The Bavarian Hunting Association (Bayerischer Jagdverband, BJV), with some 47,000 members, is taking a strong position on hunting ethics. BJV President Prof. Dr. Jürgen Vocke said that the credibility of ethical hunting and of hunters’ commitment to animal welfare are at stake, in particular when overabundant species like wild boar need to be contained. Hunters must commit to clear ethical guidelines to preserve their credibility as advocates of wildlife and habitat and to safeguard the acceptance of hunting. Dr. Vocke announced that three committees (hunting ethics, hunting culture and hunting history) of the BJV are developing guidelines.

Romania has seen a tremendous increase in human–wildlife conflicts. Implementation of EU-funded action plans for brown bear and wolf harvest, which have been agreed upon by all stakeholders, are being delayed. Bear attacks are on the rise, having already caused many injuries and, in 2019, the loss of three human lives, and the rural people of Romania demand action. In a joint statement, FACE and CIC (European and international hunting groups) have requested that the action plans be implemented and harvest quotas issued.
Feral horses may reinvigorate European grasslands and reverse the negative effects of land abandonment. Wild horses are often regarded as invasive creatures who don’t belong in certain ecosystems, but—write Swedish researchers in a recent study—they might serve as modern-day analogs of now-vanished species: “Reintroducing an ecologically functional substitute of an extinct large herbivore could mitigate current biodiversity declines and foster semi–natural grassland conservation.”

African Swine Fever (ASF) has been found in the Belgian province of Luxembourg. Since September 2018, 821 cases have been confirmed. The government of Wallonia has decided that all wild boar in the infected area will be culled. The Czech Republic has been the only country in recent years to have eradicated the ASF virus through containment and culling.
Africa

“Thriving wildlife resources have a tremendous potential to be instrumental in sustainable socio-economic development through associated wildlife-oriented businesses such as eco-tourism, hunting and photographic safaris, among other benefits,” said Zimbabwean President Mnangagwa in his opening statement on June 23, 2019, at the inaugural African Union-United Nations Wildlife Economy Summit. “[The Southern African region remains] guided by [the] principle of sustainable utilization of wildlife . . . [communities] must experience the value and developmental benefits of living with and conserving wildlife . . . safari hunting is a vital cog in successful wildlife economies . . . we continue to call for the free trade in hunting products as these have a positive impact on the national and local economies of our countries.” Pres. Mnangagwa concluded with, “Currently Zimbabwe has about US$600 million worth of ivory and rhino horn stocks, most of which is from natural attrition of those animals. If we are allowed to dispose [of] the same under agreed to parameters, the revenue derived therefrom would suffice to finance our operational conservation efforts for the next 20 years!” Read also Zimbabwe Independent reporter Nyasha Chingono’s interview of CITES Secretary-General Ivonne Higuero concerning the ivory trade, trophy hunting and CITES CoP 18.
More than 40 community representatives from 12 countries across Africa met at Africa’s first Wildlife Economy Summit at Victoria Falls in late June 2019. They called for a “A New Deal for rural communities and wildlife and natural resources” in Africa, including the recognition of community rights to the ownership, management and use of resources; strengthening community governance and institutions; recapitalizing communities and their natural resources across boundaries; ensuring that community voices are heard in shaping policy and decision-making; using evidence-based adaptive management; incorporating indigenous knowledge; promoting investment partnerships in community-owned wildlife economies; ensuring that a full and fair share of benefits from these economies flow directly to the communities; and changing the development model from doing things for communities to enabling well-governed communities to act for themselves.

Botswana’s recent lifting of the ban on elephant hunting is drawing much opposition from protectionists, who argue the move might lead to an upsurge in poaching and would compromise elephant genetics. Martin Rowan, in a detailed report in the Daily Maverick, June 30, 2019 (“The Great Elephant Debate: Let’s remove emotions and pseudo-science from wildlife management and get down to scientific facts”), concludes that unwarranted mud-slinging by some non-objective scientists who on principle oppose all forms of consumptive use smacks of “Heaven forbid that native Africans could manage their own natural resources.”

“I hate elephants: Behind the backlash against Botswana’s giants” is the title of a May 21, 2019, Washington Post article by Max Bearak with powerful photographs by Carolyn Van Houten. The compelling story articulates the voices of the rural people of the Chobe Enclave.

