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A World That Values The Conservation And Livelihood Benefits Of Sustainable Wildlife Utilization
The best chance to secure social acceptance for hunting lies primarily in the transparent implementation of and compliance with scientifically grounded sustainability rules, secondly in the full recognition of the role of local rural people in wildlife management, and thirdly in the behavior of hunters in the field and how they present themselves to the public. These three tenets, important as they are individually and in combination, should be adaptable and sensitive to varying local cultural, political and social contexts, and integrate local knowledge and cultural practices.

There are several interconnected segments of land use, viz. agriculture and livestock husbandry, forestry, hunting, gathering of wild foods, and non-extractive nature-based leisure activities, in a complex supplier/user system of stakeholders. Due to this complexity, the future of habitat and wildlife conservation depends on trust building and concerted efforts of all invested stakeholders to explore common ground and determine shared objectives.
The romantic-utopian preservationist view of a vociferous minority from the urbanized western consumer-society, which pursues the elimination of any human impact on nature, is largely emotive, shows an almost irresponsible lack of knowledge, and is dangerously detached from the realities on the ground; it is also mischievously deceitful and full of hypocrisy. Its perpetrators want to convert more and more lands to strictly protected areas. They are presenting foggy concepts of wildlife being a globally owned asset, and tout proposals of substituting present and future economic benefits derived from sustainable extractive and non-extractive natural resource use with foreign aid, philanthropy, carbon offset payments, etc.

This is a fallacy and will accelerate the onset of a conservation tragedy of the commons. Most protected areas in Africa and Asia are already severely underfunded; existing foreign aid and donor funding fall pitifully short to even pay for their existence value and are very susceptible to shifting political imperatives. Designating more lands as protected will not prevent the intensification of human pressures, but rather exacerbate the funding gap and merely create parks on paper. Nobody can really want such a development.

The lands where most of the wildlife still occurs, exist outside formally protected areas. These lands, which encompass nearly two-thirds of the world’s most remote and least-inhabited regions, are to a large extent still owned, managed or influenced by Indigenous peoples and rural communities. They are in much better condition nature-wise than the rest, and thus most valuable for conservation. Reducing the rural stewards of wild lands and wildlife to charity objects at the mercy of instable external funding has already undermined many practical conservation efforts.

The sheer number of the world’s population should be compelling reason to adopt a more anthropocentric stance towards nature. Of course, the intrinsic and intangible worth of the natural world needs recognition and practical protection, but at the same time we need to conserve and wisely use its utilitarian values for human well-being.

In other words, nature conservation in the 21st century must seek the proper and wise use of nature, now and to posterity, by unlocking the economic value of natural habitats through privatization of conservation. Private investors and global asset managers will direct funds into scalable and sustainable conservation finance projects. These projects ideally encompass a combination of hunting tourism and eco-tourism. The latter probably receiving more emphasis...
in areas where large animals roam and the scenery is spectacular. The former is critically important in the substantially larger areas, where the landscape is mundane, animal variety and density are lower, infrastructure is marginal, and habitat degradation and/or conversion are a threat.

The cultural and ideological choices of some social-media-active urbanites and rating-obsessed talk show hosts cannot be allowed to obliterate the values of 4 million years of hunting and gathering, just because they don’t fit their globalist utopian world view and ideals.

All those who hold wild spaces and wildlife close to their hearts need to cooperate with the traditional land custodians to develop private conservation funding mechanism that contribute to resource conservation and rural livelihoods. This has to happen inside, and even more importantly outside of formally protected areas.

A utilitarian approach involves, however, certain social, political, and personal restraints and imperatives, which affect all stakeholders at different levels and with varying intensity.

User and beneficiary groups need to contribute meaningfully to nature conservation by reducing habitat degradation or conversion, lessening the key threats of illegal wildlife trade, and promoting ecosystem-wide habitat and wildlife management. They need to better understand the economic, ecologic and social linkages of extractive and non-extractive use of nature and make them work for conservation in adaptively adjustable actions and processes.

In today’s dramatically changed and changing social environment, hunters in particular must accept the challenge to play a visible role in this process. User-rights come with user-responsibilities and -obligations. To that end, hunters should provide tangible proof that recreational hunting generally, and hunting tourism in Asia and Africa specifically,

- is conducted in ways that are adapted and sensitive to diverse cultural, political and social contexts, and integrates local knowledge and cultural practices;
- enhances investor attraction as well as diverse local livelihood options based on sustainable use of wild resources – landscapes, plants and animals – in ways that incentivize conservation and meet the aspirations of the rural land stewards;
• supports the establishment of physical and virtual platforms for meaningful dialogue on, and practical implementation of investment projects in wildlife management and research;

• provides the international stage for Indigenous peoples and rural community organizations to showcase their individual wildlife conservation models and market the products of their land under Fair Trade conditions.

These objectives cannot be reached without adhering to standards. Not only regarding the economic, ecological and social sustainability of wildlife use, but in the case of hunting also of measurable standards regarding individual choices and preferences. We do not suggest to unduly restrict independence, self-governance and personal freedom, the freedom of the markets, or burden stakeholders with additional administration; over-regulation is not intended! Yet, in the world of the 21st century, with the increasing development juggernaut on wild habitats and the threats of climate change, some constraints are essential.

1. Transparent parameters that measure the results of sustainable wildlife management and use against internationally agreed frameworks for sustainable use of biodiversity (e.g. Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for Sustainable Use; Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its 2050 Vision; the Aichi Biodiversity Targets; UN Sustainable Development Goals, etc.).

2. Aspirational, innovative and tailor-made instruments, like Charters for Hunting, Wildlife Conservation and Habitat Protection, designed for specific regions or sub-regions in Asia and Africa that create trust across sectors and borders (e.g. the European Council’s “Charter on Hunting and Biodiversity” adopted in 2007 by the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, and the “Charter on Recreational Fishing and Biodiversity”, adopted in 2010).

3. A matrix of region-specific principles, criteria and indicators (PCIs) as a basis for adaptive wildlife management to transparently document and monitor the ecological, economical and societal impacts and consequences of hunting in general and hunting tourism in particular, and its interfaces with other natural resource use sectors.
Conservation success is the effort of many, and hunters can perform an important role as partners. Recognizing the deep connection Indigenous peoples and rural communities to the lands they inhabit, their aspirations, and their customary forms of wildlife stewardship, will open innovative avenues for natural resource use and conservation funding. Wildlife researchers and conservationists welcome the cooperation of hunting citizen-scientists to complement and expand data collection on climate, landscapes and wildlife to better understand wildlife population and other natural dynamics. Last not least, hunters can effectively self-check the sustainability of their actions, when they hunt with all senses and faculties focused on expanding individual proficiency and knowledge.

Hunting is an individualistic passion, traditionally occurring in places where few are watching. There is no space for narcissistic self-aggrandizement on social media or for gung-ho television shows focusing on the kill and on the mostly staged ‘hunting prowess’ of equipment-touting (and sponsored) ‘hunter-actors’.

To hunt right means observing the 3 Rs – respect, responsibility and reverence – for the game you hunt, the people who own and care for the land, for your fellow hunters, and last but not least for those fellow citizens who chose not to hunt. African, European and American authors and filmmakers created some truly inspirational reading material on authentic hunting and inspirational movies on the conservation and hunting imperatives – let’s have more of this, and less hunting porn!

Let’s catalyze the enthusiasm of young communicators and influencers within the global hunting community; young people who share an inspiration rooted in the rich history of authentic hunting and are passionate fighters for the conservation of wild spaces and wildlife. Leading by example, they will be able to communicate their knowledge and experience as first line content to a receptive audience amongst their Generation Z and Millennial peers. Their savvy to operate the multiple social networks day and night will serve hunting and conservation better than anything else.

National and international hunting associations, booking agents and consultants, private and communal hunt operators or concessionaires, equipment manufacturers, and last but not least, every single individual hunter who has the future of hunting at the heart, should take some time to ponder these ideas. Together we need to develop a better narrative of factually, morally and ethically sound pro-hunting arguments.

A World That Values The Conservation And Livelihood Benefits Of Sustainable Wildlife Utilization
As editors of *Conservation Frontlines*, it is our objective to provide you with the tools and arguments that hunters were, are and will be an indispensable part of nature conservation.

The *Conservation Frontlines E-Magazine* and the ad-hoc newsletter *Frontline Dispatches* will directly deliver information, evidence and opinion on these matters to your email inbox. The *Conservation Frontlines Website* provides additional information and an extensive thematic library.

Together with you, we want to expand horizons, step out of the box, and seek innovative, solution-oriented and realistic scenarios for the survival of wild habitats and wildlife in the 21st century.

We invite you to join the dialogue, express your own views, and take up the challenge of being a communicator on THE FUTURE FOR HUNTING!
Protecting Hunting from the Hunters

by Derek Carstens

Introduction

Remember the days when it seemed that everyone smoked, everywhere, all the time? In planes, in pubs, at the game, in restaurants, at the office - I mean everyone, doing it everywhere, morning noon and night. Then somewhere, sometime, someone got a bee in their bonnet about the practice and started protesting. Low key at first, then increasingly vociferously as the medical evidence mounted and despite the best PR and lobbying efforts of some of the biggest, most cash flush companies in the world, the ripple became a swell, which became a tsunami of negative opinion and voila, the anti-smoking lobby carried the day.
I mean today you are not even allowed to smoke in an Irish pub for goodness sake. I often wonder who that one person was that started it all and if they thought they had a hope in hell of being heard, let alone sweeping all before them.

Make no mistake hunting stands to go the same way, as more and more groups of people line up to see to it that hunting as we know it today is banned in its entirety. Whilst the anti-smoking campaign was bolstered with weighty medical evidence, it ultimately succeeded on account of smoking becoming socially unacceptable.

This is a powerful emotive force, especially today where we claim to be enlightened in our thinking and way of life and increasingly legislate to enforce so-called normative behavior. Witness further the elimination of traditional initiations and orientation at schools and total disregard for the bonding purpose they served. It seems in modern society that traditions are increasingly under threat and the tradition of hunting is right up there on the list of endangered practices.

So best we act and act now and it starts with ourselves, as to a large extent I believe we have created our own firestorm through our own behaviors and practices.

However, I am also aware that this is tricky terrain - as Peter Beard puts in his classic *The End of the Game*... "Hunting is a difficult subject to discuss because it is a private, personal experience for the few who find it meaningful. As soon as it involves large numbers of people or even comes to their attention, its value is distorted. Hunting is for the individual." As such it’s to us, as individual hunters, to initiate the change.

Perhaps a worthwhile place to start is by assessing what has changed over the years since hunting started and how our practices and behaviors today compare to the indigenous hunters of the past, in the belief that not only is there much to learn, but also that it can provide a foundation on which we can build a more resilient defense. If you find it harsh or a little extreme, then know that it has been done in the best interests of what we as hunters hold dear, lest we lose it. How unthinkable would that be?

**Hunting for survival vs. killing for pleasure**

It is a fact that hunting in the past was done more by the need to survive than anything else - one certainly does not sense that fun or recreation was high on their agenda when it came to...
survival. Meat, being the most protein rich food source and fat it's vital partner, was the obvious target. So, man hunted to survive and the more successful he became the more man thrived. However, it always seemed to have been done for that purpose alone and it was not as if they had a choice in the matter. Today it's different. Few of us need to hunt to survive. Therefore, we hunt because we choose to and typically we do it for recreational purposes and often defend it on the grounds of it being "something man has always done", forgetting that early man did it then out of necessity, not choice. So, it's a spurious defense. It is also an unfortunate fact that this recreational activity has become increasingly bedeviled by unethical practices, ranging from bait shooting from hides, to an obsession with trophies that meet all kinds of scoring criteria. So, whilst we may like to think of ourselves as conservationist and upholding some kind of time-honored tradition, we are increasingly viewed as ego-driven killers. People who consciously violate nature and its animals and we need to recognize that fairly and squarely. As smoking is harmful to humans so hunting is now seen as being harmful to animals as well-being socially unacceptable.

