



# WILDLIFE RANCHING NAMIBIA CODE OF CONDUCT

## 1. PREAMBLE

- 1.1. Wildlife Ranching Namibia (WRN) and all members fully support and subscribe to the ideology and practices for **sustainable use of wildlife**. It is recognized that sustainable use cannot be understood only from a biological or ecological perspective, such as the harvest of a specific species over time in isolation. The broader social, economic, cultural and political dynamics should be factored into the equation by state policy designers.
- 1.2. Ecological and humanity systems change constantly and depend on informed functional governance systems. The governance systems must be capable of detecting, assessing and applying adaptive management prudently to changes in public, private, community-based, formal and informal environments. These governance systems are dependent on:
  - **Applied evidence-based research** by academic research agencies; and
  - **Adaptive management** by ranchers, biologists, ecologists and other relevant professionals.
- 1.3. Wildlife Ranching Namibia unconditionally supports the **IUCN Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for Sustainable use of Biodiversity**, attached as **Appendix A**.
- 1.4. WRN, as the representative body for game ranching in Namibia, is at all times committed to sound and responsible national citizenship.

## 2. THE RANCHER'S COMMITMENT

### 2.1. Statutory

- 2.1.1. Comply with all applicable laws, jurisprudence, codes, rules and regulatory requirements in general, and specifically those relating to wildlife ranching.

## **2.2. General Management Philosophy**

**2.2.1.** Provide and maintain **fit-for-purpose** ranching facilities, related to one or more of the following:

(i) Sustainable wildlife production, management and utilization factoring in the **ecology, economy** and **socio-cultural** aspects that would facilitate meat production, tourism, etc.

a. Conserving and fostering the condition of wildlife for

i. breeding

ii. eco-tourism and/or;

iii. environmental conservation.

**2.2.2.** Be an activist for the principle of sustainable utilization of all natural resources on the ranch.

**2.2.3.** Apply all practical and economic measures to mitigate against the degradation of the ecology and natural environment.

**2.2.4.** Participate in programs aimed at the conservation and protection of endangered wild species in the surrounding environments.

**2.2.5.** We recognize the laws and regulations of MET and we encourage members to facilitate bio prospecting and bio trading.

## **2.3. Wildlife Husbandry and Management Practices**

**2.3.1.** The rancher will assertively take all precautionary measures to mitigate against the following:

- Any crossbreeding of species.
- Keeping and breeding animals with genetically detrimental conditions such as albinism, dwarfism, etc.
- Any practice, such as intensive genetic manipulation.
- Reckless game management and husbandry practices.

**2.3.2.** The rancher will implement appropriate management which will mitigate against inbreeding that could lead to weakened resilience in a game species, or reduce adaptive capacity to environmental changes. Such management could include identification, monitoring systems and other technologies such as the use of modern DNA testing.

## **3. HUNTING**

**3.1.** With regard to all types of hunting, the rancher will **assertively promote** and **ensure**:

**3.1.1.** hunting with compassion and discretion;

- 3.1.2. prevention of socially unacceptable hunting practices such as hunting by using snares or poison;
- 3.1.3. employment of humane hunting practices at all times;
- 3.1.4. hunting is orientated to the well-being of the game; and is practiced with as little pain for the animal as possible;
- 3.1.5. the development and maintenance of an economically and ecologically sound hunting strategy taking into account time and area;
- 3.1.6. no sport or trophy hunting of any caged animals.

#### 4. GAME MEAT QUALITY AND SAFETY

- 4.1. The wildlife rancher will actively strive to upgrade to a level of compliance in accordance to the **ISC** (international standard certification) and its subsets (fully or partially): **ISO 9001**, **ISO 14-001** and **ISO 22-000** which includes applying:
  - 4.2. humane harvesting/hunting practices of game during meat production processes.
  - 4.1.2. apply traceability techniques of all Namibian game meat produced and to conspicuously ensure documentation to the effect;
  - 4.1.3. the quality control and safety of SA game meat legislative requirements and standards throughout the supply chain “from the farm to the fork” (consumer); and
  - 4.1.4. comply with the Namibian Constitution; and
  - 4.1.5. with regard to all types of Namibian game meat (i) production, (ii) harvesting and (iii) meat processing activities, the rancher will **assertively promote safe Namibian game meat production and refrain from any activities that will offend or mislead consumers.**
  - 4.1.6. follow the labeling guidelines of WRN closely; and
  - 4.1.7. refrain from misrepresentation or misleading labeling of any Namibian game meat products or secondary processed Namibian game meat products.