The future of African elephants is inextricably linked to the well-being of the continent’s rural people, writes Jason G. Goldman in National Geographic’s Wildlife Watch, May 28, 2019. He concludes by quoting Maxi Louis, director of the Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organizations, that “rural Africans often suffer the costs of living with large, dangerous animals without deriving much if any benefit from that coexistence. Perhaps solving the
elephant crisis means treating it as an issue of human rights and social justice, rather than solely one of wildlife conservation.”

His experiences during a week at Nyae Nyae in Namibia are the basis of a highly critical article by John Grobler on Mongabay.com. Gail Potgieter, an independent researcher and science communicator, writes in a follow-up Mongabay commentary (“Community conservation in Namibia requires balance and understanding”), on May 29, 2019, that Grobler’s report leaves much to be desired. Also read Gerhard Damm’s response to Grobler (“How The Truth On Community Wildlife Conservation In Namibia Is Twisted”) in Conservation Frontlines, April 2019.

Table Mountain's wild predators are exposed to rat poison through their prey. The effects of anticoagulant rat poisons on genet, Cape eagle owl, water mongoose, caracal, otter, honey badger and more species are highlighted in an investigation by University of Cape Town scientists. The findings echo those for predatory species also found near cities in Europe and North America, including polecats, owls and other raptors, coyotes, foxes, fishers and bobcats.

The IUCN Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office issued a statement regarding the report “Africa is Changing: Should its Protected Areas Evolve? Reconfiguring Africa’s Protected Areas” by Bertrand Chardonnet. Chardonnet is being widely cited—especially by the Campaign to Ban Trophy Hunting—as representing the official views of IUCN, the International Union for Conservation of Nature. However, IUCN ESARO states that Chardonnet’s report did not pass its peer-review process and so cannot be assumed to reflect the views of IUCN ESARO. (The NGO is currently reviewing Chardonnet’s report; further details will be “shared in due course.”)

Pangolins are the most heavily poached mammal on Earth, but these elusive animals receive far less attention than more charismatic species such as rhino, elephant and lion. Pangolins were once hunted as bush meat, but now their scales (and fetuses) have become valuable as
folk medicine in China and Vietnam. One ton of scales represents some 1,900 dead pangolins; in 2018, 48 tons of scales—91,200 pangolins—were seized. Read Tony Weaver’s June 4, 2019, report in the Daily Maverick and watch Bruce Young and Johan Vermeulen’s documentary, Eye of the Pangolin.

Kenyans support the consumption of game meat, the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife has found: “Countrywide consultations indicated much support for consumptive wildlife use among Kenyans generally, provided there are proper and strict regulations in place.” A report by Bernardine Mutanu in Kenya’s Daily Nation, June 4, 2019, quotes the African Wildlife Foundation’s Alistair Pole saying that “Wildlife thrives in countries where communities have diverse revenue streams from wildlife, the key ones being sustainable utilization of the resource.”

Africa’s flagship wildlife training institutions will collaborate. In a joint press release, the College of African Wildlife Management, Mweka (CAWM), in Tanzania, and the Southern African Wildlife College (SAWC), in South Africa, have announced they will “work together to find appropriate and scalable solutions to the conservation of African wildlife through capacity building and development.” One of the first joint projects will be to develop and implement a Responsible Resource Use module for training students in natural-resource management.

NAPHA President Danene Van Der Westhuyzen spoke on the benefits of regulated hunting on the BBC’s Emma Barnett show, on June 17, 2019, to explain why such hunting is the only wildlife-conservation model proven to work in Africa. (This is an excellent primer on the challenges of explaining hunting to non-hunters and anti-hunters.)

The Working Wild Program of the South African Hunters and Game Conservation Association advances conservation through partnerships with like-minded organizations. Members volunteer for habitat restoration, anti-poaching, research, species re-introductions, biomonitoring programs, raising awareness, supporting wildlife rehabilitation facilities and
more. Partner organizations have access to more than 40,000 SAHGCA members in South Africa. For more information contact lizanne@sahunt.co.za.