Honoring the animal vs. triumphing with the trophy

On successfully completing a Giant Eland hunt the hunter is rewarded with a wonderful welcome in camp and a ceremonial dance in honor of the hunting party and the animal. One feels special as the hunt and the animal have been made to feel special which of course they are. Above all you sense huge respect for the Eland, which has been recognized in the memorable and moving ritual and it makes you feel humble and privileged.

Compare this to the recent photos pasted on their Facebook site by the two Trump brothers clutching their leopards - the epitome of ignominy, from both an animal and human point of view. No honor, no respect, nothing remotely humble. A brash shocker in every sense of the word and it went around the world in a flash and not surprisingly fueled the flames which threaten to devour us. But they were just doing the traditional thing of sporting their trophies as you see in every hunting magazine - in a sense following the example of their elders who collect so-called Grand Slam trophies at SCI Conventions and the like. Rather call them check book awards and be done with it, than delude ourselves that the recipients are hunters of stature in the true sense. Perhaps we can take a leaf out of the German's and Scot's books who seem to maintain high standards when it comes to ethical and honorable traditions as a result of which I venture to say they find their sport under less pressure.
Africa is the nub of the problem, but regrettably it is the yardstick against which we are judged and where most of the malpractice happens.

Hunting vs. shooting

Traditionally a hunter defined himself by his ability to read the signs and use the elements to get close and efficiently dispatch his quarry to the happy hunting grounds, using fairly crude weaponry. Increasingly today you hear talk of head shots at 400m and the like - seldom however, is mention ever made of the ghastly jaw hits. In fact it seems the further you are from your target the better and the more accomplished you are as a hunter. Shooter maybe - hunter no way.

Test of skill vs. proof of wallet

Skilled hunters of the past were not just proficient with their weapons, but they were also knowledgeable about the entire eco-system, tracking, feeding, drinking, sleeping and breeding habits of the animals. Witness Ndende of whom Beard says, "He learned the ways of elephant early in childhood. He read their spoor as he might read writing, interpreted their rumblings and shuffling as one might hear conversation."

Ask your typical hunter of today what he really knows about a buffalo in terms of its life and the conditions within which he is hunting it, or a sable or elephant or any other. I suspect a low pass rate, but one that doesn't interfere with his ability to pay and desire to kill. How often do you not hear PH's complaining about the pressure they operate under so the client can fill his quota? Pound the roads, pound the baits, pound the beat, all to pound the animals.

Why not hunt on foot and enjoy the experience by learning from the likes of Ndende.

Succeeding with the animal of your mission should be a bonus not a contrived given. So what if you go home without the animal in the salt. You will have had a much more fulfilling bush experience and come back a more fulfilled person, a better hunter and yes, you would also have got much better value for your hard-earned dollar. But no, it's a case of "get that animal which I have paid for and if we get it early can I please leave"!

Proof of manhood vs. testosterone fuelled chauvinism.
In the past we know that attaining manhood was a defining moment in the life of the community for many reasons, not the least being the candidate's ability to attract the maiden of his choice or not. As such one was tested to see if the threshold had been crossed. Today, in the increasing absence of time honored rituals and accelerating urbanization, males still seek to assert their masculinity and so-called hunting of animals is one way out. So, more ego-centric stories prevail about the hardships endured and challenges faced. In fact, virtually every story you read written by hunters, places themselves and their deed firmly in the middle - look at me, look what I have achieved, as I fend off that mid-life crisis.

Animal has a chance vs. animal has no chance.

As a lion, facing down a Masai warrior with a spear and shield is one thing - try escaping from a high-science projectile, hurtling towards you at 2800 ft. per second, guided on its way by a 10-power scope set atop a modern-day rifle, from the safety of a blind.

In particular I am bothered by shooting animals from a hide on a bait - no one will ever convince me that it constitutes hunting. Tell me in all honesty how does it qualify? Exciting, yes, I am sure to hear a lion roaring near you as you sit in the blind - but hunting, no. And remember it is the big cats, who are most commonly shot like this, that will be next on the anti-hunting brigade's agenda and how do we possibly defend this practice as ethical hunting. I say it again - lions will be the next to be outlawed unless we change. Rather go after them on foot for a real sphincter tightening experience and test of courage.

Physical prowess vs. diesel stalker

Heaving his not inconsiderable bulk off the Land Cruiser, the average hunter stares vacantly around as the trackers set about their business. The fact that he has wounded the animal whilst shooting from the truck is more of an inconvenience than anything else, and so the chore of follow up ensues, with the PH typically finishing the animal off. Maybe that's harsh but again it is a conclusion after seeing many hunters, either in the bush or at airports, that few are well physically conditioned. Long hikes after fresh buffalo tracks is not their idea of a hunt and listening to PH's and their staff over the years, it is surprising to learn just how prevalent diesel-stalking is. Sadly, physically prowess seems to be on the wane whilst diesel powers ahead.
Social necessity vs. socially unacceptable

Here it is about killing out of necessity as opposed to for sport. With all the focus on the trophy, the wider context within which hunting occurs has become lost. All people see are dead animals killed for sport. Problem - big problem. The fact that owners of hunting concessions have invested in anti-poaching squads and all manner of environment and community improvement initiatives goes unnoticed, or is overwhelmed by pictures of dead animals and grinning hunters. As the saying goes "a picture tells a thousand words". So let’s show different pictures which depict us and what we do in a different light. Whilst we all know that the facts largely support hunting in terms of the ultimate survival of the various species, the fact is that people will not listen to reason when their emotions prevail.

Stories of the hunt vs. photos of dead animals

Bushmen, Inuit, Aboriginals, Plains Indians and the like, all have a folklore richly embellished with stories of the animals that sustained them, the legendary hunters and their hunts. Little of that today - too little. Instead we focus on ourselves and our heroic deeds rather than on the animal and its life. Time me thinks to change or we will be changed - are we naturalists or killers.

Time also for the various media involved in hunting to change their editorial stance and to demonstrate that they too get it, lest they find advertising revenues declining as circulations come under pressure. Let the emphasis shift from the gallery of death to more about hunting in its entirety - I mean how many more stories can you read about "wounded buffalo at dawn" or "leopard at last light (from a blind)" written by well-meaning amateurs.

Not exactly going to further the cause of hunting or the wellbeing of the animals. Let’s rather become as proficient with our cameras as we hopefully are with our rifles. What about pictures of the animal before it was taken, full of life and challenge? Pictures of life.

Professional hunters all vs. PH and "clients"

Truth is that whilst hunters of the past were invariably all pros, many today venture into the bush as rank amateurs under the protective wing of a veteran PH. Ridiculous, if you really think about it. I mean how can you possibly have any respect for something which seemingly seems to require so little in terms of skill or preparation. Hence the arrogance and the callousness.
Consider this, that to undertake a simple 30ft underwater scuba dive, requires proper training and certification. Yet to take the life of a 46-inch Zambian sable or 55-inch kudu bull requires no formal training or certification - just a chequebook. How can you possibly honour something you have not worked for or earned the right to hunt?

**Respectful behaviour vs. disrespectful behaviour**

Early to bed, early to rise, early to hunt, practice, practice, practice vs. late to bed, early to rise possibly with a hangover, a couple of sighting shots off a dead rest at a stationary target at 100 yards. Then off we go in the truck to attempt to shoot any number of animals from a list, many of which we have never seen let alone know anything about. Then back well before the heat of the day gets too much, to flop exhausted into a camp stool, ready to be waited on by the ever attentive camp staff.

"**Primitive** man vs. "**modern" man**

Primitive man is respected for his deeds in terms of survival because the odds were so stacked against him and yet he thrived. He had no choice, made the most of his talents and basically got on with it. He was also relatively simple by nature, mentally undeveloped and socially unsophisticated (so we are told). His was a physical world.

Today we see ourselves as educated, evolved and sophisticated. Ironic isn't it that this social accolade called "sophisticated" comes from the word "sophism", which means a "plausibly deceptive fallacy" and a "sophist" is an "intentionally fallacious reasoner". And it is these fallacious reasoners who hold us to ransom on the grounds we are no longer living in a physical world but one filled with knowledge and wisdom.

Where the need to hunt has long been intellectually superseded and people who indulge in it are boorish and socially unacceptable. Relics of a bygone era who society will increasingly marginalize. Thoughtless people in an increasingly thoughtful world. Time to expose their fallacious reasoning, is it not? As mentioned earlier, it starts with us behaving differently and only when we do this will we have a chance of allowing the facts to speak for themselves.

**Hunting vs. photographic safaris.**
As evidenced by the recent ban on hunting in Botswana in favour of photographic safaris we face a formidable alternative. One that ticks all the boxes in terms of social acceptability, conservation, sophistication, nature loving, eco-friendly, animal respect, community involvement, revenue generation and the like. Expect more of it, not less, at the expense of hunting as the twain shall never meet.

Unless of course we respond differently to the currently thoughtless norm and also start ticking some boxes, instead of annihilating canned lions. Seems the only photos we are interested in are the inevitable - what about everything else that we are privileged to see and observe in some of the magnificent places we are so fortunate to visit whilst on safari? Or have our powers of observation become blinded by the quest for the trophy?

What a waste when you consider that one of the great joys of hunting is that you get to hunt in really remote areas. Where there is a real possibility to get involved with your surroundings and in fact experience sights and sounds way better than sitting on the game viewing truck of a photographic safari could ever deliver. But do we capitalise on that? No - invariably we default to the "trophy pic", instead of being more reflective about the special experience we have been privileged to enjoy.

Focus on life vs. focus on death

The inescapable fact of the matter is that we are seen as purveyors of death, not propagators of life. Our hunting forefathers respected life and it seems we worship at the shrine of death. Think about it - hard and honestly.

Conclusion

Hunting and hunters are increasingly under fire not just on account of what we do, but how we do it. The “what” does not concern me as it is a personal choice one makes and that is one's right (at least for now). It is the “how” that is the problem and which makes it increasingly difficult to defend the what and which gets in the way of the facts.

For the record I am not saying all of us do this all of the time. Most, I am sure, endeavour to hunt fairly and ethically. However, the inconvenient truth of the matter is that we are all guilty, to a greater or lesser extent, of transgressing one or more of the above boundaries at one time
or another and it's the transgressions that create the perceptions, which in turn become reality in the minds of the nay sayers.

We are as strong as the weakest link in the chain. So that is why I say it is up to us as individual hunters to protect our sport - not committees, organizations or societies. I mean have you ever seen a statue erected to a committee?

Let's use the public platforms available to us and our industry media to put a different face on hunting based on different practices. No longer natural born killers a la Oliver Stone, rather knowledgeable conservationists, who lead by example and consequently are able to stand up to the emotive attacks of the anti-brigade whose voices will become a cacophony lest we still them through example.

The good news of course is that we are talking about attitudes and behaviours which we can chose to change for the better ... if we have the will. That is the question and depending on how you answer you will either become part of the solution, or continue to exacerbate the problem.
Trophy Hunting and Artificial Selection for Small Horns in Mountain Ungulates

by Marco Festa-Bianchet, University of Sherbrooke, Canada & IUCN/SSC Caprinae Specialist Group

Many mountain ungulates are much sought-after hunting trophies, and the IUCN Caprinae Specialist Group has long supported the inclusion of hunting in conservation programs.

About 20 years ago, we produced a statement that was later used as a basis for the IUCN Guiding Principles on Trophy Hunting. We recognize that sustainable hunting, in accordance to biological principles and including respect for local communities, can have many positive contributions to the conservation of mountain ungulates and their habitat.
Members of our group have also produced evidence that in some cases, excessive selective harvest of males with rapidly-growing horns can favor the evolution of smaller horns. The initial paper showing a genetic change in heavily hunted bighorn sheep on Ram Mountain, Alberta, Canada (Coltman et al. 2003) was confirmed by a reanalysis (Pigeon et al. 2016) that accounted for some valid statistical criticisms, and showed that the evolutionary trend towards smaller horns stopped when the trophy hunt was suspended.

