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Trophy Hunting in Namibia: Controversial but Sustainable?

A Case Study of “Hunters Namibia Safaris”

Working Paper, November 16, 2015

The ESC Rennes School of Business

By Tom McNamara, Cyrlene Claasen and Irena Descubes

Abstract

The international outcry and indignation which followed the killing of “Cecil the Lion” in Zimbabwe in July 2015 opened a Pandora’s Box on the ethical and economic implications of trophy hunting, especially in African countries. Private trophy hunting operators such as Hunters Namibia Safaris, a Namibian company, more than ever before, had to justify their business. No easy task when your trade is often described as being controversial, unsustainable and, in many instances, cruel. While the debate on trophy hunting was always intense internationally and locally, the death of “Cecil the Lion” only escalated it. Governments, trophy hunting operators, professional hunters, communities impacted by trophy hunting, and national and international NGOs all had a point of view in the heated debate over whether or not trophy hunting is indeed a sustainable and worthwhile activity. Some countries such as South Africa and Namibia tout the success of the industry in terms of economic gain and wildlife conservation. Botswana took another direction and banned trophy hunting in 2013. But now the country faces the loss of income that hunters provided, as well as growing instances of wild animals such as lion and elephant threatening rural communities. So who is right and who is wrong about the sustainability of the industry? Some say that a well-regulated trophy hunting industry plays an important role in the conservation of wildlife and guarantees immediate and long-term economic benefits for communities (as well as the country as a whole). Others say the opposite – according to this view, trophy hunting is an unsustainable and unethical practice which wreaks havoc amongst big cat populations, elephants and endangered species such as black rhino.

A Brief Introduction to Trophy Hunting

Hunting has often been portrayed as a romantic and brave adventure in dangerous Africa. For example, in *King Solomon’s Mines*, novelist H. Rider Haggard caught the imagination of Victorian England with the account of a fearless hunter, the famous big-game hunter Frederick Selous who ventured to Africa. The impact of the novel was immediate and resulted in the much idolized figure of the “white hunter” - colonial-minded, aristocratic Englishmen who made their

living shooting game and leading wealthy travelers on hunting safaris. In the years leading up to World War I, which some consider the golden age of big game hunting, other legendary hunters joined Selous — most of them European, rich and bored by the constraints of life back home (Time Line, 2015).

Other important figures elevated the romanticized status of the white hunter even further. For example, in 1909, just after completing his second term, US President Theodore Roosevelt and a 250-strong expedition party came to Africa for a nearly year-long hunting excursion. Traveling through East Africa, the Belgian Congo and Sudan, Roosevelt and his son killed 512 animals, including lions, elephants and rhinos. Roosevelt published an account of his travels, arguing that hunting played a role in saving species and habitat. He also warned against a “craze” of hunting trophies, calling the quest “absurd”. The president’s trip garnered wide spread attention, further glamorizing the hunting safari and prompting a flow of wealthy Americans to the continent (Time Line, 2015).

More recently, trophy hunting became the object of furious debate and even a call for banning the industry worldwide with the killing of “Cecil the Lion” by American dentist Dr. Walter Palmer back in July of 2015 (BBC, 2015). The term “trophy hunting,” which can be used interchangeably with “safari” or “sport” hunting, normally refers to tourists who pay to engage in a hunt, usually in the company of a professional guide, with the objective being to obtain a “trophy” (i.e. horns, tusks, skin, etc.) from a rare or exotic animal (Lindsey et al., 2007; Novelli & Humavindu, 2005). Cecil was a major tourist attraction for visitors to Zimbabwe’s Hwange National Park. The large 13 year old male with a distinguished black mane, the leader of two prides containing six lionesses, 12 cubs and one other adult male, was reportedly friendly towards sightseers and a crowd favorite. That is until he was shot and killed by Dr. Palmer who used a crossbow to shoot the animal outside of the protected confines of the Park. But it wasn’t enough to immediately kill him. The hunting party reportedly had to track the wounded lion for almost two days before Dr. Palmer was able to finally kill him with a gun, whereupon the lion was then skinned and beheaded. The outrage was furious and almost immediate. Once the details of Cecil’s death had become known, the anger was even more intense (Rogers, 2015; Thornycroft, 2015).