“Conservation Partnerships to combat wildlife crime in Namibia” is a new publication of the Namibian Partnerships Against Crime. The overall aim is to continue and expand Namibia’s successful campaign of environmental restoration and wildlife recovery begun after independence.
SOS Central Asia supports a new wildlife initiative. CAMI, the Central Asia Mammal Initiative, aims to reverse the decline of migratory mammal species in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, focusing specifically on goitered gazelle (*Gazella subgutturosa*) and snow leopard (*Panthera uncia*).

Punjab Honorary Game Warden Badar Munir said that without trophy hunting, CBOs, community-based organizations, cannot operate. Hunting fees finance wildlife and forest protection, which have allowed urial sheep (*Ovis orientalis punjabiensis*) populations to increase substantially. There are five registered CBOs in the Punjab region, in Jhelum, Chakwal and Mianwali; another is being organized in Cholistan. The story appeared in Pakistan's *Express Tribune* on May 30, 2019.

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development has established the *Bam-e-Dunya* (“Roof of the World”) network to promote long-term conservation and sustainable development in the fragile alpine ecosystem of the HKH, Asia's Hindu Kush Himalayan region. According to a June 2, 2019, story in Pakistan's *The News International*, the network spans six
connected protected areas in four countries: Broghil National Park, Qurumbar National Park and Khunjerab National Park in Pakistan; Wakhan National Park in Afghanistan; Taxkorgan Nature Reserve in China and Zorkul Nature Reserve in Tajikistan. In Pakistan and Tajikistan, community-based trophy hunting is considered a successful conservation tool.

The government of Kyrgyzstan rejected a proposed moratorium on hunting argali, ibex, roe deer, maral and wild boar. The law would have banned hunting until 2030. The Kyrgyz government recognized that lawful and regulated hunting is one of the most benign ways of protecting habitats and using natural resources sustainably, and hunting fully fits the “green economy principle” of the Kyrgyz Republic. (Ecology AKIpress, June 6, 2019)

Data from 650 of the largest Himalayan glaciers show that ice loss due to rising average temperatures has doubled since 1975. An estimated 800 million people depend on runoff from Himalayan glaciers for irrigation, hydropower and drinking water, and could be impacted as melting accelerates. (Mongabay.com, June 20, 2019)

Explosives concealed in bushmeat bait are the primary cause of elephant deaths in Sri Lanka. These devices, intended primarily for wild boar, are increasingly maiming and killing elephants. One in five recorded elephant deaths last year were due to such explosives; most of the victims were juveniles under the age of 10. (Mongabay.com, June 20, 2019)

The critically endangered great Indian bustard is now down to just 160-odd individuals, most of them in the Thar Desert of India’s Rajasthan state. In a last-ditch effort, wildlife researchers along with the forest department are collecting the birds’ eggs to begin breeding them in captivity. Two bustard-breeding facilities are being built. (Mongabay.com, June 25, 2019).
American attitudes toward wildlife are changing. More and more view wildlife as “human-like parts of their social networks,” while fewer believe that wildlife should be managed through activities such as hunting and fishing. These shifts challenge principles that have guided wildlife management in the US and Canada for more than a century. A special issue of PERCreports addresses some of these challenges. In “Whitetail Wars,” Jim Sterba analyzes the pitfalls in managing overabundant wildlife. Tate Watkins writes that markets help manage alligators in Florida and asks what this can teach us about curbing other overabundant species in “The Gator Traders.” Brian Yablonski, in “Rethinking the North American Wildlife Model,” posits that new challenges for wildlife require new solutions. Last but hardly least, Shane Mahoney explains the “The North American Model of Wildlife Conservation.” (This is a must-read, especially for North American subscribers.)
An amendment that would essentially ban the import of elephant or lion trophies from Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Zambia has passed the US House of Representatives (by a vote of 239–192) despite opposition from the Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation, the Congressional Sportsmen’s Caucus and the sporting conservation community. Amendment No. 133 was attached to HR 3055, the appropriations bill to fund the Depts. of Interior, Agriculture, Commerce and more. The Senate has not yet released its version of the bill, and the CSF is lobbying heavily against the inclusion of any similar “short-sighted, emotionally driven” amendment that “fails to recognize the contributions of international hunting and the conservation benefits associated with the financial contributions of these activities.” Legal, ethical, sustainable fair-chase hunting is the basis on which the conservation of African wildlife and habitat has been built for decades; ending the market for elephant and lion trophies will cause an increase in illegal killing of the animals as they lose their financial value.