Long-term, broad-scale analyses of harvest record suggest that evolutionary change is to be expected when harvests are intense (Garel et al. 2007, Hengeveld & Festa-Bianchet 2011, Pérez et al. 2011, Festa-Bianchet et al. 2014) but can be avoided when regulations limit the selective impact (Büntgen et al. 2018) or when harvest is limited by access (Douhard et al. 2016).

This is not an unexpected result: about 30-40% of variability in sheep horn size is inheritable. Intense artificial selective pressure will cause evolution, especially when, as is the case for wild sheep, ram horns grow to ‘trophy’ size a few years before large horns confer high mating success (Martin et al. 2016). In that case, a ram risks getting shot before the large horns give him a high mating success.

Evolutionary changes can be avoided by regulations that ensure that some large-horned males survive to reproduce. The effectiveness of those regulations can be gauged by analysis of long-term data on the age and horn size of harvested males.
For example, when bighorn sheep ram horn size was declining in Alberta in the 1980’s and early 1990’s, up to a quarter of the harvest was made up of rams aged 4 or 5 years (Festa-Bianchet et al. 2014). In contrast, in parts of British Columbia where the horn size of Stone’s ram has not declined, about 70% of the harvest is made up of rams aged 8 years and older (Douhard et al. 2016). Rams with large horns that are harvested at 9 years of age and older have likely already produced some descendants and passed on genes for large horns. Of course, that means that information on the age of harvested rams is extremely important for management.

Many other factors affect the probability that trophy hunting will have an evolutionary impact, including the age-specific role of horn size on mating success, the degree of mate monopolization by large-horned males, the availability of effective sources of non-selected immigrants and gregariousness (Festa-Bianchet 2017). The overriding factors, however, are the selectivity and the rate of the harvest.

Unfortunately, these results have been received with hostility by some in the trophy hunting community, partly because they have been used by anti-use groups to suggest that any kind of trophy hunting will have undesirable evolutionary consequences. That is not the case.

Instead, I have argued that the specific biology of mountain sheep, combined with very heavy selective hunting, sets up a perfect storm that is very likely to lead to an evolutionary response. I have encouraged researchers and managers to consider when selective harvest may lead to evolution, and how to ensure that harvests are evolutionarily sustainable. Managers are instead increasingly confronted with manufactured uncertainty (see Boan et al. 2018 for a discussion of similar techniques to discredit caribou conservation) in attempts to prevent them from using the best science to develop harvest plans.
A good example is the recent attempt by wildlife biologists in Alberta to change bighorn sheep hunting regulations based on strong evidence that the current harvest scheme selects for small horns. That recommendation was refused by the provincial government and the report supporting it remains in 'draft' stage after 3 years!

The latest manifestation of hostility towards the idea that intense, quota-free selective hunting may lead to evolution is found in three papers recently published in a 'Special Issue' on mountain sheep in the Journal of Wildlife Management, including an Editorial Comment (Boyce & Krausman 2018) to which I have written a reply (Festa-Bianchet 2018).

Another paper in this issue, questioning the idea that selective hunting can lead to evolution, contained several basic errors. When those errors were pointed out (Kardos, Luikart & Allendorf 2018), the author admitted that bighorn sheep hunting regulations in Alberta may in fact have caused an evolutionary response (Heffelfinger 2018).

I trust that most wildlife managers and conservationists will consider the evidence for evolutionary effects of selective hunting and neither attempt to simply obstruct it, nor abuse it by applying it out of context.

A similar article was first published in Caprinae News, the Newsletter of the IUCN/SSC Caprinae Specialist Group, issue 1/2018 (September). To see the original article including the details on the references mentioned please click HERE.
When the United States imposed a unilateral moratorium on elephant trophy imports from Zimbabwe in 2014, conservationists were taken by surprise. The moratorium’s sudden announcement in the Federal Register, the daily digest of all proposals and rule makings emanating from the United States executive branch, made it clear the ban was being imposed without the benefit of consultation with either Zimbabwe’s conservation agencies or the US public, as required by law. The timing of the decision, coming during a period of both strained relations between Washington and Harare, and heightened international concern over widespread elephant poaching, stained it with suspicion of political motivations. Eight years
later that stain persists, despite changes in the administration of both countries, leaving the conservation programs elephants depend on, unstable, and raising questions about the future role of science and law in US decision-making on environmental issues.

According to the African Elephant Specialist Group of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Zimbabwe is home to the second largest elephant population in Africa with an estimated 82,630 animals. This success is the product of the nation’s holistic approach to conservation that leverages the strengths of protected areas, like national parks, with the active engagement and investment of rural communities in the surrounding matrix via the often lauded Communal Areas Management Program For Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE).

The CAMPFIRE program arose during the 1980s and 1990s with the active support of the United States, via the US Agency for International Development (USAID), who provided financing and technical expertise. Under CAMPFIRE, rural commercial enterprises are developed and markets leveraged, to raise the standard of living in rural areas and, in turn, reduce incentives to participate in poaching while increasing the social carrying capacity of wildlife populations that are dangerous and can come into conflict with agriculture.

Enterprises developed under CAMPFIRE include hunting concessions, community fisheries and photo-tourism ventures. As noted by USAID, one hallmark of CAMPFIRE’s success is the doubling of elephant numbers in program areas from 4,000 to 8,000 individuals. This success has been delivered through the program’s embrace of fee based trophy hunting as a means to create jobs, encourage investment and raise revenue that can be applied to conservation, as well as the nation’s conservative management of hunting itself. While the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) grants Zimbabwe an export quota of 500 elephants per annum (1000 tusks), the quota employed in practice has ranged between 240 and 400 elephants, or 0.3 percent to 0.5 percent of Zimbabwe’s total elephant population. This conservatism allows hunting programs to both be sustainable and promote a high level of trophy quality. This increases the economic competitiveness of Zimbabwe’s hunting trade, which in turn creates more business for hunting operations that then create more economic security in the nation’s rural areas and increase the opportunity costs for engaging in poaching or habitat destruction.
Between 2010 and 2015 a total of 1,087 elephants were allocated under quota in CAMPFIRE Areas, with the majority, fifty three percent, being utilized by hunters from the United States. These hunters in turn generated almost $7.5 million in revenue, more than ten times the amount generated by photo-tourism in CAMPFIRE Areas during the same period. A portion of this revenue helps to pay the salaries of 168 community game scouts who conduct anti-poaching patrols in CAMPFIRE areas. These scouts, who historically logged more than 3,000 patrol days over more than 2 million square kilometers, represent an important force multiplier for the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (ZimParks), the country’s principal anti-poaching body, who is also funded with hunting fees.

While not a panacea, the numbers show the CAMPFIRE approach to conservation has steadily delivered positive outcomes for Zimbabwe’s people and wildlife and that the patronage of US hunters has played a decisive role in these successes. This track record of success was disrupted in 2014 when the US Fish and Wildlife Service announced the suspension of elephant trophy imports from Zimbabwe into the United States, saying they doubted the ability of Zimbabwe’s natural resource management programs to conserve elephant populations. Because of the size of the US hunting market, this represented nothing short of a crippling blow to conservation efforts in Zimbabwe.

The agency’s announcement was made under authority of the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the US enabling legislation for CITES. Under CITES, parties are permitted, at their discretion, to adopt more stringent barriers to wildlife trade than those in the convention. Under this provision the ESA empowers the US Fish and Wildlife Service to allow or disallow the importation of hunting trophies of CITES listed species based on their determination of whether or not the programs of the range nations “enhance” the conservation of the species. The criteria for making these determinations gives the agency a wide degree of professional latitude, but still must fall within the ESAs requirement that agency decisions be based on the “best available commercial and scientific information.”

The announcement that the US was abandoning nearly 2 decades of recognizing hunting’s value to elephant conservation in Zimbabwe was not without wider context. Elephant poaching in Africa began to spike around 2008 due to increased demand for ivory from a rising middle class in China and other Asian countries. While these increases in elephant poaching were primarily centered in East Africa and the Congo Basin, and poaching in Zimbabwe
remained comparatively incidental, the international outcry for elephant conservation treated African nations as a collective, ignoring the important details and nuances between countries and their conservation programs. Animal rights activists, who represent a voting bloc in the US, utilized the global concern over elephant poaching to drive increased animosity towards trophy hunters, between whom a moral equivalency was drawn.

2014 saw increased diplomatic sparring between the US and Zimbabwe over accusations of corruption and a lack of commitment to democracy on the part of Harare. That year the US Treasury Department imposed economic sanctions on 113 Zimbabwean nationals and 70 related enterprises. The imposition of these sanctions, combined with the moratorium’s announcement in advance of the US mid-term elections, raised questions about whether the US Fish and Wildlife Service’s decision was even about elephants at all.

The impact of the sudden discontinuation of trade was felt immediately on both sides of the Atlantic. Denied the ability to comment in advance of the moratorium’s enactment, western conservationists pressed their case in the courts. Key to these challenges were claims that the USFWS should have solicited public comments before abandoning a long standing position recognizing hunting’s value; and, that the agency’s acknowledged reliance on anecdotal information about the status of Zimbabwe’s elephant populations violated the ESAs requirement that decisions be made based on the “best available commercial and scientific information”.

In Zimbabwe the moratorium depressed safari bookings by thirty percent according to the industry’s trade association. This downturn in Zimbabwe’s hunting industry stemming from the loss of the US market correlated with increases in poaching as funding for anti-poaching activities became more restricted. Elephant poaching reportedly increased 5 fold in the Dande Safari Area as the local game scouts were put on a curtailed patrol schedule. In an incident that shocked the world, ZimParks rangers poisoned more than 60 elephants and other wildlife in Huwange National Park after they had not been paid due to reduced funding. Incidents like these were not isolated.

In time, US conservationists would prevail in court, US conservation officials would engage their Zimbabwean counterparts and new presidents would assume office in Washington and Harare, leading to the US Fish and Wildlife Service announcing the moratorium’s lifting in November of 2017.
Like when the moratorium was first imposed, reaction was swift with animal rights activists deftly organizing political opposition to trophy hunting that had been honed in the wake of the killing of Cecil the Lion. The activists were eventually joined by populist political pundits such as Laura Ingraham, Michael Savage and Tammy Bruce who condemned lifting the moratorium, variously equating hunting with poaching, making appeals to faith and sharing petitions from animal rights groups in the process. The protest eventually caught the attention of US President Donald Trump who in a tweet called trophy hunting a “horror show” and said that the decision to lift the moratorium was being placed on hold until he had a chance to “review all conservation facts.”

The President’s intrusion into the US Fish and Wildlife Service’s rulemaking lifting the moratorium once again raises concerns that politics are replacing economics and science in the conduct of ESA decision making. Internal agency emails reported by The Hill indicate that the White House’s actions took USFWS by surprise and that a hard stop on imports was put in place in the immediate wake of the President’s tweets. In March of this year the agency began attempts to navigate the politics and the law by issuing an internal memo saying they would review elephant trophy imports from Zimbabwe on a “case by case basis.”

Seven months later however conservationists are still awaiting resolution as it increasingly appears a de-facto trophy import moratorium remains in place. Reports are emerging of US hunters who had traveled to Zimbabwe believing they would be able to bring their elephant trophies home but whose import applications now appear to be in administrative limbo. This suggests a creeping politicization of ESA decision making that should concern all who value wildlife, whether they support hunting or not. It also signals instability in the US hunting market that may continue to impact not only the conservation programs of Zimbabwe but other African nations dependent on hunting revenues as well.