Complicating matters further was the fact that Cecil had been closely monitored by a group of researchers at the University of Oxford for almost seven years. Ironically, the scientists were studying the “decline in Africa’s lion population.” As a result of Cecil’s death, the researchers postulated that the cubs in the two prides would most likely be killed by other male lions in an effort to establish their dominance (Capecchi & Rogers, 2015). Dr. Palmer, for his part, said that all of his paper work was in order and that he used licensed guides whose expertise he was relying on to ensure that the hunt was legal. He announced his “regret” over killing an animal that was a “local favorite” and part of a scientific study (DeLong, 2015).

The licensed professional guide who was overseeing the hunt, Theo Bronkhorst, says that nothing illegal or unethical was done. Contrary to claims that they had lured Cecil out of the National Park, Mr. Bronkhorst argued that the lion was already outside of the park and feeding on an elephant carcass when they came upon him. The fact that the lion had a GPS collar and was being tracked is irrelevant, since, according to Mr. Bronkhorst, lions with tracking collars are shot and killed all the time in Zimbabwe, with five large cats being killed in the first 10 months of 2015 alone. The Zimbabwe government has dropped charges against Dr. Palmer but plans to prosecute Mr. Bronkhorst (Saburi, 2015).

The killing of Cecil the lion has only increased the ongoing debate over the value, ethics and sustainability of big game hunting (otherwise known as safari or trophy hunting). Proponents of trophy hunting argue that, when well managed and regulated, it is a sustainable activity which helps to protect the environment and maintain biodiversity (Hofer 2002; Novelli and Humavindu, 2005, Novelli, Barnes, & Humavindu, 2006). Opponents usually make an ethical argument against trophy hunting on the grounds of its cruelty, the questionable motivation of self-satisfaction on the part of the hunter, and the belief that killing for sport is something that is fundamentally wrong (Finch, 2004; Hofer, 2002). More troubling is the perception by some that the majority of the economic benefits in Africa go to White landowners who hold a privileged position in the economy due to the past injustices of colonialism and Apartheid (Duffy, 2000; Lindsey et al., 2013). Chances that the average person in a country like Namibia will ever be able to benefit equally from the industry are slim as Lindsey et al (2012) shows that the amount of money needed to start a trophy hunting operation varies from \$US 57 000 to \$US 440 000.

Wildlife biologists and big game hunters argue that trophy hunting in Africa brings cash into local economies (see Table 1), as well as resources to help restore habitat and animal populations. Hunters also help cull dangerous or old animals. But critics say the cash doesn't always end up in the right hands and that efforts to correct this are thwarted by corrupt officials and hunting guides. They also note that trophy hunters sometimes kill the healthiest, most dominant animals, upsetting social structures. In Cecil's case, wildlife biologists believe other males will kill cubs he sired. Whichever way, the numbers do not look good for big cats: A hundred years ago, the lion population in Africa was about 200,000. Now it's 30,000. While some conservationists believe trophy hunting boosts conservation efforts, a study authored by one of the world's top lion experts found that doesn't hold true for lions (Packer, et. al, 2011). The study focused on lion-rich Tanzania, and found that trophy hunting, both in and out of protected areas, hastened a decline in the number of lions.

Of the average of 665 African lions killed each year (Cronin, 2015) for sport more than 60% are hunted by Americans, many of whom pay tens of thousands of dollars to do so (Packer et. al, 2011). In 2011, outraged conservation groups petitioned the US Fish and Wildlife Service to list the lion as "endangered," which would make it illegal to bring lion trophies into the country. The agency listed the lion as "threatened" instead, allowing imports to continue. Safari Club

International (SCI), which promotes big game hunting and maintains a website where hunters tally points for killing big game, applauded the decision. SCI suspended Dr. Palmer's membership after Cecil's death. Its website lists Dr. Palmer's 43 kills.

Other industries such as the commercial airline industry were also affected in the aftermath of the death of Cecil the Lion. For example Delta Airlines, America's largest carrier, released the following statement in August of this year: "Effective immediately, Delta will officially ban shipment of all lion, leopard, elephant, rhinoceros and buffalo trophies worldwide as freight. Before this ban, Delta's strict acceptance policy called for absolute compliance with all government regulations regarding protected species. Delta will also review acceptance policies of other hunting trophies with appropriate government agencies and other organizations supporting legal shipments" (The Economist, 2015).

