCD and ORLNRAD not only employ common scientific methods in their surveys for example transects and direct counts, but also does so on a temporal basis over the majority of the mountain nyala's known range. Outside of BMNP, there have been few surveys conducted that incorporate scientific methodology other than those by Ethiopian wildlife officials and Leslie Brown. This should raise questions as to how and why recent population estimates published in scientific papers and reports continuously hover between 1,000 and 2,000 mountain nyala.

The simple calculations I present still do not accurately reflect the true population of mountain nyala. There have been several significant discoveries of new mountain nyala populations within the last two years. The first discovery was made in an area between the Galama Mountains and Arba Gugu. Recent surveys by Ethiopian wildlife officials estimate a population of about 350. This is an unusual case, since this region of Ethiopia is heavily settled by people and much of the surrounding land has been cultivated or logged. A new Controlled Hunting Area has recently been established in an effort to curb further degradation of the landscape.

In the Bale Mountains, EWCD and ORLNRAD have been investigating the remote highlands south of the Dodolla (west of BMNP). There have always been scattered reports from local people of mountain nyala inhabiting the area, but most have discounted any significant numbers due to the high number of people, forestry activities, and the sparse vegetation on the dryer northern slopes. The interior of the highland forests are contrastingly different with more mesic vegetation and rugged terrain which has isolated the area from people and livestock. Surveys have not yet been conducted, but analyses of satellite images indicate that ideal mountain nyala habitat could exceed 800 km<sup>2</sup>.

Similar circumstances occur in the Harenna Forest and Mena-Angetu Forest Priority Area on the southern escarpment of the Bale Mountains. These largely intact forests stretch from the town of Rira west to Riripa and Goma. I visited the area earlier this year and estimate that mountain nyala habitat may span as much as 3,000 km<sup>2</sup>. The total forested area is actually much larger, but drops to elevations that are not as favorable to mountain nyala. The area is continuous with minimal fragmentation from human settlements or land-use. Rugged terrain and deeply incised valleys prohibits human accessibility to the vast majority of the landscape, while creating optimal habitat for mountain nyala. At this point, it would be nearly impossible to estimate how many mountain nyala can be found here, but Ethiopian wildlife officials are actively surveying the area and a new Controlled Hunting Area is scheduled to open in 2007.

Due to uncertainty of the species' entire range and inconclusive results from population surveys, the total number of mountain nyala cannot be accurately reported at this time. However, evidence clearly indicates that populations exceed estimates reported in recent literature. Despite all the controversy sur-

rounding the status of mountain nyala, credit needs to be given to the work conducted by EWCD and ORLNRAD for their systematic approach of monitoring regional populations, development of intensive management and conservation strategies, and for not succumbing to the pressures that result from low speculative population estimates. Today, Controlled Hunting Areas are well managed with habitat destruction being controlled in most cases, local communities and regional governments receiving economic benefits from hunting revenues, and professional hunters having long-term conservation incentives. But most importantly, mountain nyala populations are largely stable, and in some cases, on the rise. Hunter success rates in 2004/2005 were an impressive 97.6% and trophy sizes are at an all time high with five mountain nyala expected to rank in the SCI top 15 from this past year alone, each sporting horns greater than 38". Wildlife management in Ethiopia still has room for improvement and faces many challenges, however, the current system is a model built on sustainability, conservation, and the distribution of benefits that many African countries could consider following.

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## 11 Recreational Hunting Symposium in London

On 12th and 13th October 2006, the IUCN SSC Sustainable Use Specialist Group (SUSG) and the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) in cooperation with CIC will be holding a two-day symposium at the ZSL meeting rooms in London with the title:

**'Recreational Hunting, Conservation and Rural Livelihoods: Science and Practice'**

In the field of conservation, few activities attract more controversy or misunderstanding than hunting for recreational purposes. On the one hand, hunters insist that their activity is an important conservation tool, and there is evidence to support this where careful management is in place. Hunting is also a significant economic activity and can in principle provide significant livelihood benefits in rural areas where opportunities are scarce. The question for conservation science is whether these potential benefits are realized in practice.

This Symposium and resultant publication will for the first time look comprehensively at many issues which are fundamental to an understanding of the role of recreational hunting in conservation and rural development. It will examine the key issues, ask the difficult questions and seek to present the answers to guide policy. Where the answers are not available, it will highlight gaps in our knowledge and lay out the research agenda for the next decade.

**This symposium is not only an excellent opportunity for hunters to interact with an international group of conservation practitioners and scientists, but actually a date which no hunting organization – especially the professional bodies from Africa like PHASA, APHA, NAPHA, SOAZ, etc – must miss.**

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