As has been witnessed in Zimbabwe, this market instability can have significant local impacts that collectively create setbacks in the global effort to deter wildlife crime. As noted at the recent conference on illegal wildlife trade held in London, progress depends on a deeper engagement of rural communities that are a critical choke point in the illicit trade’s supply chain. Success in doing so requires that these communities not be alienated by placing undue restrictions and barriers on the hunting trade that incentivizes their involvement in

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conservation and that policies like those in place in the United States, be unambiguously abandoned.

**Catherine E. Semcer** is the founder and CEO of Artemis Strategic Advisors, a boutique consultancy supporting clients pursuing solutions to challenges in environmental security, sustainability and conservation finance.
In the New Machine Age, hunting helps us accept mortality as truth

by Paula Young Lee

Does hunting make us human? In the New Machine Age, we are all cyborgs — hybrids of flesh and technology, glowing with artificial enlightenment. So perhaps the better question is this: Does hunting keep us human?

In this country, hunting is both admired and despised. Anachronistic, it is a protest against the civilizing process, a process that combines neurotic desires with economic excess. The goal of civilization? Utopia. Soon, the civilizing narrative affirms, technology will surmount the pathos of the human condition and overcome the horror that is reality. Already, every trivial experience — vacationing at Disneyworld, snorkeling in the Seychelles — gets documented and flung into cyberspace, to be admired by virtual friends who don’t realize that these ersatz novelties were scripted by someone else.
Sadly, there is no such thing as the purely “wild” any more (if indeed there ever was), just as the unmodified human is extinct in wealthy habitats. The basic well-off human model gets contact lenses, braces, dental fillings and daily vitamin pills, for starters, then nose jobs, artificial knees, replacement hearts, silicone implants, hair plugs and so forth. But insofar as “wild” refers to a wilderness that civilization has mostly left alone, there hunters hunt, and in so doing protect a living reality from becoming one more ersatz, purchased experience.

To protect the living is a quintessentially human act. It may seem like sophistry to argue that hunting protects wildlife, but the act of hunting encompasses far more than shooting a wild animal, and it neither starts nor ends with a death. Entire seasons can pass without the quarry being spotted. And yet, without ever having taken a shot, the hunter has still hunted. Tracking, scenting, looking for signs, searching for scrapes, following paths, learning trails — this is all part of understanding the patterns of a particular landscape that both hunter and quarry call home. The hunt itself is part of a much larger continuum.

From a storytelling perspective, this continuum is boring. No drama, no conflict, no violence. Just watching, waiting, listening and learning. It is possible to equate the hunt with the fatal shot, but to do so reduces the quarry to a future mount over the fireplace. To anti-hunters, that head is a relic of a bizarre and morbid ritual. To the hunter, it is a reminder and a warning. The reminder is this: To hunt means taking from a land to which you will be giving back a life: yours. The warning? The land exists prior to both humans and animals, and it supports both without playing favorites.

Thus hunters refer to “taking a deer” from the land. The land is giving them a gift, but whatever is taken must eventually be returned. The idea of giving back is built in.

The traditional attachment of hunters to a family clan and a specific locale places hunting inside a “gift” economy, the traits of which are especially evident in the United States, where wild venison (as opposed to farmed venison) is illegal to sell. The implications of this system go beyond hunting itself. As anthropologist Marcel Mauss showed in his famous study, *The Gift* (1966), the gift of the wild holds a kind of magic in primitive societies. In Maori culture, gifts hold a “spiritual power” that is particularly strong in things from the forest, and in forest game most of all, infused with an energy that is, Mauss writes, “often personified, and strives to bring to its original clan and its homeland some equivalent to take its place.”
Many hunters invest hunting with spiritual significance, for it is difficult to ignore the feeling that taking a wild life and serving it for supper are symbolically weighty acts that have nothing in common with going to a restaurant and ordering a steak. The legacy of the gift explains why.

In a gift economy, the act of giving compels the person who receives the gift to reciprocate. A gift can be refused, but that refusal has consequences. So does the failure to give back. If the original gift is the freedom to hunt the land, then hunters are obliged to return the gift by bringing an “equivalent”: a life to take its place. Hence, ethical hunters reciprocate by protecting the wilderness, giving of themselves to ensure that the forest stays the forest, instead of being turned into a Rainforest Café. That act of caretaking, which is also conservation, likewise conserves a relationship between humans and nature that accepts mortality as truth. A commodity system, by contrast, cannot survive without the fantasy that displaces value onto symbols and calls it transcendence, even while working extremely hard to perpetuate the myth that cyborgs are immortal.

Fantasies are fun, but they can’t last. Sooner or later, profits fall, reality intrudes, pills get popped, and everybody’s depressed. When the land demands its due from those who take
without acknowledging the “nature” in natural resources, the fantasy will collapse. As some clever cyborgs chase utopia, still other humans insist on living with nature.

As long as a few hybrids hunt, something of that human nature will survive, too.

Paula Young Lee is a cultural historian, food writer and backwoods cook. She is the author of the award-winning book Deer Hunting in Paris: A Memoir of God, Guns, and Game Meat. This essay first appeared as a contribution to the Center for Humans and Nature.
Sustainable Use of Wild Species: A Foundation for Conservation and for Local Livelihoods

by Rosie Cooney and Shane Mahoney

A World That Values The Conservation And Livelihood Benefits Of Sustainable Wildlife Utilization
The **IUCN Policy Statement on Sustainable Use of Wild Living Resources** asserts that “use of living resources, if sustainable, is an important conservation tool because the social and economic benefits derived from such use provide incentives for people to conserve them” (IUCN, 2000). As humans, we are inclined – under favourable governance conditions – to protect and maintain that which has value to us. There are clear linkages between conservation success and benefits deriving to people from the use of wildlife. This statement does not mean use of all species is desirable, or that all use is sustainable – far from it. Often governance conditions are not favourable – for example, lack of any local rights to use wildlife legally often leads to unmanaged and highly destructive illegal use. Legal and illegal unsustainable use – from industrial fisheries and tropical timbers to orchids and African forest elephants – is one of the major causes of species decline and wider ecosystem degradation. But this means that sustainable use is a powerful tool in the conservation toolbox – including for addressing unsustainable use itself. There are robust examples from around the world of enduring models of long-term sustainable use of wild resources, and of destructive patterns of poaching and overexploitation transformed through supporting legal, equitable and sustainable stewardship and use of wild species.

This policy and this experience sets the direction for the work of IUCN Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialist Group, a volunteer expert network of over 300 people from all around the world, with expertise in a broad range of topics relevant to sustainable use of wild species and its contribution to local livelihoods. SULi is a joint initiative of two IUCN Commissions – the Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP), and the Species Survival Commission (SSC). In other words, it brings together biological/ecological and social/governance knowledge to understand and provide advice on the interaction between humans and wild species in its conservation and livelihood dimensions.

One major focus of work in recent years has been the illegal wildlife trade. A surge in poaching for IWT continues to devastate populations of many species globally – not just the high profile elephants, rhinos and pangolins, but also many less attention-grabbing taxa – orchids, timber, fish, medicinal plants. SULi has worked in partnership with IIED and TRAFFIC for several years to highlight the necessity of seeing the indigenous peoples and local communities that live with wildlife as key stakeholders and actors in effective and equitable responses to IWT, and the critical need to enhance community rights to land and resources and benefits from wildlife. Sustainable use is a key part of these benefit flows (both consumptive and non-consumptive),
although other approaches can be very effective in some contexts (e.g. gate park fees, Payments for Ecosystem Service approaches).

Enhancing the voices of communities themselves in deliberations on IWT has become a key approach for us, and our most recent event was a “Community Voices” session in London held immediately before the fourth intergovernmental IWT Conference hosted by the UK. Around 40 community representatives were present (as well as many more NGO, academic and government representatives working to support community-based approaches) and a closed community session crafted messages for the IWT Conference. The messages were clear – community-led conservation is important in reducing IWT and it needs far greater practical and policy support at national and international levels. Communities need strong rights to their traditional lands, rights to make decisions about the wildlife they live with, and rights to benefit from conservation and wildlife. As stewards of around 25% of the world's habitable lands, they need a recognized and formal seat at the table in these discussions.

A further key priority for us in recent years is hunting – from subsistence all the way to high-value trophy hunting. Well-managed hunting is a form of sustainable wildlife use that provides incentives and revenue for government, as well as private and community landowners, to maintain and restore wildlife as a viable land use in many parts of the world. It can (again, only where well-managed) provide much needed income, jobs, and related economic and social benefits to indigenous and local communities, places where such commodities are often scarce. Hunting also contributes significantly to food security for individuals, families, and communities, positively affecting individual health and nutrition, and general social wellbeing for millions of people worldwide. As a traditional activity, hunting helps maintain the identity of indigenous and local peoples, thereby supporting human cultural diversity globally and helping safeguard the many ecological insights these communities have developed over long periods of nature engagement. Peoples and communities impacted by these benefits are, in turn, motivated to practice good environmental stewardship and implement conservation initiatives to protect wildlife and its habitat, thus ensuring the continuation of these benefits.

This is not just a theoretical framework. While it may seem counterintuitive to many people, evidence does show that legal and regulated hunting can, and does, play an important role in delivering benefits for wildlife conservation and the livelihoods and welfare of indigenous and local communities. SULi therefore supports scientifically well-managed hunting, including
international (trophy) hunting, as an integral and legitimate component of sustainable wildlife management and, in the wider conservation context, and as a tool for creating incentives for wildlife tolerance, as a mechanism for reducing human-wildlife conflict, and as a legitimate form of sustainable wildlife use.

However, the specialist group also acknowledges that hunting (regardless of motivation), if poorly managed, can not only fail to deliver social and conservation benefits, but can have negative ecological impacts, including altered age/sex structures, social disruption, harmful genetic effects, and even declines in wildlife populations. In short, illegal or insufficiently regulated hunting can become a detriment to conservation priorities and impair livelihoods of local and indigenous communities. Indeed, some forms of hunting indeed compete with and undermine community-based models of hunting.

SULi recognizes that achieving successful and sustainable wildlife use requires the application of diverse insights gathered far beyond the realm of traditional conservation biology. These include knowledge platforms related to effective governance, economics and benefits sharing, and political ecology. This is also why SULi members work to mobilize and integrate global conservation expertise across the science, policy, and practice sectors. Such multi-disciplinary approaches are critical, if robust, equitable models of sustainable use, including hunting-based models, are to be developed and maintained. As global impacts on natural diversity make clear, meeting human needs and priorities without compromising conservation imperatives is not an easy task.

Dr Rosie Cooney is Chair of the IUCN SSC/CEESP Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialist Group (SULi) and Visiting Fellow in Fenner School of Environment and Society, Australian National University.

Shane Mahoney serves as SULi Vice-Chair and is the founder and CEO of Conservation Visions. He has over 30 years’ working experience primarily as a scientist, wildlife manager, policy innovator and strategic advisor; but also as a filmmaker, writer, narrator, TV and radio personality, and lecturer.
Community-based Wildlife Management in Central Asia

by Gerhard R Damm
A gathering of wildlife management experts from across the broader Central Asian region was convened in September at Supara Chunkurchak in the Republic of Kyrgyzstan by IUCN CEESP/SSC Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialist Group (SULi), represented by Rosie Cooney (Australia) and Shane Mahoney (Canada), in partnership with Panthera, Hunting and Conservation Alliance of Tajikistan, GIZ, TRAFFIC and the IUCN Eastern Europe & Central Asia Regional Office. The experts and government representatives from central and western Asian countries – Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and the Russian Federation were complemented by international experts and representatives of the Wild Sheep Foundation, the SCI Foundation, The Russian Mountain Hunters Club and the US Delegation of the CIC.

The participants agreed that Community-Based Wildlife Management CBWM engages communities to value wild species and landscapes, fosters community wildlife management activities, and generates income streams and other benefits from wild species and healthy landscapes. It was recognized that CBWM is a new approach in the wider Central Asian region – in several countries there are promising initiatives, while it remains almost absent in others – but establishment and growth of CBWM faces many challenges.