Earlier in May, the world's largest airline, Emirates issued an outright ban on hunting trophy cargo, sending the hunting business into a nosedive, as national carrier South African Airways (SAA) also issued a short-term restriction. SAA has since overturned its decision, citing the Department of Environmental Affairs' (DEA) implementation of "additional compliance measures for permits and documentation". According to the Economist (2015), the Professional Hunters' Association of South Africa, played an active role in convincing SAA to overturn its ban. In the meantime, British Airways also issued a statement asserting its standpoint against the transportation of hunting trophies of endangered species.

At the time of the Emirates and SAA decision, Chris Green, Chair of the American Bar Association's Animal Law Committee created a Change.org petition calling for the End the Transport of Exotic Animal Hunting Trophies, specifically requesting the CEO of US- Atlanta-based Delta Airlines, Richard Anderson, to join the airlines refusing to carry hunters' exotic trophies. More than 400 000 signatures were collected resulting in a number of other airlines following suit. These include Lufthansa, Qantas, Qatar, Etihad, Iberia, Singapore and Brussels Airlines (The Economist, 2015).

The problem is that if both Delta and South African Airlines ban the export of taxidermy, some hunters might decide not to travel to South Africa or Namibia. Animal rights activists would welcome this outcome, but perhaps not if they were aware of all the possible negative consequences as a result, such as the loss of money said to be raised for wildlife conservation, jobs and the meat some operators donate to feed children in poor rural areas.

In countries such as Namibia where unemployment is high and wildlife is considered a common resource, trophy hunting is seen as an important way to optimize benefits for all stakeholders, especially the local communities, the government and private operators.

The Management of Natural Resources in Namibia

When it comes to the administration of natural resources and biodiversity, Namibia is today seen as being at the forefront (Weaver and Peterson, 2008), with its Constitution having a special provision for their sustainable development and use (Article 95, Section L). However, before independence from South Africa in 1990, for years, Namibia was under military occupation and control by Apartheid South Africa, with the main result being that any economic benefits to be had from the natural environment, including wildlife, would automatically accrue to a privileged minority. In addition, before Namibia gained independence, natural wildlife was often seen as a nuisance (Pietersen, 2011), and prior to 1970, wildlife population figures were on a downward trajectory (Weaver & Skyler, 2003). The general low regard for nature at the time was clearly illustrated by a 1960s advertisement for a farm that was for sale in which it was proudly proclaimed that the property was free of wild animals (Schalkwyk, 2014).

Eventually, by the late 1960s, politicians, as well as local landowners and entrepreneurs, saw the advantages to be had from protecting, promoting and exploiting the natural beauty and resources that Namibia had to offer. Legislation passed in the late 1960s and early 1970s gave farmers and ranchers conditional rights over certain wildlife located on their lands, thus providing them with an incentive (arguably, for the first time) to ensure that they were managed and used in a proper and sustainable manner. Further regulations established rigorous requirements and standards for the trophy hunting industry. It is the implementation of this legislative framework which was credited with bringing about an increase in wildlife numbers on commercial farms as well as creating an extremely valuable, and sustainable, trophy hunting industry in pre-independent Namibia (Barnes & de Jager, 1995; Barnett & Patterson, 2006; Bojö, 1996; Bond et al, 2004; Lamprecht, 2009; Weaver & Petersen, 2008; Weaver, Petersen, Diggle & Matongo, 2010).

Since independence Namibia has shown itself to be a role model when it comes to local community empowerment, doing more than almost any other sub-Saharan African country in terms of transferring administrative rights for the management of wildlife and the environment at the communal level (Bollig & Schwieger, 2014; Davis, 2008; Roe, Nelson & Sandbrook, 2009). In the interest of extending the relative success of wildlife preservation already seen from giving commercial wildlife rights to freeholders in 1967 (Barnes & De Jager, 1996), in 1995 the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) introduced a policy entitled “Wildlife Management, Utilization and Tourism in Communal Areas.” The primary goal of this initiative was to create a more equitable playing field by trying to provide the same opportunities to local communities that were previously given to freeholders by a colonialist government (Barnett & Patterson, 2006; Weaver & Skyler, 2003). Shortly thereafter, in 1998, for the first time, four communal conservancies were established and registered in Namibia, providing a way for local communities to manage and profit from the associated native wildlife (Weaver, Petersen, Diggle & Matongo, 2010).

