

5 November 2008

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Dear Mr Madikizela

RE: DEAT should outlaw gin traps, leg hold devices, poison traps and hunting dog packs in the National Norms and Standards for the Management of Human-Wildlife Conflict in South Africa

I write in support of an appeal to the Department of Economic Affairs and Tourism (DEAT) that you amend the draft Norms and Standards for the Management of Human-Wildlife Conflict in South Africa to include the following:

That no person or entity may manufacture, distribute, sell, possess, purchase, donate or received a donation, or use any gin trap or leg holding device (or other similar such mechanism), snares, poison traps or lures or hunting dog packs in the management of human-wildlife conflict, or in the hunting or handling of any wildlife or any animal.

I believe it to be essential that such an amendment be made in these norms and standards as it will be in support of the principles of the said regulations and its relevant legislation, namely the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, 2004 (act 10 of 2004). Should these amendments not be made it would result in continued decimation and negative impact on our biodiversity and natural heritage, never mind undermining and contradicting the very legislation it is aimed at giving effect to.

The devices in question are unacceptable management tools in the management of human-wildlife conflict or in the hunting of any wildlife or any animal, and it has proven to be ineffective over the last 200 years! There is a growing consensus that these methods have been a major contributing cause of the escalating human-wildlife conflict. I support efforts that are non lethal, ecological and socially acceptable, humane and effective. In this regards I believe that many methods have been demonstrated to be effective, socially and ecologically acceptable, and humane, and more effective in the production of livestock compared to the lethal controls that I am appealing to you to outlaw. Thus I believe that you as a department tasked to conserve our natural heritage, should legislate and enforce the use of non lethal, ethical and ecological acceptable methods in these regulations, such as:

- Livestock Guarding Animals (e.g. Anatolians, herding dogs, donkeys, alpacas, llamas etc)
- Protective measures (kraaling, protective sheep collars, technobgy collars, fencing mechanisms)
- Herdsmen/Shepherds
- Deterrents (smells, noises, alarms)
- Herd selections
- Live trapping and collaborations the conservation entities
- Conservation of wildlife on livestock and game farms

I am grateful to you for the opportunity to have input to the drafting of these important norms and standards, and strongly appeal to you to effect these important changes to the regulations and outlaw the methods listed above.

Kind regards