The Inaugural Meeting of the IUCN Sustainable Use & Livelihoods Central Asia (SULiCA,) Supara Chunkurchak, Kyrgyzstan. Photo Credit: Maksim Levitin
The meeting *inter alia* called on governments, donors, conservation organizations, local communities and other key stakeholders

- to recognize and strengthen the role of CBWM in the region,
- support and promote the development of diverse local livelihood options based on sustainable use of wild resources,
- establish enabling legislative and regulatory frameworks,
- assist CBWM organizations to document their wildlife management practices
- strengthen the understanding of conservation and community dimensions among wildlife user groups including international hunters, and hunting operators and hunting agents/consultants to promote best practice in their decision-making and operations.

The key outcomes of the meeting are encapsulated in the “The Chunkurchak Recommendations on Community-based Wildlife Management in the broader Central Asian region”. Download the Recommendations in [English](#) and [Russian](#).
Introduction to the New Central Asian Sustainable Use & Livelihoods Specialist Group

by Khalil Karimov, MSc

The IUCN Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialist Group (SULi) is a global expert network formed by IUCN as a joint initiative of the Species Survival Commission (SSC) and the Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP).

In September 2018 a regional subgroup of SULi was established for the wider Central Asian Region, including China, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq and Russia. The goal of this specialist group is strengthening and improving conservation through sustainable use of wild resources such as wildlife, fish, wild plants, wild fruits, fungus, pastures and forest. One of the highest priorities for Central Asian SULi SG (SULiCA) will be development of better wildlife management that supports community-based, bottom up management in the selected region.

A World That Values The Conservation And Livelihood Benefits Of Sustainable Wildlife Utilization
Central Asia with its wild resources, particularly wildlife, and unique game species such as wild sheep and wild goats, is a very attractive region for humans. Fast growing local communities and with this, a growing livestock industry is putting this enigmatic wildlife under big pressure.

Unsustainable practices of communal hunting, but also unsustainable hunting tourism industry are additional pressures. Lack of scientific knowledge on populations’ status of the different species, and future trends is another significant gap for sustainable management. Last, but not least, elite capture of concession areas and overseas markets, as well as inadequate re-investment of benefits from hunting into conservation and a lack of apparent benefits for communities as the local wildlife stewards are creating an uncertain future for some regions and the wild resources therein.

Over 45 national and international experts assembled at a SULi roundtable in Kyrgyzstan in September 2018. This round table served for setting up this SG and clarifying the current situation and priorities for action. One of the key organizers of this roundtable was the Hunting and Conservation Alliance of Tajikistan (H&CAT); their representatives confirmed that they will continue to support the establishment of this SG contributing practical knowledge from experience gained over the past years.

In the next years SUli Central Asia will focus on mobilizing national and international experts to establish a science-based platform for sustainable wildlife management and community based natural resource management in the region. The group will assist policy- and decisions-makers to improve sustainable management and secure livelihoods for key stakeholders, particularly local communities. The global SULi SG will collaborate closely with SULi CA.

I was appointed Chair of SULi Central Asia – this is a unique lifetime opportunity and challenge to work towards habitat and wildlife conservation and management in this region, to help local communities to assert customary and legal rights to the land they live on, and the conservation and sustainable use of their wild resources for the benefit of future generations. I am very excited and optimistic about this development. My background and expertise, as well as the colleagues from my regional and international networks will assist choosing the optimum path to build this group. I have worked for Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH or GIZ in short, a German development agency headquartered in Bonn and Eschborn, and U.S. based Panthera, the only organization in the world that is devoted exclusively to the conservation of the world’s 40 wild cat species and their landscapes. To this
day I collaborate with both organizations in regional projects. I am a member of several IUCN specialist groups – Cats, Bears, Caprinae and SUli. I am a Head of the Tajik Delegation of the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC) and closely collaborate with the hunting-conservation world on development of best practices for sustainable use of wild game resources. Some years ago, I founded and established the Hunting and Conservation Alliance of Tajikistan, but am no longer directly involved in this alliance, because I must remain independent. My present involvement with H&CAT largely on an advisory basis, including promotion, high-level communication and essential support for H&CAT at early stages of this completely new and not yet finally developed community wildlife management approach in this region.

I will put all my efforts to establish a strong and influential IUCN SUli CA SG, which will be advocating for sustainable conservation and community-based conservation. I am working currently on creating a supporting foundation to be able to get donations but also apply for big grants in order to develop and run this group. During the coming years, 2019 and 2020, I will be visiting the countries of the region, dialoguing with local stakeholders to understand their points of view and the work they do. I will approach the most promising young conservationists from the region and motivate them to join our specialist group. I am looking forward to work with many experts from various sectors and countries: this will be a busy time, but I am very glad to do this work. Together with local experts, we will first of all try to focus much on all gaps, such as scientific data and will try to fill all these gaps, and make this data available on official IUCN SUliCA Web-Page.

Conservation of wildlife, sustainable use and local communities from rural parts of the world is my life passion. In October 2018 I have participated at the opening ceremony of the 2018 Illegal Wildlife Trade Conference in London which was officially opened by the royal brothers at St James’ Palace. The personal dialog I had with Prince Harry, who has an excellent understanding of the role of community conservation and the need for benefits and incentives, including through sustainable use, has inspired me to work even harder for sustainable conservation. I cordially thank all my networks, private sponsors and common thinkers who support me in my pioneering mission.
Good rains continued until the very late end of the rainy season in May. After the draught in the previous year the generous rains allowed the regeneration of critical functions within the local ecosystems. This excellent news makes us optimistic for the continuing recovery of giant sable populations.

In Cangandala, the copious rains gave way to abundant grass, a lot of grass really; tall, thick, and everywhere. By end of May the soil was still too moist and the floodplains full of water, and by mid-June, when we finally could venture off- track, a thick wall of grass made progress a nightmare.

The long and intense rainy season has various and additional predictable consequences; probably a lot less surface will burn in 2018 both in Cangandala and Luando, although there is a risk that if the next rainy season is delayed, the unusual accumulation of combustible material may cause exceptionally severe wild fires in September. We struggled to make controlled burnings to promote mosaic micro-habitats and regrowth of vegetation for the dry season in highly favored sable feeding spots. Still, we managed to partially burn some patches on the main floodplain and some small areas on a couple anharas. These will surely become grazing and browsing hotspots for the animals shortly after in the dry season.

As result of the terrain conditions, we struggled to approach the sable herds in Cangandala. The females were quite dispersed and shy, surely a consequence of calving, or nursing their...
newborns. We could confirm that the big bull we had named Mercury was still routinely patrolling his favorite area. This suggests he still maintains the undisputed position of a dominant bull. We could ascertain that the younger bull Eolo is becoming more impressive by the day ... his horns are beautifully arched and imposing. It is probably only a matter of time until Eolo challenges his elder sibling; it may not take that long for him to become number one and the new master bull in Cangandala.

For Luando we had high expectations to increase monitoring and extend security measures across its vast wilderness areas, but the rainy season limited our movements. Throughout the rains it is impossible to drive a 4x4 vehicle off-road in the reserve, and even the few main sand roads become quickly impassable. The most efficient solution are bikes and we deployed three brand new Honda bikes along existing foot paths. However, we had underestimated how wet the conditions had become, and with the woodland becoming completely flooded in many places, the bikes had to be carried too often; long patrols turned into a nightmare. A new plan is now in the works to be implemented during the dry season; it will evolve around building access roads and deploying advanced ranger camps deep in the bush. These camps will be reached with 4x4 vehicle in the dry season and quad bikes during the rains.

The stepped-up security measures initiated in the previous year are producing encouraging results. The semi-permanent presence of two senior rangers, well equipped, supplied and fully motivated, has been a game changer. The endorsement and direct link of our senior rangers maintain to the Angolan military provides additional power. Their message is clear: the giant sable is a national symbol and sacred.
However, poaching is far from eliminated and poachers are likely lurking and readjusting to the increased pressure. With training exercises scheduled for the second semester, we hope to further increase security on the ground.

In the meantime, seven animals, four males and three females were still being tracked via GPS satellite collars until the end of June. These collars completed two full years of operation, sending GPS positions every four hours. They may not last that much longer now, but their impact has been extraordinary, by giving us in-depth knowledge and pioneering data on the biology and behavior of giant sable. The GPS positions also allowed to pinpoint the home ranges of various herds with extreme accuracy. Throughout the first semester we were able to witness how different bulls moved across their territories and interacted spatially with other bulls and herds, and we could even infer interesting breeding and calving behavior in females.

Download more of Pedro vaz Pinto’s beautiful and interesting photos from Cangandala and Luando [HERE](#).
Sustainable Conservation of the Saker Falcon

by Adrian Lombard, President, International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey.

The Bedouin falconry tradition probably extends back over thousands of years and is based around the annual migration seasons of the Saker falcon and its prey. Sakers migrate south in winter, to the Arab Peninsula, along with Houbara Bustards and Stone Curlew. The Bedouins learned to trap the Sakers, train them rapidly, and hunt bustards and curlew. As the warmer weather of spring heralded the northward migration, the trained Sakers were released back into the wild. This entirely sustainable custom was practiced from time immemorial.
At the turn of the 21st Century, some populations of Saker falcons were noted to be declining. The decline coincided with an increase in the popularity of falconry as a cultural heritage in the Gulf region, and was initially associated with measurably increasing legal and illegal trade in Sakers.

As a reaction, the United Arab Emirates decided to cease using wild-taken Saker falcons and to opt for captive-bred birds; this resulted that at least 95% of falconry birds used in the Emirates are captive-bred. The Emirate of Abu Dhabi led the response to investigate the cause for the decline and efforts to restore the iconic Saker falcon. As the availability of nest-sites is the limiting factor to Sakers breeding in the Eurasian steppes, the Emirate of Abu Dhabi developed a project to create 5,000 artificial nest boxes in Mongolia. In the process, it was noted that huge numbers of Saker falcons, and other raptors, were electrocuted on medium voltage electricity distribution lines that snaked across the endless rolling steppe. The poles of these lines provided the only elevated perching points for birds of prey; poor pole design made them perfect raptor killing machines.

Research was undertaken to establish the magnitude of this decimation and the results were horrific; approximately 10,000 raptors, of which 4,000 are Saker falcons, are electrocuted annually in Mongolia alone. This can be extrapolated across the immense Saker distribution range, which extends from Hungary in the west, to China in the East, and from Siberia to East Africa. The electrocution is selective of larger birds, so more female Sakers than males are killed. Clearly such losses are unsustainable.

Additionally, the collapse of the Soviet Union led to the disappearance of the huge collective grain farms. The resulting habitat change caused a decline in the numbers of rodents used by Sakers to feed their chicks. Other raptors were also affected, but their declines have largely gone unnoticed, although the Steppe eagle was recently reclassified in the IUCN Red List from Least Concern to Endangered.

In 2011, the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) faced a call to up-list the Saker falcon from Appendix II to Appendix I, citing unsustainable illegal trafficking as the cause. This position was by challenged by IAF, FACE and CIC and lead to the recognition of electrocution as principle cause for the decline; habitat change and illegal trade were considered other contributing factors. The value of the artificial nest project in Mongolia was recognized, and
this population was retained in Appendix II, allowing to a limited sustainable harvest. Following this agreement, the Saker Task Force was established under the CMS Raptors MoU. The task force developed the Global Action Plan for the Saker Falcon, which incorporates the principle of sustainable use into the conservation plan. The plan was accepted by the CMS CoP in 2014.

The establishment of the 5,000 artificial nests in Mongolia resulted in over 500 of these being occupied by breeding Saker falcons by 2014. About 2,500 young birds are now produced annually. Since the Saker is a particularly fecund species, a 10% harvest of young birds is completely sustainable. Political change in Mongolia resulted in a moratorium on the export of Saker falcons, however, and there is ongoing controversy relating to issues of governance and transparency.