Trophy Hunting in Namibia

Organized trophy hunting is believed to have started in Namibia in 1962, when a few industrious game farmers allowed professional hunters on to their property (Novelli & Humavindu, 2005). According to the Namibia Tourism Board, today a miniscule 0.18% of registered trophy hunting operators in Namibia are what can be considered as previously disadvantaged peoples (Abbiati et al., 2013). But the net effect of all of these regulatory efforts, both pre- and post-independence, on conservation is believed to have been positive, with wildlife numbers increasing by an estimated 70%, and their diversity increasing by some 44%, on private lands between 1967 and 1995 (Barnes & de Jager, 1996). Namibia though, like almost every other African country, is not immune from the effects of Global public opinion. The debate for or against trophy hunting has only become more intense due to the media highlighting stories of unethical or illegal hunting methods, which generally portray hunting in a negative light (Barnes and Novelli, 2008; Lindsey, 2008).

Hunting in Namibia is officially controlled and regulated by the MET. The trophy hunting season lasts for 10 months each year, starting on February 1 and ending on November 30, with authorized hunting hours being 30 minutes before sunrise until 30 minutes after sunset. All trophy hunting expeditions require the use of a licensed / registered guide (or “hunting professional”) as well as a valid permit issued by the MET. Trophy hunting parties are required to use a tour operator that is registered and in good standing with the Namibia Tourism Board (NTB) as well as with the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI). A hunting professional is limited to escorting only two clients for any given hunt and must be present at all times. Parties in search of large cats, i.e. cheetahs, leopards and lions, require that an additional hunting permit be obtained before the hunt commences. Hunts are limited to areas where permission has been given by a property’s owner, with individual hunters being limited to a maximum of two trophies per species for each permit. Namibia would have an advantage over rivals in that it is one of only two countries (the other being South Africa) that authorizes the hunting of the “Big 5,” i.e. buffalo, leopard, lion, elephant and White / Black rhinoceros, with the largest percentage of income being derived from elephants. An estimated 75% of hunting takes place on communal conservancies with the remaining 25% taking place on private lands (a fraction takes place on concessions in State Parks) (Lamprecht, 2007, Lindsey et al., 2007, Lindsey et al., 2012; NAPHA; Novelli & Humavindu, 2005).

One of the groups most responsible for promoting trophy hunting in Namibia is the Namibian Professional Hunting Association (NAPHA). Created in 1974, its self-stated mission is to “promote Namibia as a hunting destination internationally and protect the right to hunt locally.” It

is the hunting industry's main lobbying group, describing itself as having an "excellent working relationship with the Namibian Ministry of Environment and Tourism" as well as being "instrumental in forming new legislation" (source: NAPHA).

Today, trophy hunting is a vital part of Namibia's economy, with an estimated 4,000 to 6,000 safari hunters visiting Namibia each year, mainly wealthy individuals from the USA and Europe (Lindsey et al., 2013; Novelli and Humavindu, 2005). Between 2004 and 2007, the value of the trophy hunting industry in Namibia as a whole is believed to have gone from \$US 28.5 million to almost \$US 45 million (Lamprecht, 2009), a positive trend which should only continue given the estimates that travel and tourism in Namibia is expected to grow by over 7% a year in the next decade (WTTC, 2015).

The MET says that trophy hunting is, "one of the most important industries in Namibia in terms of its strong contribution to the Gross Domestic Product; the employment it creates; and the well-being and social upliftment it offers Namibians in rural areas" (Sikopo, 2014). It is believed that each (Namibian) dollar expended on hunting makes a direct contribution of \$0.47 to Gross National Product (GNP) and an indirect contribution of \$0.43 by way of an income multiplier (Novelli and Humavindu, 2005). An estimated 21% of the total income generated by trophy hunting goes to the government, with 40% going to local communities and low income wage earners (Samuelsson & Stage, 2007). Trophy hunting reportedly provides more jobs, at higher salaries, than commercial agriculture or any other land utilization scheme found in communal conservancies in Namibia (Lamprecht, 2009). This revenue is extremely important in a country that is still working to undo the legacy of unequal wealth distribution brought about by Apartheid, and is often recognized as the impetus for the expansion of wildlife conservancies and conservation efforts on land that is communally owned (Ashley & Barnes, 1996; Weaver and Skyer, 2003).

