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Dedicated to the People and Wildlife of Africa

PHASA President's Opinion

Peter de Villiers Butland

The judgment in the case of the SA Lion Breeders' Association against the Minister of Environmental Affairs has been given at last, the noise from the various parties has died down and South African hunters can hopefully put this sorry saga behind them. A DEAT spokesman summed it up well, saying "Hunting is an important industry but we must manage it in accordance with defensible standards".

Although not all were guilty, the standards which some clients were prepared to accept to tick off a lion on their trophy lists were indefensible. And the willingness of some "PHs" to take those clients' money and to pretend that they were "hunting" a wild animal was despicable.

The damage done to the reputation of our country, to its image in the hunting world and to the reputation of all South African hunters, the good and the bad, by this sloth and greed will take some time to overcome. But it is time to move on.

PHASA has in the past consistently condemned the shooting of captive bred predators, because of actual and potential abuse of the law. PHASA's past president [Stewart Dorrington] was a member of the Panel of Experts. PHASA participated in the consultative process which led to the TOPS regulations and PHASA has noted the judge's detailed comments [*see last African Indaba for details*] and his judgment in the court case.

PHASA has accordingly reconsidered its position on lion hunting in South Africa. It will support the hunting of any and all species that have been released into an extensive wildlife system and can fend for themselves, provided that species listed as TOPS are hunted strictly according to the provisions of the TOPS Regulations and that all species are hunted according to the laws of the land, the PHASA Code of Conduct and the commonly accepted principles of Fair Chase. Unethical and illegal practices will not be tolerated and PHASA members will be held to account if found guilty of misconduct.

The PHASA Executive Committee on Rhino

- Expert evidence from enforcement and trade monitoring agencies indicated a direct link between the export of rhino horn from recent legal rhino hunting by

Vietnamese, from rhino poaching on private and state land, from cross border smuggling and from the theft of rhino horn from stockpiles, museums, etc. and Far Eastern syndicates.

- In the light of the evidence and the questionable legality of the end use of certain rhino horn hunted in South Africa, PHASA strongly advises its members not to book and conduct hunts with nationals from Vietnam or other Far Eastern countries until Government "has removed this abuse from the SA legal system" which it has undertaken to do in the near future.
- PHASA members with a long term interest in South African hunting and conservation are strongly urged to heed this advisory.

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For hunter-conservationists and all people who are interested in the conservation, management and the sustainable use of Africa's wild natural resources.

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Zimbabwe Trying to Stop Rhino Poaching

According to CITES the rhino poaching situation is particularly bad in Zimbabwe. Raoul du Toit of the Lowveld Rhino Trust says that reasons are in "part the national situation in Zimbabwe where there is reduced law enforcement and [another] part of it is the growing demand for rhino horn, the growing Chinese and Vietnamese footprint in Africa and the fact that the markets are now really fueling poaching in a very aggressive way." Du Toit added that Zimbabwe had seemingly got on top of the situation when a similar surge in poaching happened in the late 1980s and early 1990s. He said the rhino population had actually increased, but all the good work is being undone and the falling rhino numbers are once again a cause for great concern. He put the number of rhino poached in Zimbabwe since 2006 at as high as 250. National Parks and Wildlife Management Authority Director General Morris Mtsambiwi agreed the situation is a cause for concern, but said an Emergency Rhino Protection Plan has been put into place to counter the poachers. He says his department; the police, the army and rangers from wildlife conservancies are involved in the program, which he says has been successful. He pointed to the killing of six poachers since the beginning of the year as proof of action being taken, but he said the country's economic problems are hindering a more effective response to the poaching. Mtsambiwi said that some Zimbabweans, including those in position of authority, are involved in the poaching. He admitted some rangers from his own department were arrested for their involvement. In a recent article in the local press two Cabinet ministers from Robert Mugabe's ZANU-PF Party are named for being investigated for poaching. Lowveld Rhino Trust's du Toit also blamed the courts for not being harsh enough on those poachers captured alive for sentences to act as a deterrent, but Mtsambiwi says his department is continually engaging judicial officials and the situation is changing.

Du Toit and Mtsambiwi agree that while the rhino gets most of the attention because it is endangered, wildlife conservation in Zimbabwe in general is facing many challenges. Du Toit said Zimbabwe once had what he described as a proud record in conservation, but the country is compromising some of its own principles. He said wild dogs, which are also endangered, are also under threat as they get caught in snares set up by people hunting for meat. Of the animals that do not seem to be attracting that much attention he singled out the zebra. He explains, "What we have seen particularly in southern Zimbabwe is growing commercial poaching of zebra for their hide. Those hides are smuggled across the Limpopo river to South Africa and marketed in South Africa and exported from South Africa to European markets at pretty high values." Conservation groups also blame the settlement of landless Zimbabweans in wildlife conservancies under the country's land-reform program for the decline in wildlife conservation. Mtsambiwi admitted this had caused problems, but it is now being remedied.

Community based natural resource management in Zimbabwe: the experience of CAMPFIRE

Russell Taylor

Abstract

Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) is a long-term programmatic approach to rural development that uses wildlife and other natural resources as a mechanism for promoting devolved rural institutions and improved governance and livelihoods.

The cornerstone of CAMPFIRE is the right to manage, use, dispose of, and benefit from these resources. Between 1989 and 2006, CAMPFIRE income, mostly from high valued safari hunting, totalled nearly USD\$ 30 million, of which 52% was allocated to sub-district wards and villages for community projects and household benefits. Whilst a number of assumptions underlying the success of CAMPFIRE as an innovative model for CBNRM have yet to be met, CAMPFIRE confirms the concept that devolving responsibility and accountability for natural resource management can be highly effective for the collective and participatory management of such resources.

Elephant numbers in CAMPFIRE areas have increased and buffalo numbers are either stable or decreased slightly during the life of the programme. However, offtake quotas for these two species have increased with a concomitant decline in trophy quality. Although the amount of wildlife habitat diminished after 1980, following the commencement of CAMPFIRE the rate of habitat loss slowed down and in some specific instances was even reversed. More recently there has been increased pressure on habitats and other natural resources as a consequence of deteriorating socio-economic conditions in the country. Where devolution has been successful, promising results have been achieved and the recent acceptance and implementation of direct payments to communities is probably the most significant development since 2000.

That this has happened can be attributed to CAMPFIRE enabling communities to maximize their roles within the existing set of rules, and by so doing, allowing these rules to be challenged. Donor (73%) and government (27%) investments into the programme amounted to \$35 million during the period 1989 to 2003. Since 2003 however, donor funding has been reduced to <\$600,000 over the past 5 years.

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