#### 5. ECO-TOURISM

- 5.1. Wildlife Ranching Namibia acknowledges that both consumptive and non-consumptive sustainable use of biological diversity are fundamental to the Namibian economy, cultures, values and well-being of our peoples.
- 5.2. With regard to all types of eco-tourism activities, the rancher will **assertively promote:**

- 5.2.1. Preserving and fostering the condition of the environment, factoring in influences of other anthropogenic forms of use (agriculture, forestry, hunting, mining activities, transport infrastructure, etc.);
- 5.2.2. visitors not taking anything from nature to which he/she is not entitled, nor litter the area – only leave footprints;
- 5.2.3. not causing or effecting anything to the environment that is harmful to health or well-being of present and future generations and
- 5.2.4. limiting off-road driving; and
- 5.2.5. integrity and honesty of marketing and advertising.

## 6. ACKNOWLEDGE

6.1. The Constitution of the Republic of Namibia, 1990

6.2. IUCN – Addis Ababa Principles

6.3. The following CITES Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Resolutions

- **RESOLUTION CONF. 8.3 (Rev. CoP13) (Benefits of Wildlife Trade)**

RECOGNIZES that commercial trade may be beneficial to the conservation of species and ecosystems, and to the development of local people when carried out at levels that are not detrimental to the survival of the species in question; and  
 RECOGNIZES that implementation of CITES-listing decisions should take into account potential impacts on the livelihoods of the poor.

- **RESOLUTION CONF. 13.2 (Rev. CoP14)**

WELCOMING the adoption at the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP7), in Decision VII.12, of the *Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity*

- **RESOLUTION CONF. 15.2 (Wildlife Trade)**

ENCOURAGES *Parties to take into account the needs of indigenous people* and other local communities when adopting trade policies concerning wild fauna and flora.

ALSO INVITES bilateral, multilateral and other interested donors and partners to support wildlife trade policy reviews and related institution-building activities.

- **CONF. 10.19 (REV. CoP14) (Traditional Medicine)**

RECOMMENDS that the Parties: - d) consider, where appropriate and with sufficient safeguards, the application of artificial propagation and, in certain circumstances, captive breeding, to meet the needs of traditional medicines where this would relieve pressure on wild populations of species and is in accordance with their national legislation.

### **6.3. Traceability**

Support databases developed for the wildlife ranching industry to collect scientific data to improve sustainable use of the resource.

### **6.4. Competence**

Support accredited courses and will assist the development of such courses to improve the standard of knowledge and competence of their members.

## **7. APPROVED AT AGM on 14 November 2015**

7.1. Date:

**Annexure A: Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines**

**Annexure B: Definitions and Useful Genetic Terminology**

## ANNEXURE A: Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines

The Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable use of Biodiversity consist of fourteen interdependent practical principles, operational guidelines and a few instruments for their implementation that govern the uses of components of biodiversity to ensure the sustainability of such uses. The principles provide a framework to assist Governments, resource managers, indigenous and local communities, the private sector and other stakeholders on how to ensure that their use of the components of biodiversity will not lead to the long-term decline of biological diversity. The principles are intended to be of general relevance, although not all principles will apply equally to all situations, nor will they apply with equal rigour. Their application will vary according to the biodiversity being used, the conditions under which they are being used, and the institutional and cultural context in which the use is taking place.

Click on each principle to see the full text of the principle, its rationale and operational guidance for the sustainable use of biodiversity.

Sustainability of use of biodiversity components will be enhanced if the following practical principles and related operational guidelines are applied:

**Practical principle 1** Supportive policies, laws, and institutions are in place at all levels of governance and there are effective linkages between these levels.

**Practical principle 2** Recognizing the need for a governing framework consistent with international <sup>(1)</sup> national laws, local users of biodiversity components should be sufficiently empowered and supported by rights to be responsible and accountable for use of the resources concerned.

**Practical principle 3** International, national policies, laws and regulations that distort markets which contribute to habitat degradation or otherwise generate perverse incentives that undermine conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, should be identified and removed or mitigated.

**Practical principle 4** Adaptive management should be practiced, based on:

1. Science and traditional and local knowledge;
2. Iterative, timely and transparent feedback derived from monitoring the use, environmental, socio-economic impacts, and the status of the resource being used; and

3. Adjusting management based on timely feedback from the monitoring procedures.

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**Practical principle 5** Sustainable use management goals and practices should avoid or minimize adverse impacts on ecosystem services, structure and functions as well as other components of ecosystems.

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**Practical principle 6** Interdisciplinary research into all aspects of the use and conservation of biological diversity should be promoted and supported.