The Controversy Surrounding Trophy Hunting in Namibia

There is research suggesting that trophy hunting, once it is recognized as having financial and economic benefits to local populations, engenders a positive and protective attitude towards wildlife in those populations, resulting in a positive impact on conservation (Baker, 1997; Barnes, 2001; Humavindu and Barnes, 2003, Barnes et al., 2002; Novelli and Humavindu, 2005). This would be especially true for Namibia, where the revenue generated by trophy hunting is seen as being a major factor in the increased development of wildlife conservancies on communally owned land (Lindsey, 2008). There is also evidence that governments, in an effort to promote and protect trophy hunting, try to engage in more constructive and responsible policies and initiatives with regard to wildlife conservation (Hofer 2002; Novelli and Humavindu, 2005). That said, there is still the perception that private farms in Namibia are more efficient and more adept when

it comes to conservation efforts, with there being an estimated 21 to 33 times more wildlife located on private property than in nominally Government protected areas (Lindsey et al, 2013). All in all, an estimated 80% of wildlife in Namibia resides outside of protected areas (Lamprecht, 2009).

Experts argue that a well-regulated trophy hunting industry plays a key role in wildlife conservation efforts, in that, normally, it is aged males (ideally beyond the age of breeding) who are targeted for killing, with an average of no more than 2 to 5% of the population being harvested in any one year. These rates are generally considered as being less than the reproduction rates for most trophy species and as such are deemed to be sustainable if maintained (Bond et al., 2004; (Lindsey et al., 2007a). In the case of Namibia, historically speaking, trophy numbers have usually been below the official stated quota, sometimes substantially (Lindsey et al., 2007).

But just as with any industry, there are unscrupulous operators willing to engage in unethical if not outright illegal behaviour. Some of the more egregious practices would be hunting from mechanized vehicles, shooting young or extremely rare animals, using bait or artificial lights to attract quarry, luring animals out of protected areas or National Parks, engaging in “canned-hunting,” i.e. killing captive-bred animals in extremely small fenced in areas (Lindsey et al., 2007a).

In addition to ethics, there are also ecological and biological issues as well. Some game farms have been known to introduce species that are not indigenous to an area in order for them to be hunted, with the importation of the black wildebeest into Namibia being just one example. (Lindsey et al., 2006). There are also instances of game farmers manipulating the genetics of certain species in order to promote some desired trait, as well as the questionable practice of the cross breeding of species in order to create new varieties of exotic animals to hunt (Hamman et al., 2003; Lindsey et al., 2009).

In Namibia, it is illegal to engage in trophy hunting at night and/or with artificial light. Additionally, it is illegal to engage in practices that violate the “Fair Chase” principals as delineated in the NAPHA Code of Conduct. Fair chase, as outlined by NAPHA, states that hunters should only pursue quarry considered to be, “a free roaming animal or enclosed roaming animal possessed of the natural behavioural inclination to escape from the hunter and be fully free to do so.” Hunters should not use any form of motorized transport and should refrain from killing females with dependent young (source: NAPHA). Encouragingly, a survey of trophy hunting clients reported that the vast majority would be unwilling engage in a hunt in which fundamental principles of conservation and sustainability were not respected (Lindsey et al., 2006).

In Namibia, trophy hunting takes place mainly in three ways; 1) through private operators on private land, 2) in conservancies which are operated by local communities on public land and 3) in some cases through partnerships between the private operators and local communities. Arguments for and against are made for all three cases. For private operators, there is the criticism that they have a hereditary privileged position since they operate on land which they obtained under Apartheid, basically for free. Furthermore, they have more resources than local communities and do not necessarily share their wealth with employees by paying fair salaries. On the other hand, private trophy hunting operators are considered to be more efficient and effective in profiting from the industry as a whole, resulting in regular tax payments to the government and continuous jobs in a country where unemployment is a problem. A common complaint with local communities and conservancies is that they don't have enough resources to pay proper salaries to game wardens, an important expense since poaching takes place on most conservancies. However, not all conservancies lack the money to pay guards as many have income from other types of tourism such as photographic tourism due to their abundant wildlife and stunning scenery.

