

AFRICAN INDABA

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Dedicated to the People and Wildlife of Africa

PHASA President's Opinion

Peter de Villiers Butland

The judgment in the case of the SA Lion Breeders' Association against the Minister of Environmental Affairs has been given at last, the noise from the various parties has died down and South African hunters can hopefully put this sorry saga behind them. A DEAT spokesman summed it up well, saying "Hunting is an important industry but we must manage it in accordance with defensible standards".

Although not all were guilty, the standards which some clients were prepared to accept to tick off a lion on their trophy lists were indefensible. And the willingness of some "PHs" to take those clients' money and to pretend that they were "hunting" a wild animal was despicable.

The damage done to the reputation of our country, to its image in the hunting world and to the reputation of all South African hunters, the good and the bad, by this sloth and greed will take some time to overcome. But it is time to move on.

PHASA has in the past consistently condemned the shooting of captive bred predators, because of actual and potential abuse of the law. PHASA's past president [Stewart Dorrington] was a member of the Panel of Experts. PHASA participated in the consultative process which led to the TOPS regulations and PHASA has noted the judge's detailed comments [*see last African Indaba for details*] and his judgment in the court case.

PHASA has accordingly reconsidered its position on lion hunting in South Africa. It will support the hunting of any and all species that have been released into an extensive wildlife system and can fend for themselves, provided that species listed as TOPS are hunted strictly according to the provisions of the TOPS Regulations and that all species are hunted according to the laws of the land, the PHASA Code of Conduct and the commonly accepted principles of Fair Chase. Unethical and illegal practices will not be tolerated and PHASA members will be held to account if found guilty of misconduct.

The PHASA Executive Committee on Rhino

- Expert evidence from enforcement and trade monitoring agencies indicated a direct link between the export of rhino horn from recent legal rhino hunting by

Vietnamese, from rhino poaching on private and state land, from cross border smuggling and from the theft of rhino horn from stockpiles, museums, etc. and Far Eastern syndicates.

- In the light of the evidence and the questionable legality of the end use of certain rhino horn hunted in South Africa, PHASA strongly advises its members not to book and conduct hunts with nationals from Vietnam or other Far Eastern countries until Government "has removed this abuse from the SA legal system" which it has undertaken to do in the near future.
- PHASA members with a long term interest in South African hunting and conservation are strongly urged to heed this advisory.

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For hunter-conservationists and all people who are interested in the conservation, management and the sustainable use of Africa's wild natural resources.

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