Green iguanas have invaded Florida and are damaging seawalls, sidewalks and landscaping. The species is not protected in Florida except by anti-cruelty laws and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission encourages homeowners to kill green iguanas on their property whenever possible. Iguanas may also be killed, year-round and without a permit, on 22 public lands in south Florida.

The Conservation Fund, American Electric Power and the US Fish and Wildlife Service announced, on May 30, 2019, the addition of a further 4,113 acres of wetlands and forestland to Louisiana’s Catahoula National Wildlife Refuge. The land, which AEP has been reforesting since 2001, is to be permanently accessible for birdwatching, hunting and fishing; it includes hardwood forests, fields and wooded swamp. As the trees mature, the hardwoods also will act as a carbon sink to capture and retain CO2. The refuge is one of North America’s most important natural wintering areas for waterfowl.

Hunting and fishing license sales in western New York State have fallen by more than 20% over the past decade, according to a May 31, 2019, story in The Buffalo News. This drop in
revenue affects the state’s Conservation Fund, which helps pay for conservation and wildlife management. Although more women and youth are taking up field sports, dwindling access to private land, competition from indoor entertainment and other “cultural forces” are keeping potential hunters from spending a day in the woods. “We’re losing the older hunters faster than we’re gaining the younger ones,” said a veteran hunting-education instructor.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service’s national wildlife refuges constitute an unparalleled public lands network built with the help of generations of anglers and hunters. Across the US, some 270 national wildlife refuges offer fishing and nearly 400 refuges are open to hunting. Watch the USFWS short video “Reconnect with Outdoor Traditions on a National Wildlife Refuge.”

Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, the California Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, the California Wildlife Conservation Board and a committed landowner have teamed up to permanently protect more than 2,600 acres of prime Tule elk habitat in north-central California. The landowner allows hunting on the property through the CDFW’s Shared Habitat for Recreational Enhancement Program.

“How We Pay to Play: Funding Outdoor Recreation on Public Lands in the 21st Century” is a new publication by PERC, the Property and Environment Research Center. The recreational demands of the new century bring new challenges for public-land management. This informative report examines some of the primary sources of funding for outdoor recreation on public lands.

SB 20 failed to pass the Connecticut House of Representatives. The state assembly adjourned sine die on May 13, 2019, handing anti-hunting groups a stinging defeat by failing to advance Senate Bill 20, which would have blocked importation of elephant, lion, leopard, rhino and giraffe parts from Africa.
At the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation's Elk Summit III, conservation leaders from 15 states and federal agencies discussed a wide range of issues that impact elk and elk habitat. Topics included private/public land use by elk, public access, elk hunting, disease, communicating about hunting, and analysis of habitat and conservation projects.

South America’s spectacled bears (Tremarctos ornatus) are killed illegally for their teeth, fat and penile bones, which are used for cures by traditional healers. According to NatGeo’s Wildlife Watch, May 31, 2019, the spectacled bear is listed as vulnerable; numbers have fallen to between 13,000 and 18,000 throughout its range in Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela and Peru.

When the mass media focus on poachers, conflicts about trophy hunting, wildlife crises and endangered species, hunters and fishermen often become targets of hatred. In a February 20, 2019, Outdoor Wire article, James Swan identifies some potential allies of hunters, fishermen and trappers. Look at those who may not hunt, he writes, but do not oppose hunting and fishing; and seek humane ways to interact with animals as well as the people who support animal welfare—such as the National Animal Interest Alliance, based in Oregon but with international membership and conventions held across the US. The goal, he writes, is to complement the 3 R’s programs to recruit, retain and reactivate hunters and anglers.