Some conservancies, such as Otjituuu Conservancy, also face human-wildlife problems. Farmers' animals are sometimes killed by cheetah, wild dogs and jackals. Mr. John Kasaona, a director at the Kunene conservancy, said that he supports trophy hunting. This is mainly due to the fact that the number of dangerous animals in areas where people live is increasing and could be lowered through hunting (while at the same time adding economic value to conservancies). According to him, other African countries that criticize Namibia are "jealous" of its nature conservation record, and that anti-hunting lobbies from overseas "do not understand what we are doing ... they are just tweeting". He urges the government to stand up to pressure from these groups (Felton, 2015).

Mr. Raymond Kwenani from the Salambala Conservancy believes that anti-trophy hunting groups and individuals from abroad don't fully appreciate the importance of the consumptive use of wildlife, which provides meat and trophy hunting income for conservancies. "We have benefits now – jobs in the safari camp: skinners, trackers, meat from the trophy hunt and income from the hunter" Mr. Kwenani notes, but wonders who will pay for people's expenses if there is no income and who will be responsible if a person is killed by an elephant? "They should come here and see ... if we stop hunting, it will spell disaster for the conservancy" he insists. Another conservancy director, Mr. Joh Kamwi, insists that wildlife is harvested in accordance with strict quotas and on a sustainable basis.(Felton, 2015).

However, there are those proven cases which show the dark side of trophy hunting, with some of Namibia's wildlife species bearing the brunt of trophy hunting. For example, a study titled "Spotted Hyaena Ecology and Human-Wildlife Conflict in the Caprivi Region" conducted by the Caprivi Carnivore Project found that the spotted hyaena population was fragmented and unstable due to trophy hunting which, in this case, "cannot be practiced sustainably due to the population dynamics. It is likely that trophy hunting of spotted hyaena in conservancies is impacting on clan structure ..." (Lise Hansen, Project Leader). The report concluded that the present method of setting trophy-hunting quotas per conservancy to maximize the benefits to the members rather

than the sustainability of the hyaena population should be reassessed. The spotted hyaena is a unique and vital component of most African ecosystems.

Tourists visit Namibia for mainly two reasons – the country’s magnificent wildlife and its scenic splendor. Sectors such as the trophy hunting industry need to be well-regulated if these rich resources are to be preserved for future generations. If wildlife numbers dwindle and whole ecosystems are damaged because of irresponsible practices, then it will be a loss for all, and tourist numbers will decrease accordingly. The MET has an extremely important role to play in regulating the industry and ensuring that Namibia’s wildlife resources are protected through clear hunting guidelines for conservancies, especially when it affects endangered species. Also, many Namibians, especially those on conservancies, are concerned about human-wildlife conflict. Unfortunately, there are many examples of local communities experiencing difficulty in balancing their own needs against those of natural conservation. These communities must be assisted in order to maintain this delicate balance, as both need protection and support to live in harmony.

Private trophy hunting operators such as Hunters Namibia Safaris generally face different challenges. These often have to do with the perceptions and ideas people have about the industry. In this industry extreme opinions are at the fore-front while various attempts have been made to adequately address the pros and cons.

Hunters Namibia Safaris

General Background

Hunters Namibia Safaris was founded by Joof and Marina Lamprecht in 1984 and is situated in the beautiful Camelthorn Kalahari of eastern Namibia, a 45-minute drive from Windhoek International Airport, and an hour from the city of Windhoek. The company explains that they are “widely respected as Namibia's premier hunting safari outfitter, offering exceptional trophy hunting, luxurious accommodations and uniquely Namibian hospitality”. They also have a Facebook page on which they display the trophies and their hunters. Hunters Namibia Safaris offers packages to different groups of hunters - first-time African hunters, experienced well-travelled hunters as well as non-hunting observers and family groups. Please see Table 2 for a list of prices. They explain that they “offer a full range of exciting options for the hunter, the observer, and the entire family in our completely safe, progressive and hunter-friendly country on the coast of southwestern Africa”.

