

that the fight against wildlife crime will be won or lost at the local level – right there, where hunters are. This Global Summit represents a clarion call for the global hunting community to join together and partner with all interest groups committed to arresting and reversing the present crisis. We hunters love wildlife and we want to see it not only survive, but prosper within habitats of natural beauty.

The Global Summit will, for the first time, bring hunters together with an international group of government officials, wildlife conservation leaders and law enforcement professionals to discuss a range of bi-lateral and multi-lateral actions. Hunters are committed to take immediate and measurable action and to halt the current wildlife crime crisis.

The CIC welcomes all participants and is looking forward to positive discussions at the Summit and to sharing the outcomes of the event. Readers of African Indaba will find the results in the next issue.

Finally, I like to thank the editors of African Indaba that they have made wildlife crime and illegal wildlife trafficking the focus of this year's General Assembly edition. The profound articles and the well-researched news offer excellent background information. The new African Indaba website will facilitate spreading important conservation news on Africa, and the facelift with the eye-catching design by Aliz Ertler gives African Indaba a better exposure. African Indaba with its wide readership in more than 130 countries has developed into a professional journal. We are proud that it is the official CIC Newsletter on wildlife conservation and hunting in Africa,

For further details on the CIC Milan Summit, please consult the official website of the event: <http://www.cicmilan2014.com/Summit.html>. The CIC is looking forward to positive discussions at the summit and to sharing the outcomes of the event.

Tanzania: The Selous Revisited

Rolf D. Baldus

In February 2014 I paid a short private visit to the Selous Game Reserve in southern Tanzania. After having worked for 13 years with the Selous and the Wildlife Division between 1987 and 2006 I thought it was high time again to see for myself how things were on the ground.

The reserve is in dire straits once again. The main indicator is the present low number of around 13,000 elephants. As compared to 70,000 elephants when I left Tanzania at the end of 2005 this means a reduction of about 80%, or around 7,000 elephants per year. This is the highest rate of poaching ever recorded in the Selous ecosystem. The poaching crisis was and continues to be absolutely serious. The high rate of elephant loss is difficult to believe and to understand, but can probably be explained by the fact that poaching must have been common inside and outside the reserve for quite some time. Elephants are one of the major attractions for the photographic as well as hunting tourism in the Selous. The attractiveness of the reserve for tourists as well as hunters is clearly at stake.

The aerial census - irrespective of the absolute figure of remaining elephants - has obviously shown a realistic picture of the situation. Whether we have presently 13,000 elephants or a few thousand more is ultimately irrelevant. What is important is the trend, not an absolute figure, which can always be contested. The need for immediate action cannot be overlooked any longer. Fortunately the German government will come with a major support package of around eight million Euro next year. However, in the meantime emergency assistance is indispensable to get scouts back on patrols day and night.

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

It can be expected that there will be political pressure again to stop elephant hunting due to the greatly reduced numbers. This was the same in the late 1980s in a similar situation. Once again I would regard such a hunting ban, even if it was only for elephant, as wrong. They are one of the major reasons why sportsmen go there. Many come and do not find a suitable elephant but hunt other game while they are there.

The Selous is dependent upon the income from hunting, especially now, as the "retention scheme" is in place again, by which the reserve can retain 50% of all income for management and conservation. The abolition of this scheme was one of the major reasons for the downtrend of management, which led to the present crisis. Instead of banning elephant hunting altogether, the Wildlife Division together with scientists have to evaluate the minimum tusk-weights and -lengths of huntable elephants. Thus the take-off can be controlled.

I am not without optimism. The government, including the president, is determined to act. A major German project is in the pipeline. The former Chief Warden has been called back, and the "retention scheme" is back in place. I can see a small light at the end of the tunnel. Between 1988 and 2006 Selous elephants recovered from less than 30,000 to around 70,000. This was accomplished by the Tanzanian Game Department working efficiently together with foreign partners, notably from Germany. What has been achieved once can be repeated.

Post script: Since the article was written the US Fish and Wildlife Service has announced a suspension on imports of elephant trophies from Tanzania (and Zimbabwe) taken in 2014 into the United States.



Author and game guard with poached elephant, Selous Game Reserve, February 2014 © R. Baldus

Southern African Wildlife College (SAWC) Anti-Poaching Training **Ruben de Kock, African Field Ranger Training Services Division**

The need for Field Rangers on the ground and ground cover units to be trained to the highest level possible is being addressed in training interventions at the [Southern African Wildlife College](http://www.sawc.ac.za). The Field Ranger has evolved over the years from little more than a glorified "farmworker" to a professional Law Enforcement officer. The requirement was set by the Protected Area

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