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**Practical principle 7** The spatial and temporal scale of management should be compatible with the ecological and socio-economic scales of the use and its impact.

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**Practical principle 8** There should be arrangements for international cooperation where multinational decision-making and coordination are needed.

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**Practical principle 9** An interdisciplinary, participatory approach should be applied at the appropriate levels of management and governance related to the use.

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**Practical principle 10** International, national policies should take into account:

1. Current and potential values derived from the use of biological diversity;
2. Intrinsic and other non-economic values of biological diversity and
3. Market forces affecting the values and use.

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**Practical principle 11** Users of biodiversity components should seek to minimize waste and adverse environmental impact and optimize benefits from uses.

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**Practical principle 12** The needs of indigenous and local communities who live with and are affected by the use and conservation of biological diversity, along with their contributions to its conservation and sustainable use, should be reflected in the equitable distribution of the benefits from the use of those resources.

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**Practical principle 13** The costs of management and conservation of biological diversity should be internalized within the area of management and reflected in the distribution of the benefits from the use.

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**Practical principle 14** Education and public awareness programmes on conservation and sustainable use should be implemented and more effective methods of communications should be developed between and among

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stakeholders and managers.

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(<sup>1</sup>)Where consistency with international law is referred to this recognizes: a) that there are cases where a country will not be a party to a specific international convention and accordingly that law will not apply directly to them; and b) that from time to time countries are not able to achieve full compliance with the conventions to which they are a party and may need assistance.



**ANNEXURE B: DEFINITIONS AND USEFUL GENETIC TERMINOLOGY**

- **Adaptive management**

Also known as adaptive resource management (ARM), is a structured, iterative process of robust decision making in the face of uncertainty, with an aim to reduce uncertainty over time via system monitoring.

- **Allele**

An allele is the alternative form of a gene. The bontebok and blesbok, for example, differ in at least 13 alleles.

- **Artificial selection**

Usually found in production systems where specific individuals are selected based on producing offspring of improved quality within the rational description and fitness for survival for that species.

In the case of wildlife, specific breeding males are, for example, selected for traditional features and less common colour variations. Also refer to definitions for line breeding and phenotypical selection.

- **Clean uterus**

Injecting females that are being moved/translocated during the early capture season, with a veterinary medicine or where adult females are captured and translocated whilst leaving the unweaned lambs/calves behind. They will be ready for mating much earlier with the desired male.

- **Colour variants**

Colour variants are a natural occurrence, e.g. the Golden Gnu was first described in the Tuli Block in 1930 and was referred to as a “Vos Wildebeest” and records of the black faced impala being hunted in Angola during the 1980’s. Golden oryx were historically widespread, first recorded hunted in 1906 by British soldiers in the Northern Cape and Namibia, with more than 1000 currently left in SA and Namibia. Black and white Springbok have been known for centuries.

**Emotionally**, without a scientific basis at all, colour variants are wrongly condemned as “*man-made genetic manipulation*”, “*gedroggies*”, “*Smartie bokkies*”, “*aberrations*”, and a threat to biodiversity.

**Factually** colour variants are certainly not genetic manipulation or man-made, but a function of line-breeding (not inbreeding) scarce animals to increase their numbers. Note that the occurrence of recessive colour morphs is a natural phenomenon. This phenomenon of a colour mutation should not be confused with a fictional, unscientific use of the word “mutation” as seen frequently in multimedia entertainment.

The alleles responsible for rare colour morphs in a wide range of wildlife species are generally recessive and are therefore infrequently expressed in naturally occurring populations. Game breeders however select homozygous recessive individuals for breeding, in order to ensure that the rare coat colour is conserved.

- **Cross-breeding of species**

Any mating of two animals from different species producing a living offspring that is capable to live without the aid of another animal or being; such an offspring will however be infertile. The practice of cross-breeding of species is not encouraged nor condoned by WRN even though it is not seen as a threat to biodiversity given that offspring are infertile. WRN is against the practice of hybridization given that it is not congruent with the principles of conservation and / or sustainable utilization.

- **Cross-breeding of subspecies**

According to the biological species concept, mating between different subspecies of the same species will be able to produce functional and fertile offspring. Current academic thinking, sometimes called the “discontinuous mind”, does not take into account the dynamic, never-ending process of evolution, nor does it take into account the continuum that exists genetically between subspecies and the cross-breeding of subspecies is therefore generally frowned upon by authorities and a school of academics supporting the philosophy of subspeciation. WRN does not necessarily concur with the subspeciation approach, but given current regulatory practices and the weight of public opinion does not currently condone the cross-breeding of subspecies as classified as such by the authorities.