The hunting range covers an area of approximately 80 square miles of wilderness and is populated only by free-ranging game with no domestic stock or ‘camps’. “When we started building this outfitting company many of the cattle ranchers told us we’d be out of business in a

season,” said Ms. Marina Lamprecht. “But in the years since, thanks to travelling hunters, we’ve bought many of those ranchers out and let our now 80 square miles return to its natural state—there are no cattle or men worrying about their cattle on our wild lands. We now tell hunters they’ll see a minimum of 500 animals per day.” Adjoining properties add another 40 square miles. 23 species of huntable game as well as an impressive variety of game birds (depending on the season) are available for trophy hunters and wing-shooting enthusiasts. Many additional species can be viewed and photographed. A minimum of 500 head of game will be seen per day while hunting.

The operator says that “over 90% of our trophies qualify for entry into the record books”. They host only one group at a time, whether a single hunter, a couple or a group of up to 10 family and friends. They tailor every safari to suit the requirements of each party, so that they have the exclusive use of all facilities on the game-rich hunting area of 80 square miles. Over 50% of visiting hunters are return clients. By Namibian hunting law a Professional Hunter may guide only 2 hunters at any time.

Hunters Namibia Safaris also offer activities other than what they classify as “legendary hunts” to non-hunters. These activities include exclusive, customized photographic, sightseeing and fishing safaris throughout Namibia. Destinations include the Namib Desert, the mysterious Skeleton Coast, the charming seaside resort of Swakopmund, Namibia’s cosmopolitan capital city of Windhoek, the Desert Elephant in Damaraland, the Himba people of Kaokoland, game-rich Etosha, the unexpected tropical beauty of the Caprivi Strip, and the San people of Bushmanland. These customised trips can be undertaken by either chartered private plane, or in a comfortable, air-conditioned vehicle, as requested. A personal guide will host you on these exclusive adventures.

Responsibility and Sustainability

The company has “a real passion for wildlife, local communities and the environment” and have been on their property, Camelthorn Kalahari, for almost 30 years. They often welcome two and three generations of families and “enjoy passing on the hunting and conservation tradition”. Marina Lamprecht stated, “We are proud of our pristine, game rich and diverse eco-system here in eastern Namibia, which embodies selective, ethical and sustainable trophy hunting as the ultimate conservation success in Africa, and truly enjoy sharing it with our esteemed international clients”. Marina is also a widely published writer, and presents talks throughout the world on Namibia’s conservation successes due the country’s policy of selective, ethical and sustainable utilization of wildlife resources, for which she has won international awards. Mr. Joof Lamprecht was a registered Professional Hunter since 1979, and is highly respected in international conservation circles for his dedication to fair-chase, ethical and sustainable trophy hunting as the ultimate conservation tool.

The Lamprechts' state, "Our family is twelfth-generation African, and we are passionate about our country and continent". On the one hand, they show their dedication to wildlife, the environment and local communities in various ways through their business - the family is actively involved in the Namibian Professional Hunting Association- NAPHA, as well as with the Namibian government at every level. They support a number of educational projects in Namibia. For example, Marina Lamprecht is a founding member of the Hunters Namibia Safaris Education Foundation, "which strives to improve the quality of education at marginalized rural schools throughout Namibia by providing books and other essential equipment". They also donate meat from the hunt to feed 320 children at a local school. When addressing the meeting on 'The Image of Hunting' in 2011, Marina Lamprecht said "that selective, ethical, fair-chase trophy hunting is a proven conservation success in Namibia. Through hunting we have given our wildlife a value far greater than that of their meat, and the meat still utilized by the communities/landowner/communal conservancies" (The Republikein, 2011).

The couple were also involved in other wildlife causes such as the dangers from an increase in poaching in Namibia. They supported NAPHA's Big Game Committee which joined forces with other Namibians by hosting a formal dinner and live auction to raise funds towards anti-poaching initiatives in September 2015. All proceeds raised from the auction went to a Trust whose members are made up of representatives from NAPHA, the Namibian Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET), as well as an independent legal practitioner and auditor.

Internationally, Marina Lamprecht annually presents seminars on hunting in Namibia at the controversial Safari Club International Convention, and regularly addresses workshops on trophy hunting as a lucrative form of land utilization. She also holds a degree in political science. In 2011, the World forum on Shooting Activities (WFSA) at its annual general meeting in Nuremberg, Germany, presented its prestigious Shooting Ambassador Award to MET Minister at the time, Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah and Marina Lamprecht.