The CMS CoP accepted the principle of conservation through sustainable use in 2011. The Saker Project provides a practical example of the implementation of this principle. At the BirdLife Flyways Conference in Abu Dhabi in April 2018, during a one-day symposium on the implementation of the CMS Saker Falcon Global Action Plan, the issues of conservation through sustainable use were discussed and received a measure of acceptance.
Assessment of Current Trade: Reliable estimates of the numbers of Saker falcons traded are not available, but it has been estimated that 6,000 and 9,000 Sakers, mostly young females, have been imported annually to the Gulf region. Since illegal trafficking also causes significant mortalities during trapping and smuggling at least a 5% this mortality rate must be added to the import figure. This certainly contributed to the observed population declines.

The falconry community is seriously concerned about this situation, not only because of its negative reflection on falconry, but also because of our conservation commitment and our concerns for the Saker.

Assessment of the Pros and Cons of a Legal Harvest: Since illegal harvest is a significant factor in the Saker population decline and that this is undesirable and unacceptable, we need to consider the following alternatives:

1. Termination of the practice of falconry, recalling that this was proposed by the Council for Bird Preservation in 1975.

2. Increased enforcement for an international ban on all trade in wild Saker falcons. Thus, no legal harvest would be permitted.

3. Encouragement on a monitored sustainable legal harvest of Saker falcons where harvest quotas are scientifically determined and balanced by conservation actions that increase or sustain existing Saker populations.

4. Disincentivize the use of wild-taken falcons and replace these with captive bred falcons (demand reduction).

It is evident that no single approach is ideal. Realistically, we would propose that measures to address the unsustainable illegal trafficking in Saker falcons should include elements of points 2, 3 and 4.

There are a range of conservation actions which can affect the conservation status of the Saker falcon. The ultimate objective would be downlisting the IUCN Red List status of the Saker falcon from Endangered to Least Concern. That this is achievable, has been demonstrated by successful falconer-led efforts to restore the Peregrine falcon. This bird of prey was decimated by pesticides in the 1960s; now the Peregrine is considered Least Concern.
Recognition of the importance of sustainable use in the conservation of the species is, however, essential. In 2016, efforts to downlist the Peregrine falcon at the CITES CoP failed, despite its improved conservation status, and despite of good supporting scientific evidence that the species not under threat by illegal trade.

The Saker falcon is highly valued by falconers in the Gulf region; it is, therefore, reasonable to expect that significant funding will be made available to develop and implement Saker conservation efforts. Additionally, recognition of the Saker as a “natural asset” within range states will result in conservation measures benefitting local communities, supporting habitat improvement and restricting illegal trade:

Photo Credit: International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey
Reduction of electrocution through mitigation, remediation and correct design of new distribution lines. Recognizing electrocution as the single most significant factor in the collapse of the Saker, the Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Raptor Conservation Fund led the research for solutions and corrective measures, providing $1,000,000 to initiate the process in Mongolia and other range states. Measures to mitigate dangerous distribution line poles have been developed at a cost of $20 per pole. If a conservative estimate shows that currently 4,000 Sakers are electrocuted per annum, a reduction of 80% would introduce 3,600 additional birds into the environment annually. It will also correct a gender imbalance, as electrocution selectively kills the larger females. These results may be extrapolated across the Saker distribution range.

- **Provision of artificial nests.** The success of the Mongolian Nest Project demonstrated the existence of a large population of floating non-breeding birds, limited by nest site availability. Artificial nest provision can create new breeding populations and potential exists for this in China, Kazakhstan and further west. An artificial nest project is under way on the Tibetan Plateau to restore resident Saker falcons as natural rodent control.

- **Modification of the environment.** The disappearance of collective grain farms along with progressive desertification and the use of rodenticides has reduced populations of rodents as prey base for breeding Sakers and their chicks. This situation can be reversed with support by local communities who may come to see the Saker as an asset.

- **Conversion of illegal trafficking to legal trade.** Unregulated and unsupervised illegal trafficking results in high mortalities and animal welfare issues. Whilst antipathy exists towards the commodification of wildlife, such antipathy is unacceptable, if legal trade benefits local communities, results in fewer mortalities and improved welfare. Legal trade can regulate excessive trapping of larger female birds as well as the trapping of mature breeding birds. Falconers desire “passage” falcons taken on their first migration. Such birds have developed flying and hunting skills, but have the mental plasticity to rapidly adapt to falconry training. Trapping occurs along migration routes, such as in Pakistan, which are distant from the breeding areas further north. There is a need to incentivize local communities along these routes so that they benefit from the regulated harvest and will oppose illegal traffickers who poach their resource.
The Saker falcon is the only currently endangered raptor popular with falconers. The threats to the Saker are not primarily related to overharvesting, as was initially proposed. To solve the problem, falconers must be incentivized to champion Saker conservation. The development of a sustainable legal harvest based on calculated yearly surplus of young Sakers as a result of conservation measures will be a workable solution.

It will require broad support and determination from the conservation community to succeed. Many other species of steppe raptors will benefit from the measures taken as these other raptors silently disappeared along with the Saker.
Hollowing Out Sustainable Use From The Inside

by Gerhard R Damm

After the self-professed anti-hunting Born Free Foundation (BFF) gained membership to IUCN, it now enters into partnership agreements to subvert multinational agreements which have sustainable use as part of their rationale.

The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals CMS and Born Free Foundation BFF signed a partnership agreement in May 2018. According to information on the CMS website, CMS and BFF cooperated already in the past outside formal partnership agreements.

Born Free opposes all forms of trophy hunting. BFF emphasizes the organization's ethical opposition to trophy hunting, but claims to work closely with policymakers, enforcement agencies, wildlife managers and other stakeholders to ensure that rules, regulations and guidelines relating directly or indirectly to trophy and sport hunting are strictly applied and enforced. BFF’s claims that this is part of its wider mission to reduce and ultimately eliminate human-induced, negative impacts on animal welfare and wildlife conservation.

Importantly, BFF unashamedly campaigns to change public attitudes towards trophy hunting and implement sustainable, non-lethal forms of delivering real wildlife-derived benefits to local communities. BFF’s track record shows that BFF does not always adhere to facts and truth, and – as far as the author could ascertain, has very little to show with regards to the well-being of local rural communities and wildlife!

BFF reports about the signing of the MoU with CMS saying that “CMS Executive Secretary Bradnee Chambers highlighted the significant role Born Free has played in supporting the work of the Convention on terrestrial African mammals, culminating in the recent listings of lions, leopards, giraffes and chimpanzees on its appendices, and the creation of the joint CMS/CITES African Carnivores Initiative. Born Free is also contributing to the Convention's ground-breaking work on the importance of animal culture and the role individual animals play in their societies, which aligns closely with Born Free's Compassionate Conservation principles.”
CMS partners include the secretariats of biodiversity-related Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), other inter-governmental bodies, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, that work with CMS. Interestingly, one of the CMS ambassadors, Ian Redmond, is also “a conservation consultant and advisor for organizations such as the Born Free Foundation and the International Fund for Animal Welfare”.

CMS has already signed partnership agreements with inter alia the Bern Convention; CIC - International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation; CPW - Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management; but also with HSI - Australia (part of the global arm of The Humane Society of the United States) as well as IFAW - International Fund for Animal Welfare. CMS also partners with IUCN, CBD, CITES and IWC (see box on this and next page for details).

As the only global convention specializing in the conservation of migratory species, their habitats and migration routes, the CMS treaty under the aegis of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) affords a global platform for the conservation and sustainable use of migratory animals and their habitats.

Bern Convention

A binding international legal instrument in the field of nature conservation that covers the natural heritage of the European continent and extends to some states of Africa. It aims to conserve wild flora and fauna and their natural habitats, especially those species and habitats whose conservation requires the co-operation of several States (as for example in migratory species).

In 2007, the annual meeting of the Parties of the Bern Convention adopted the European Charter on Hunting and Biodiversity, which is meant to reinforce the implementation and coherence of global and European biodiversity instruments such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and the European Community's Birds and Habitats Directives, and is fully supportive of the European Commission's Sustainable Hunting Initiative.

IUCN

Through its Global Species Program and Species Survival Commission (SSC) Specialist Groups, including the CEESP/SSC Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialist Group (SULi), IUCN works to promote the conservation and sustainable use and trade of wild species. SULi, for example, explains how trophy hunting, if well managed, can play a positive role in supporting conservation as well as local community rights and livelihoods.
The CMS Secretariat develops and promotes agreements, supports and supervises research and conservation projects and co-operates with governments other international organizations and partner organizations (NGOs, media and the corporate sector). Potential partners are selected by a variety of criteria, inter alia, by their ability to advance CMS goals and the consistency of the organization’s objectives and activities with those of CMS (including those activities beyond the immediate area of the proposed relationship). The collaboration of CMS and its formal partners extends to either the development of conservation policy or specific projects and fieldwork.

Many conservation efforts are based on the sustainable use of natural resources; in fact MEAs like CITES, CBD and CMS share sustainable use as interlinking concept. Sustainable natural resource use includes regulated responsible hunting, whether it is for subsistence, recreation, or for trophies. Regulated hunting programs normally do not present a threat to the survival of species; such programs can reduce poaching, lead to species population growth and recovery, provide valuable income to local communities for conservation and development projects, and provide incentives for communities to engage in wildlife conservation for the long-term.

**Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**

Sustainable use of the components of biological diversity is one of the three objectives of the Convention and is addressed in Article 10. The Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity originally developed by CBD are also used as a basis of cooperation by CITES.

CBD explains the term sustainable use as: “... the use of components of biological diversity in a way and at a rate that does not lead to the long-term decline of biological diversity, thereby maintaining its potential to meet the needs and aspirations of present and future generations”.

**Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management (CPW)**

CPW is a voluntary partnership of 14 international organizations – one of them the Secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS).

The community of these 14 partner organizations professes to have “substantive mandates and programs to promote the sustainable use and conservation of wildlife resources”.
CMS is partnering with organizations or groups supporting regulated forms of sustainable use and apparently also with some who are diametrically opposed to any such use, especially extractive use like hunting. Therefore, one wonders about the wording of the CMS press release “The Partnership Agreement helps fulfil the Secretariat’s mandate to liaise with international organizations concerned with migratory species and will facilitate communication and cooperation towards achieving the two organizations’ shared goals.”

Although information on the nature and scope of cooperative arrangements should be available on the CMS website and to the public at large, we could not find any further reference or text to the new partnership agreement with BFF. The author was, however, able to obtain a copy.

Interestingly, the agreement acknowledges that “BFF and CMS pursue common goals” and “the relevance of cooperation”; but even more interestingly, both parties confirm in the agreement that they will share internal information, documents, work plans, coordinate activities and work programs, to the extent that CMS will encourage other MEAs (e.g. CITES and CBD) to share information with BFF. The icing on the cake is the linking of the CMS and BFF websites and the objective to develop collaborative activities.

This partnership was signed by CMS Executive Secretary Bradney Chambers and BFF CEO Howard Jones on 30th January 2018 but apparently made public only during the 3rd meeting of the Sessional Committee of the CMS Scientific Council in May 2018.

BFF says unashamedly that “Born Free is opposed to the killing of any animal for sport or pleasure, and strongly refutes claims by trophy hunting proponents that their activities support conservation or local communities”; BFF campaigns for “a petition calling for countries to end trophy hunting and to stop the import of trophies from threatened or CITES-listed species” and BFF solicits donations to “protect threatened species worldwide from the cruel practice of trophy hunting ...”.

CMS for its part declare that “as an environmental treaty under the aegis of the United Nations Environment Program, CMS provides a global platform for the conservation and sustainable use of migratory animals and their habitats.”
Whether you call the concept ‘sustainable use’, ‘incentive-driven conservation’, ‘conservation through exploitation’ or, where commerce is involved ‘market-led conservation’, is irrelevant. Important is the fact that these concepts – so integral in the policies of CBD, CITES and indeed also CMS – are apparently not part of BFF’s vocabulary or philosophy.

