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PRESS RELEASE FROM THE NAMIBIA PROFESSIONAL HUNTING ASSOCIATION

The Namibia Professional Hunting Association (NAPHA) feels compelled to issue this statement in reaction to the decision reached by the Professional Hunting Association of South Africa (PHASA) to, by way of amending a constitutional definition, now allow for and condone, inter alia, the “hunting” of captive bred lion.

NAPHA, cannot sit idly and allow actions which we firmly believe to be contrary to both our aims and objectives, as well as the internationally recognized principles of ethical hunting in Africa, to go unanswered

PHASA decided at their Annual General Meeting held on 22 November 2017 that, in future, their constitution would define the term “*ethical hunting*” as: “*Ethical hunting shall mean all types of hunting permissible by law*”. This amended definition was approved at their AGM by majority vote.

NAPHA is shocked and deeply disappointed that PHASA has decided to take the low road by amending its constitution to include a bland and superficial definition of the word “ethical” that now leaves the door wide open to abuse and exploitation by those who clearly have no concern for the future of hunting in Africa, or around the world.

It must also be unequivocally stated that this amending of the PHASA definition of the term “ethical” flies in the face of the Code of Ethical Sport Hunting Conduct for Africa, co-signed at Victoria Falls in 1997 by the late Mr Basie Maartens, acting as president of PHASA, as well as the Operators and Professional Hunting Associations of Africa Memorandum of Understanding, also co-signed by PHASA, which clearly define what these bodies deem to be termed ethical.

NAPHA recognizes that the majority vote which approved this constitutional amendment was achieved by a vote of less than one third of its membership. NAPHA wants to believe that the majority of hunters in South Africa do not support this change in constitution as well as condemns any form of Captive Bred Lion practices, and shall therefor continue to have NAPHA’s support in rectifying this grievous wrong.

NAPHA would like to place it on record that there is a distinct and profound difference between the definitions of the concepts of “*legal*” and “*ethical*” and that, just because something might be legal (or not yet deemed to be illegal), that it is therefore ethical.

There is no law expressly forbidding knowingly shooting a pregnant animal, or animal with dependent young but, by any definition of the word ethical, this would be condemned by any right minded human being with even the vaguest comprehension of what ethical means. In terms of the amended definition approved by PHASA, this type of action would now be deemed by them to be ethical.

By reaching this decision, PHASA has decided to ignore the majority opinion of both the hunting and the non-hunting community around the world and, by so doing, has placed all the



hard work undertaken by various institutions in support of sustainable hunting as a tool of conservation, in jeopardy.

Both NAPHA and numerous other African Professional Hunting Associations have, in the past, warned PHASA that, by even considering this course of action, they are heading down a very slippery slope where short sighted decisions would be detrimental to the entire hunting industry worldwide.

In addition to this, the decision taken by the majority of PHASA members now leaves the door wide open in South Africa to engage in Captive Bred Lion Shooting (*please note that NAPHA, along with the majority of African Hunting Associations affiliated to OPHAA (Operators and Professional Hunting Associations of Africa) as well as APHA (African Professional Hunting Association), considers this type of activity to be in direct contravention of what we consider fair chase and ethical hunting, therefore, cannot be called hunting*). There is a very fine line between Captive Bred Lion Shooting and Canned Lion Shooting, if any; and this activity has been condemned around the world.

PHASA, by engaging in fancy semantics, attempts to veil or justify their decision but, irrespective of what PHASA might choose to call it, canned and captive shooting are rejected by all ethical hunters who believe that there is small difference between the two. In addition to this, semantics aside, this decision will be met with shock and disgust by the non-hunting public worldwide.

Despite this, PHASA has chosen to ignore the warnings of numerous Hunting Associations in Africa and world opinion and now allows for the shooting of Captive Bred Lion.

As such, NAPHA has no choice but to condemn this short sighted and ill-advised decision by PHASA in the strongest possible terms and has no choice but to distance itself from this reprehensible decision which has severely tarnished the reputation of the entire African hunting industry.

We shall continue to stand firm in our beliefs and support Hunting Associations throughout Africa and the world who share our mission and vision, whereby ethical and fair chase hunting outweigh any short sighted focus on financial gain.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Danene van der Westhuyzen'. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Danene van der Westhuyzen

NAPHA President