On the other hand, Marina Lamprecht was a guest at the much criticized Dallas Rhino Hunt Auction Convention in 2014. The gathering is billed as The Greatest Hunters Convention on the Planet and the FBI confirmed that it was investigating death threats against members of the Dallas Safari Club. Ms. Lamprecht explained that the government owns all of the country's rhinos so the money made from killing them will help protect and grow its herds. "In Namibia we have found that the single greatest conservationist tool that we have is trophy hunting, because through trophy hunting we have given our wildlife a value far greater than their meat. And therefore local communities as well as landlords are taking care of their wildlife." But both the International Fund for Animal Welfare and the Animal Legal Defense Fund denounced the auction, saying it is not conservation, but rather a "sad joke." They further claim, in part, "Although the group [Dallas Safari Club] claims its primary intent is conservation of the critically endangered black rhino, fundraising proceeds from the Convention consistently go towards hunting and political advocacy of hunting interests" (CBS Local, 2014).

Conclusion

While almost all stakeholders in the trophy hunting industry claim that the industry is well regulated, poaching, the illegal killing of trophy animals, is still a problem in Namibia. In June of 2015, five people were arrested on suspicion of poaching in the Kunene region of Namibia after they were found with a rhino horn believed to have been taken from a 13 year old black rhino female (SRT, 2015). In the first seven months of 2015 a reported 40 Namibians (plus one Angolan) were arrested in connection with rhino poaching in Etosha National Park, Namibia's largest. The gravity of the situation is highlighted by the fact that a reported 95 black rhinos and 8 white rhinos were lost to poaching between 2005 and 2015 (Kaira, 2015).

But activists demanding a ban on trophy hunting might want to be careful for what they wish for. A review of history provides a disturbing picture. Bans on trophy hunting in Kenya in 1977, Tanzania from 1973 to 1978, and Zambia from 2000 to 2003 were all associated with an increase in the rate at which wildlife was lost. The argument given for this phenomenon was that local communities lost their economic incentive to be proactive in conservation efforts (Baker, 1997; Leader-Williams & Hutton 2005; Lewis & Jackson, 2005; Lindsey, 2005). Large scale organized poaching in Namibia is considered as theft from the local community. As a result, those taking part would most likely be ostracized by their neighbours. In fact, it was reported that in recent cases of rhino poaching, the illegal hunters were arrested with the help and cooperation of local residents (Denker, 2014). Some also make the argument that the mere presence of legal hunters can deter poachers as well (Baker, 1997).

The example of Botswana is instructive. In 2013, after reporting a serious decline in wildlife numbers in its Northern region over a period of 15 to 20 years, the country banned trophy hunting, with the Environmental Ministry stating that "The shooting of wild game for sport and trophies is no longer compatible with our commitment to preserve local fauna" (Boyes, 2013). Unfortunately, since the ban took effect, the reported number of conflicts between local residents and wild animals has increased. More concerning, many remote villages have suffered as a result of the loss of the valuable income that trophy hunting had brought in. Quite often, hunting revenues were used to provide much needed improvements, like indoor plumbing and toilets, the construction of houses for the needy and scholarships for students (Onishi, 2015). From a conservation standpoint, there is now the risk that unemployed professional hunting guides will use their skills to poach endangered species in order to generate income and feed their families (Boyes, 2013). In what may become a trend, Zambia recently announced that it plans to reverse a two year ban on the hunting of lions and leopards. The Minister for Tourism and Arts said that

the ban had negatively impacted conservation efforts and the livelihoods of people who were directly and indirectly connected to the hunting industry (Smith, 2015).

Complicating matters further, trophy hunting represents a viable option for people living in isolated and disadvantaged areas to generate revenue, since hunters are very often willing to hunt in areas that ecotourists might not be interested in visiting due to a lack of picturesque landscapes or an abundance of wildlife (Lindsey et al., 2006). Also, the fees per client generated by Trophy hunters are usually greater than those to be had from tourists in general (Baker, 1997; Lewis & Alpert, 1997). This means that fewer visitors are required to generate a given level of income, possibly reducing the related environmental impact (Gössling, 2000; Mayaka et al., 2004). Research has also shown that operators overestimate the importance a client places on obtaining a trophy while underestimating the importance that a client places on the hunt actually benefiting the people living in the local community (Lindsey et al., 2006). The economic and social impact from a ban on big game hunting should not be underestimated.

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