In an interview published by the Express (UK) on July 18, 2018, BFF Chairman Will Travis, described in the article as ‘one of the world’s leading conservationists’, submitted this reactionary and populist comment: “Trophy hunting is highly controversial and is widely condemned as being inhumane and elitist, failing to deliver either the community or conservation dividend that its proponents claim. Botswana has bravely broken with the 'use it or lose it' mantra of neighboring countries and has now aligned itself with a more progressive and compassionate conservation agenda that resonates with the great majority of people worldwide. … Botswana has an opportunity to show independent, resolute, international leadership and to continue on an enlightened conservation course that rejects the blood-lust of those who revel in the killing of wild animals and who deprive the rest of the world of their majesty and wonder.”

Rather than spreading the mantle of “one of the world’s leading conservationists” over Mr. Travis, the author of the Express article and Mr. Travis should have consulted with the several hundred experts of the IUCN Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialist Group to get their facts right! With regards to Botswana, Mr. Travis should listen to the voices of thousands of rural community members, and to Botswana’s president!

This is not the only time BFF has come out decrying sustainable use - one wonders why CMS engaged in a formal partnership agreement with this organization and who are the drivers behind this agreement. Did Chambers consult with the Parties to CMS on purpose and content of the agreement?

CMS Executive Secretary Bradnee Chambers has to answer a lot of questions!
Custodians of Professional Hunting and Conservation – South Africa (CPHC-SA)

by Stewart Dorrington

At the PHASA AGM in November 2017, changes to the constitution were adopted to enable the shooting of captive bred lions. This precipitated a split in the industry as many professional hunters and outfitters were totally opposed to the captive bred lion industry and believed it to be extremely damaging to the entire hunting industry.

Thus a group of experienced professional hunters and outfitters, which included most past presidents of PHASA, all remaining founding members as well as numerous high profile outfitters, called a meeting of all those who had became disillusioned with the way the trophy hunting industry was being represented in South Africa and internationally. It was at this
meeting that the Custodians of Professional Hunting and Conservation was founded in Johannesburg in December of 2017.

The aim of CPHC-SA is to raise the integrity of the professional hunting industry by maintaining a high ethical standard and to engage with conservation NGOs` and the scientific community to find common ground on which to secure the future of hunting. In addition, emphasis of the association is placed on transforming the industry to be more representative of all the people of South Africa as this is essential to secure the long term future in this country.

While the economic, ecological and social benefits of trophy hunting are well documented, the anti-hunting lobby has been very successful in tarnishing an entire industry by highlighting the negative actions of a few trophy hunters. The media, both mainstream and social, are largely ignorant of the realities of conservation on the ground and their oversimplified populist views, which are widely read and supported, are threatening the continued existence of numerous wild areas that are incentivised or funded by trophy hunting.

At the same time there are many in the hunting and wildlife industry in SA who believe in unconditional sustainable use of wildlife without taking into consideration what is socially acceptable or justifiable. This is portrayed by the antis and media as abuse of wildlife and is rejected by society.

Both these parties continue to do damage to the hunting industry and in turn, this damages the success of many privately-run game reserves and community projects in Africa who depend on the income from trophy hunting. Over the past 5 years the number of trophy hunters coming to SA has been in steady decline and introspection is needed by the industry to address this. We need more trophy hunters and must look at what industry changes are necessary to bring this about.

It is the Custodians belief that hunting must not be detrimental to any wildlife species or specific population but that hunting should rather play a positive role in maintaining and expanding habitats for wildlife. It is also our intention to find the middle ground and to get the endorsement of legitimate conservation NGO`s and the scientific community and to contribute to research that will benefit both wildlife and habitats. In this way we envisage that we will be better positioned to influence policy relating to hunting and conservation on both a
local and international scale. Read the CPHA-SA guiding principles here and explore our website www.cphc-sa.za for additional information about our vision, mission and objectives.

While many professional hunters and outfitters are apathetic and do not involve themselves in the politics of the industry, Custodians feel it is our duty to create awareness to all professional hunters and outfitters to the very real threats faced by our industry. To do this we will use as many platforms as are available to us.

At the same time, the public and the media at large are unaware of the benefits that trophy hunting contributes to conservation and rural communities and Custodians again will use every opportunity to engage with the media and groups critical towards hunting, to discuss their fears and disclose the realities of conservation on the ground and the benefits that trophy hunting makes to sustaining wildlife and wild areas.

It was this attitude that saw Custodians invited to debate trophy hunting against leading anti hunting protagonists at Conservation-Lab (www.conservation-lab.com) in front of many leading conservation opinion formers in Africa. The positive response to the Custodians was overwhelming and dialogue continues with many that were present at the conference. It was the first time any hunting body was even invited to participate at this event and it ended up being the main event.

There appears to be a hunger for conservation groups to engage with the professional hunting industry in SA, but only if it is perceived at ethical. However, as most conservation NGO’s are donor funded, and many donors cannot be associated with trophy hunting as it is currently perceived, these associations cannot publicly endorse or be associated with the industry for fear of losing their funding.

The Custodians will be the bridge which brings hunters and conservation groups together as the current polarization is damaging to both the hunting industry and wildlife conservation.

Stewart Dorrington, an experienced safari operator, outfitter and professional hunter - is the current president of the Custodians of Professional Hunting and Conservation – South Africa. More information on CPHC-SA at www.cphc-sa.za
The Custodians at their first ever convention and Annual General Meeting at Zulu Nyala Country Manor, Chartwell, Johannesburg, South Africa – November 23, 2018

Editor’s Note (Derek Carstens): The "Custodians of Professional Hunting and Conservation - South Africa CPHC-SA" strive to promote of Fair Chase hunting, recognize the necessity of enhancing conservation and ecological sustainability through the responsible use of natural resources and, last but not least, call for professional hunting's contribution to rural livelihoods and socio-economic development; all of it encapsulated in the CPHC-SA Association Principles. The CPHC-SA initiative gives hunting a powerful voice to forge a new professional identity, reframe public perceptions, and explore common ground with non-hunting conservationists. The inaugural CPHC-SA Annual General Meeting 2018 in November, supported by representatives of the major North American hunting associations and media, was a resounding success. Learn more about CPHC-SA at http://www.cphc-sa.co.za/.

It is now up to the visiting hunting client to make the wise choice and hunt with CPCH-SA members.
Book Review by Rosie Cooney: Poached – Inside the Dark World of Wildlife Trafficking

by Rosie Cooney, Chair, IUCN Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialist Group


A nuanced treatise on illegal wildlife trade misses some opportunities to advance the conversation.

In a Hanoi restaurant, a cobra lashes its body in a desperate attempt at escape while a waiter expertly slits its belly and extracts its beating heart, sending a stream of blood into a waiting vessel to the delight of the onlooking French diners. This scene hints at one of the factors that drive the illicit trade in wild species. But why is it conducted with such apparent impunity? And why have attempts to address it been so ineffective?

In Poached, Rachel Love Nuwer tackles the dynamics of this enormous, murky, and destructive trade. She tracks down wildlife sales and interviews hunters, traders, wildlife breeders, end-users, and conservationists of various stripes. The book focuses heavily on the major wildlife demand centers of Southeast Asia, supplemented by sorties to Kenya, South Africa, and Chad. Traditional Chinese medicine, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), ivory burns, antipoaching efforts, wildlife farming, organized crime, and pervasive government corruption and complicity are discussed in a likable and often humorous narrative voice, presenting perspectives and arguments on drivers of the trade and what we should be doing about it.

Poached is nuanced and sensitive. Nuwer largely avoids the simplistic trope of animal-loving Westerners condemning animal exploitation and comes to grips with the cultural attitudes,
economic realities, and institutions that shape wildlife consumption. She writes with compassion, for example, of a Vietnamese father who turned to hunting to raise cash for medical treatment for his son, whom he believes is a victim of the Agent Orange bombings of the 1960s.

Poached is chattier and more personal than Vanda Felbab-Brown’s recent book on the same topic, which Nuwer cites extensively. This makes for a compelling, lively, and highly informative read. From this standpoint, the book is a success. But in terms of elucidating some of the thorny questions underlying the disputes that dog wildlife trade policy, the book has some weaknesses.

Not infrequently, Nuwer presents questions, the answers to which are uncertain, as statements of fact. For example, the contention that allowing legal trade stimulates rather than satiates demand is sometimes presented as a given, despite the evidence on this question being scant, variable, and contested.

Nuwer’s discussion of CITES debates over wildlife trade is also rather one-sided. Although the text is peppered with arguments from anti-trade campaigners such as the Environmental Investigation Agency and the International Fund for Animal Welfare, she dismisses the arguments of pro-trade southern African countries and their supporters with short shrift. Given that the latter countries have successful track records of conserving elephants, rhinos, and other wildlife, their positions are worth articulating more clearly. At the heart of their argument lies the observation that legal trade in wildlife can provide tangible benefits to communities and foster broad-based community support for conservation and antipoaching.

Nuwer rightly notes that framing efforts to reduce wildlife trade as a “livelihoods issue” is used to justify unscrupulous hunting and trade. However, abuse of the term does not delegitimize the concern itself, and both legal and illegal trade are critical to poor rural people. Nuwer would have created a richer narrative with more engagement on this issue.

Likewise, the book pays little attention to the unjust political and economic trajectories and exclusionary conservation policies that have made poaching a compelling option. The voices of indigenous and local communities—those who actually live with wildlife and who will largely

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A World That Values The Conservation And Livelihood Benefits Of Sustainable Wildlife Utilization
determine its future—are absent. This unfortunately echoes the dynamics of the global debate on illegal wildlife trade.

Despite these shortcomings, Poached is a thoughtful portrayal of the complex illegal wildlife trade, avoiding the simplifications that pervade many treatments of the subject.


by Conservation Frontlines Newsroom


Wildlife conservation in Africa is a global priority. Illegal killing of wildlife and trafficking has centre-stage status. However, the global community's approach is not effective – wildlife trade bans may be the cause of species declines. The population explosion in Africa is reducing the range for wildlife and competition for space raises economic questions: land use values are central to species survival. This is a complex system with a scale-mismatch between local and global – a problem not amenable to reductionist science. The first paper addresses adaptive management – an essential methodology for complex systems. The second reviews changes in conservation paradigms over recent decades and looks at their shortcomings. The third focuses on Animal Rights and likens the current situation to the French Revolution. The fourth examines the relationship between crime and punishment as applied to wildlife killing and trade and suggests that law enforcement may be in ‘overkill’ mode. The last looks at the relevance of hidden traps in decision-making to Animal Rights and Sustainable Use.

The book will interest genuine conservationists and global decision-makers.
Abstracts Of Recently Published Papers On Hunting

by Editorial Team


Abstract: Trophy hunting has occupied a prominent position in recent scholarly literature and popular media. In the scientific conservation literature, researchers are generally supportive of or sympathetic to its usage as a source of monetary support for conservation. Although authors at times acknowledge that trophy hunting faces strong opposition from many members of the public, often for unspecified reasons associated with ethics, neither the nature nor the implications of these ethical concerns have been substantively addressed. We identify the central act of wildlife “trophy” taking as a potential source of ethical discomfort and public opposition. We highlight that trophy hunting entails a hunter paying a fee to kill an animal and claim its body or body parts as a trophy of conquest. Situating this practice in a Western cultural narrative of chauvinism, colonialism, and anthropocentrism, we argue trophy hunting is morally inappropriate. We suggest alternative strategies for conservation and community development should be explored and decisively ruled out as viable sources of support before the conservation community endorses trophy hunting. If wildlife conservation is broadly and inescapably dependent on the institution of trophy hunting, conservationists should accept the practice only with a due appreciation of tragedy, and proper remorse.


We agree with Batavia et al. (2018) that conservationists should think more critically about trophy hunting. On pragmatic and ethical grounds, they argue that tolerance of hunting in the interests of conservation is misguided. They find the collection of trophies especially
disquieting. We suggest insight can be gained from considering the wider context to aspects of their exploration.