- **DNA Biotechnology**

For several types of wildlife, DNA-markers, including mitochondrial and/or nuclear markers, are available and have been applied in wildlife management for the determination of parentage and lineage, the estimation of genetic diversity for conservation purposes and the genetic management of populations.

- **Endangered Species**

When used in the context of the IUCN Red List, a taxon is classified as Endangered when there is a very high risk of extinction of a particular species **in the wild** in the immediate future.

- **Genetic selection**

Genetic selection can be applied through using numerous management technologies, including hunting, selection of specific male individuals based on some or other genetic trait that can be supplemented by performing DNA analysis, which in turn can be used also to avoid inbreeding.

- **Genotypes**

The genetic composition of an animal which includes all the genes that are responsible for its survival and production.

- **Hybridizing/Hybrids**

Wild animals will also hybridize on a wildlife ranch when the area is too small and minimum herd sizes are not being maintained. Some examples of known or possible hybrids between wild animals include:

- **Fertile hybrids**

Fertile hybrids refer to the offspring from two different animal species that can reproduce successfully under natural conditions. (Note that this concept and terminology is not in keeping with the Biological Species Concept and is included only in terms of current State classification.)

- Blue wildebeest and black wildebeest
- Bontebok and blesbok

WRN is against the practice of breeding fertile hybrids given current regulatory practices and the weight of public opinion.

- **Infertile hybrids**

Infertile hybrids refer to the offspring from two different animal species that cannot reproduce successfully under natural conditions.

- Roan and sable antelope
- Tsessebe and blesbok
- Tsessebe and red hartebeest
- Red hartebeest and blesbok

- Eland and greater kudu
- Black rhinoceros and white rhinoceros
- Various zebra species and donkey
- Various zebra species

WRN is against the practice of breeding infertile hybrids given that it is not congruent with the principle of conservation and / or sustainable utilization.

- **Inbreeding**

A mating system between animals that is more closely related than the mean of the population from which they originate. In small populations that are being kept in isolation for an extended period with limited introduction of new males on a regular basis there is always the danger of inbreeding. Among other things, inbreeding will lead to the loss of genetic diversity and could lead to the loss of genetic fitness, increased mortality in young animals, reduced fertility and depressed growth. This phenomenon is known as inbreeding depression. WRN encourages the use of modern genetic technology to mitigate against inbreeding and the afore mentioned negative consequences as well as to enhance the mean genetic diversity of the population on each ranch and as a whole.

- **Line breeding**

Line breeding is a form of breeding that attempts to maintain a high frequency of individuals with specific genetic qualities in a population. The animals involved tend to have high genetic relatedness with one or more ancestor. The use of modern biotechnology must be employed in these cases to mitigate against possible loss of genetic diversity or fitness.

- **Natural Environment**

All living and non-living things that occur naturally on earth. In a narrow sense, it is an environment that is not influenced by humanity, which in Namibia today is non-existent. The environment that is influenced by humans can be called “human engineered-” or “cultural landscape”.

- **Natural selection**

Under wild conditions, specific individuals from a larger group of similar sex individuals are favoured as a result of being better adapted to the environment. These individuals will make a proportionately larger contribution to the next generation. Because of reality (i.e.

fences), natural selection is in many cases not possible without management intervention and the use of modern scientific technologies.

- **Phenotypes**

The appearance of the animal. This can include all the observable traits such as body size, weight and conformation, horn formation and horn length and coat colour.

- **Species**

The biological species concept (as underwritten by WRN) defines a species as members of populations that actually or potentially interbreed in nature, not according to similarity of appearance. Although appearance is helpful in identifying species, it does not define species.

- **Subspecies**

A group of animals that have been separated from others of the same species based on ideological man-made criteria, around which much debate happened and continues to take place. Breeding between two individuals of different subspecies of the same species will result in fertile offspring.

- **Veterinary medicine**

Means any substance or mixture of substances, other than a stock remedy or farm feed as registered in terms of the Fertilizers, Farm Feeds, Agricultural Remedies and Stock Remedies Act, used or purporting to be suitable for use or manufactured or sold for use in connection with vertebrates, for the treatment, diagnosis, prevention or cure of any disease, infection or other unhealthy condition, or for the maintenance or improvement of health, growth, production or working capacity, or for curing, correcting or modifying any somatic or organic function, or for correcting or modifying behaviour.

- **Game meat**

Meat that is produced from wildlife that is kept under free-range and semi-extensive conditions and is harvested humanely. The quality of which is assured by compliance to WRN quality control process.