

Letters to the Editor

Conservation Frontlines welcomes signed, relevant letters to the editor. Verified names may be withheld upon request. Letters chosen for publication are edited for clarity and brevity.

Culling Deer vs. Culling Elephants

(“Deer overpopulation, meet women who hunt”—Frontline Dispatches, March 2020)

I would like to pose a simple question: How come there are absolutely no comments, abuse or threats when sensible women hunters are helping deal with the explosion of deer BUT the world vilifies those who wish to do the same with the explosion of elephants in the greater Kruger Park area and in Botswana? Culling was halted many years ago due to “possible tourists refusing to visit the area” if it did not stop. (Tourism keeps half of our countries alive—we need you.)

We are now at the stage where the majority of large trees are disappearing—there are no new specimens coming up, as they are immediately eaten or pulled out [by elephants]. It has got to the stage that we have to put up false nests for birds like the ground hornbills as there are very, very few natural large trees left in which they can nest.

I would also like to point out some basic rules of “trophy” hunting: That does not necessarily mean the biggest tusker elephant, but some of the hundreds of lesser males that need to be culled. Please also keep in mind that a very old and great tusker, once his last teeth have gone, is felled by starvation and thirst. He is then eaten alive. The vultures start on his eyes, the hyenas on his rectum and testicles, until the lions come and rip open his belly. It is a horrifying death. Would it not be better to put him down with one bullet—at great price to the hunter, the income offsetting the massive costs we are all bearing to try to save the rhino and other species?

All the meat most of you eat is farmed, culled and sold. The best males are sold or culled as necessary, as are the unproductive females. Are you all saying that as long as you can buy your meat in a supermarket, it is OK to cull? But in the wild, where the wilderness is shrinking due to overpopulation and animals are threatened by poachers, these rules should not apply?

I would dearly love all of you—who sit behind a computer or loudspeaker but who do not come and see what most of Africa is trying to do—to speak up against the half of the world that is decimating our fauna and flora before you open your mouths and criticize.

Get up and get out and call for bans on countries like China and Vietnam and others that are our greatest enemies to the environment!

by Conservation Frontlines

Timothy Hancock (Mrs!)

March 1, 2020

South Africa

Adjusting the Narrative

Thank you for all the great work you do at *Conservation Frontlines*! It is a pleasure to read the frequent publications, so comprehensive, well researched and balanced. If this had been in place 10 years ago, possibly many of the nuclear anti-hunting episodes on social media would not have happened. These, among other things, have made it so hard to make wildlife conversation, with hunting as a critical part of it, a dinner table topic. (Which—thank you, again—you also made an article topic recently.)

Many non-hunting scientists have come out of the woods lately to give a much-needed boost to the effort of adjusting and correcting the narrative of ethical hunting in the real world.

[Name withheld by request]

March 27, 2020

Vaud, Switzerland