Firstly, the authors begin by limiting (although this is broadened later) their perspective to “Western” hunters (North Americans and Europeans) paying to hunt. This leads to a preoccupation with trophy hunting as a ritual of white male supremacy within “a western cultural narrative of chauvinism, colonialism and anthropocentrism.” But none of these is unique to Western culture, and nor is the taking of trophies. They disregard local hunting by, for example, the Barabaig, Maasai, and Sukuma hunters who kill lions (for cultural reasons as well as for defense of livestock) and, much like “Western” hunters, take body parts as trophies. Their definition also excludes widespread sport hunting for trophies in the West; focusing on the taking of the trophy also downplays the complexity of hunter motivation.

Secondly, the authors query the basis for a consequentialist perspective: that any conservation benefit is delivered. There are, however, worrying indications that some lion populations would lose habitat if all legal hunting there were stopped (Macdonald, 2016). Recourse to consequentialism does not imply that wildlife is valued only as a commodity. The “we as humans” to which the authors refer includes many stakeholders: we suspect that few conservationists tolerate trophy hunting because they value lions merely as a resource for hunters (many may feel pressured to do so, if only in the short-term, where the alternative is erosion of lion habitat).

Thirdly, the authors’ fundamental issue (regardless of any conservation benefit) is commodification of the animals: their reduction to “mere means.” They approach this by extending the well-known Kantian imperative to nonhuman animals, but it is worth considering that this extension leads to censure not just of trophy hunting, but of all uses of animals, including providing meat. We are sympathetic to the view that inflicting harm on sentient individuals with intrinsic value is morally hazardous. However, that hazard presumably remains regardless of whether killing animals provides sport (or other perceived benefits) to the hunter, or whether that killing also provides a trophy. We wonder whether sport hunters, regardless of race or gender, who left their quarry in the field would be thought of as showing more respect to animals than those who took a trophy.

We agree that trophy hunting is widely condemned, at least in the West, and personally we favor the substitution, wherever possible without further diminishing lion habitat, of ethically
less troubling alternatives. But mindful of the deteriorating state of lion conservation, we advocate a “journey” rather than a “jump” to end hunting, in the interests of limiting unintended consequences (Macdonald, Jacobsen, Burnham, Johnson, & Loveridge, 2016). It may be an inconvenient truth, but the conservation of African wildlife currently depends on the Western patrons and markets that Batavia et al. appear to deprecate. This is equally true of non-consumptive wildlife use, conspicuously photo-tourism. African people bear the cost of living with wildlife. Their voices should be more prominent in the debate on its ethical management.


**Abstract:** There is growing evidence of escalating wildlife losses worldwide. Extreme wildlife losses have recently been documented for large parts of Africa, including western, Central and Eastern Africa. Here, we report extreme declines in wildlife and contemporaneous increase in livestock numbers in Kenya rangelands between 1977 and 2016. Our analysis uses systematic aerial monitoring survey data collected in rangelands that collectively cover 88% of Kenya’s land surface. Our results show that wildlife numbers declined on average by 68% between 1977 and 2016. The magnitude of decline varied among species but was most extreme (72–88%) and now severely threatens the population viability and persistence of warthog, lesser kudu, Thomson’s gazelle, eland, oryx, topi, hartebeest, impala, Grevy’s zebra and waterbuck in Kenya’s rangelands. The declines were widespread and occurred in most of the 21 rangeland counties. Likewise, to wildlife, cattle numbers decreased (25.2%) but numbers of sheep and goats (76.3%), camels (13.1%) and donkeys (6.7%) evidently increased in the same period. As a result, livestock biomass was 8.1 times greater than that of wildlife in 2011–2013 compared to 3.5 times in 1977–1980. Most of Kenya’s wildlife (ca. 30%) occurred in Narok County alone. The proportion of the total “national” wildlife population found in each county increased between 1977 and 2016 substantially only in Taita Taveta and Laikipia but marginally in Garissa and Wajir counties, largely reflecting greater wildlife losses elsewhere. The declines raise very grave concerns about the future of wildlife, the effectiveness of wildlife conservation policies, strategies and practices in Kenya. Causes of the wildlife declines include
exponential human population growth, increasing livestock numbers, declining rainfall and a striking rise in temperatures but the fundamental cause seems to be policy, institutional and market failures. Accordingly, we thoroughly evaluate wildlife conservation policy in Kenya. We suggest policy, institutional and management interventions likely to succeed in reducing the declines and restoring rangeland health, most notably through strengthening and investing in community and private wildlife conservancies in the rangelands.


Abstract: Although the contribution of trophy hunting as a conservation tool is widely recognized, there is perpetual debate and polarization on its sustainability. This review integrates five themes mostly considered in isolation, as independent research fields in wildlife conservation: (1) trophy quality and population ecology of hunted species, (2) behavioral ecology of hunted populations and associated avoidance mechanisms, (3) physiological stress in hunted populations, (4) genetic variability and desirable traits, and (5) socio-economic imperatives in wildlife conservation. We searched for articles on search engines using specific key words and found 350 articles from which 175 were used for this review under five key themes. Population and trophy quality trends of commonly hunted species seem to be declining in some countries. Elevated hunting pressure is reported to influence the flight and foraging behavior of wildlife thus compromising fitness of hunted species. Selective harvesting through trophy hunted is attributed to the decline in desirable phenotypic traits and increased physiological stress in most hunted species. Though it provides financial resources need for conservation in some countries, trophy hunting works well in areas where animal populations are healthy and not threatened by illegal harvesting and other disturbances. There remains much polarity on the sustainability of trophy hunting in modern-day conservation. More research need to be conducted across the five themes examined in this review for broader analytical analysis and comparison purposes. A new research agenda is needed regarding wildlife sustainable use principles and their sustainability and acceptability in modern-day conservation.

A World That Values The Conservation And Livelihood Benefits Of Sustainable Wildlife Utilization

**Abstract:** What does trophy hunting (selective hunting for recreation) contribute to wild lion conservation? Macdonald (Report on Lion Conservation with Particular Respect to the Issue of Trophy Hunting. WildCRU, Oxford, UK, 2016) summarizes what we know. We identify unknowns, gaps in the knowledge that inhibit conservation planning, including: the causes of lion mortality, the amount of land used for lion trophy hunting, the extent to which trophy hunting depends on lions for financial viability, and the vulnerability of areas used for hunting to conversion to land not used for wildlife, if trophy hunting ceased. The cost of reversing biodiversity loss exceeds income from tourism, including hunting. New financial models are needed, particularly in view of the expanding human population in Africa.

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**Abstract:** It is argued that trophy hunting of large, charismatic mammal species can have considerable conservation benefits but only if undertaken sustainably. Social-ecological theory suggests such sustainability only results from developing governance systems that balance financial and biological requirements. Here we use lion (*Panthera leo*) trophy hunting data from Tanzania to investigate how resource ownership patterns influence hunting revenue and offtake levels. Tanzania contains up to half of the global population of free-ranging lions and is also the main location for lion trophy hunting in Africa. However, there are concerns that current hunting levels are unsustainable. The lion hunting industry in Tanzania is run by the private sector, although the government leases each hunting block to companies, enforces hunting regulation, and allocates them a species-specific annual quota per block. The length of these leases varies and theories surrounding property rights and tenure suggest hunting levels would be less sustainable in blocks experiencing a high turnover of short-term leases. We explored this issue using lion data collected from 1996 to 2008 in the Selous Game Reserve (SGR), the most important trophy hunting destination in Tanzania. We found that blocks in SGR with the highest lion hunting offtake were also those that experienced the steepest declines in trophy offtake. In addition, we found this high hunting offtake and the resultant offtake decline
tended to be in blocks under short-term tenure. In contrast, lion hunting levels in blocks under long-term tenure matched more closely the recommended sustainable offtake of 0.92 lions per 1000 km². However, annual financial returns were higher from blocks under short-term tenure, providing $133 per km² of government revenue as compared to $62 per km² from long-term tenure blocks. Our results provide evidence for the importance of property rights in conservation, and support calls for an overhaul of the system in Tanzania by developing competitive market-based approaches for block allocation based on long-term tenure of ten years.

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Abstract: Hunting regulation presents a significant challenge for contemporary global conservation governance. Motivated by various incentives, hunters may act legally or illegally, for or against the interests of conservation. Hunter incentives are shaped by the interactions between unevenly evolving formal and informal institutions, embedded in socio-ecological systems. To work effectively for conservation, regulatory interventions must take these evolving institutional interactions into account. Drawing on analytical tools from evolutionary institutional economics, this article examines the trajectory of African hunting regulation and its consequences. Concepts of institutional dynamics, fit, scale, and interplay are applied to case studies of rhinoceros and lion hunting to highlight issues of significance to conservation outcomes. These include important links between different forms of hunting and dynamic interplay with institutions of trade. The case studies reveal that inappropriate formal regulatory approaches may be undermined by adaptive informal market responses. Poorly regulated hunting may lead to calls for stricter regulations or bans, but such legal restrictions may in turn perversely lead to more intensified and organized illegal hunting activity, further undermining conservation objectives. I conclude by offering insights and recommendations to guide more effective future regulatory interventions and priorities for further research. Specifically, I advocate approaches that move beyond simplistic regulatory interventions toward more complex, but supportive, institutional arrangements that align formal and informal institutions through inclusive stakeholder engagement.

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A World That Values The Conservation And Livelihood Benefits Of Sustainable Wildlife Utilization

Abstract: Our objective was to assess the status of the large native rangeland mammals in the eastern and southern African countries focusing on conservation strategies that will benefit the animals, their rangeland habitats, and the people who live in this region. Eastern and southern African rangelands are renowned for supporting a globally unique diversity and abundance of large mammals. This wildlife legacy is threatened by changing demographics, increased poaching, habitat fragmentation, and global warming, but there are reasons for optimism. After sharp declines from 1970 to 1990 across Africa, wildlife populations in some countries have subsequently increased due to incentives involving sport hunting and ecotourism. National parks and protected areas, which have been critically important in maintaining African wildlife populations, are being increased and better protected. Over the past 50 years, the number of parks has been doubled and the areas of several parks have been expanded. The major problem is that no more than 20% of the national parks and reserves set aside for wildlife are adequately protected from poaching. The southern African countries where wildlife has recently thrived have robust hunting and ecotourism programs, which economically benefit private landowners. Considerable research shows rural communities dependent on rangelands can be incentivized to participate in large mammal conservation programs if they can economically benefit from wildlife tourism, sport hunting, and the legal sale of animal by-products. Community-based wildlife conservation programs can be economically and ecologically effective in sustaining and enhancing African wildlife biodiversity, including rhinos, elephants, and lions. Low-input ranching wild ungulates for meat and hunting may be an economically viable alternative to traditional range livestock production systems in some areas. However, in many situations, common-use grazing of livestock and wildlife will give the most efficient use of rangeland forages and landscapes while diversifying income and lowering risk.


Abstract In 2001 sport hunting was reintroduced in Uganda around Lake Mbuuro National Park, and in 2008 at Kabwoya and Kaiso-Tonya Game Management Area, to derive economic
benefits for communities and thus reduce human–wildlife conflict and change communities' attitudes towards wildlife. We used the policy arrangement approach to analyze and compare the development of the two sport hunting policy arrangements. Through interviews and document review we learned that the arrangement at Lake Mburo changed considerably over time, whereas that at Kabwoya remained relatively stable. The two policy arrangements started with small constellations of actors but turned out to be complex arenas, mainly involving disagreement regarding the benefits. Land ownership proved to be a crucial factor in explaining the differences between the arrangements. Our results also show that benefits do not change communities’ attitudes towards conservation, thus questioning incentive-based policies for conservation. We argue for a careful analysis of the complex social, cultural and political contexts in which conservation and development policies are implemented, to better understand their outcomes.