PERC and the Pacific Legal Foundation filed an amicus brief with the US Court of Appeals on May 30, 2019, for the Ninth Circuit, arguing that a district (lower) court made multiple errors in overturning the US Fish and Wildlife Service’s decision to delist the Yellowstone grizzly bear from protection under the Endangered Species Act. PERC’s Jonathan Wood noted that the failure to delist a recovered species threatens “not only the continued conservation of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem grizzly but also the recovery and conservation of other imperiled species.” Contrary to the district court’s speculation, delisting the grizzly would not be the end of conservation efforts for the species, while failure to delist it could undermine incentives for future conservation efforts.
The world's largest single organism, the Pando aspen clone in Utah, receives more than four times as much grazing pressure from cattle in less than two weeks than it does from mule deer over an entire growing season—according to a new Western Watersheds Project report. The Pando Clone is an entire grove of aspen trees connected by a single rootstock. The grove is dying back, apparently because large herbivores seem to be suppressing its ability to regenerate. The report calls for excluding grazing from the entire Pando Clone and a quarter-mile buffer, to allow for expansion, and calls for more research into the role of trampling by cattle in damaging aspen root systems.

Wild horses are a widespread conservation challenge, according to rangeland scientists Kirk Davies and Chad Boyd. They write in the journal BioSciences that the grazing-related impacts of free-roaming horses remain largely unmanaged, leading to concerns about effects ranging from soil compaction and domination of water resources to the overgrazing of native plants. Management of free-roaming horses is a contentious topic for special-interest groups ranging from wildlife enthusiasts and hunters to animal-rights and environmental groups, ranchers, conservationists and horse advocates.
Devils are now found only on the island of Tasmania. Until just a few thousand years ago, they also lived in mainland Australia. The famously ferocious marsupials might live there yet again, helping to curtail the proliferation of foxes and feral cats introduced by European colonizers. An article in *Anthropocene* Magazine points out that “People in the livestock industry might also find Tasmanian devil reintroduction more appealing than protecting [fox- and cat-hunting] dingoes, as devils don’t prey on sheep or cows.”

A new study examines how wildlife contributes to livelihoods on the Bird’s Head Peninsula of West Papua, Indonesia, where many people rely on wild meat as an alternative source of food for the household. The July 2019 *Biodiversitas* study finds that wildlife also helps generate income through the sale of bushmeat products.
The 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP18) to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora (CITES), originally scheduled to be held in Colombo, Sri Lanka, will instead be held in Geneva, Switzerland, from 17 to 28 August. The associated 71st and 72nd meetings of the Standing Committee (SC71 and SC72) will take place at the same venue on August 16 and 28.

The inaugural World Biodiversity Forum will be held in Davos on February 23–28, 2020. The forum will bring together leading researchers, practitioners, decision-makers and representatives from different sectors to debate, redefine and set the agenda for biodiversity over the next decade. Conference themes will include Changing Biodiversity, Values and Concepts, the Future of Biodiversity and Making an Impact. The forum is organized by bioDISCOVERY and the University of Zurich's Global Change and Biodiversity program.
To believe that we do no harm by abstaining from animal products is to tell ourselves a lie, writes Ephraim Livni in his review of Melissa Kwasny’s forthcoming book *Putting on the Dog: The Animal Origins of What We Wear*. Decisions like giving up meat or materials made from animals may seem noble, but clothing made from cotton and manmade fibers has a far worse impact on the environment. Their manufacture pollutes and consumes enormous resources. Using such alternatives to “cruel” clothing in fact makes the world more toxic for humans and animals alike and also exploits labor markets. Daniel Natusch et al. also express reservations about such attitudes in “Banning exotic leather in fashion hurts snakes and crocodiles in the long run” (*The Conversation*, March 26, 2019), saying that commercial harvesting of reptile and saltwater crocodile skins gives local people a direct financial incentive to conserve wildlife and habitat.

A new report in *Nature, Ecology & Evolution* found that 571 plant species have disappeared from the wild worldwide and that plant extinction is occurring up to 500 times faster than it would without human intervention. Plants underpin all life on earth by providing the oxygen we breathe and the food we eat, as well as by making up the backbone of the world’s ecosystems.

Last but not least, “Earth Endangered by New Strain of Fact-Resistant Humans,” writes humorist Andy Borowitz in *The New Yorker* Magazine: “Research identified a virulent strain of humans who are virtually immune to any form of verifiable knowledge, although they appear to have all the faculties necessary to receive and process information. And yet, somehow, they have developed defenses that, for all intents and purposes, have rendered those faculties totally inactive.” In light of the present conservation/hunting debate, Borowitz’s statement sounds plausible, does it not?
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