



**Box 4: Perceptions of a local farmer relating to meat distribution**

“I hear about meat distribution at places other than our farm but most of the time it is rotten meat. Why can’t they come and hunt with us in our area or farms and give us fresh meat? I understand they also announce the distributions on the same day that they deliver the meat. When must we collect our donkeys, which are out grazing most of the time, to go and get that rotten piece of meat that can’t even fill our hands? The conservancy just provoke the taste of wild meat.

“Since we understand the idea of maintaining and benefiting from wildlife and that it is ours, we have put away our guns and changed our attitude towards natural resources. We are protecting the game and pumping water for the kudu and elephant without any benefits just damages, leaving us with

costs that must be fixed out of our own pockets. We only receive unfair and rotten meat. So the result is that we will take up our guns, dogs, spears and traps against the large game that we only taste when rotten. We are depending on rabbits; birds and springhares while the others eat fat kudu, oryx and springbok and get fat themselves. If they think they will succeed in robbing us by giving us the conservancy constitution with one hand and cheating us from our rights with the other they are mistaken. We now will not only hunt but also exterminate the wildlife so as there will be no wildlife for unequal benefit distribution. We are disappointed and have stopped cooperating with them and will cease to attend conservancy meetings. We have already started to eat the small wildlife and will change to the kudu and oryx and chase away the Elephant by strong force.” (Rural household: weekend farmer, ≠Khoadi //Hôas, interviewed 02/03/03).

Statements concerning the fairness of meat distribution at the time of the WILD surveys didn’t simply relate to the availability of meat, but also to the quantity and quality of meat (i.e. they received small and sometimes rotten pieces)<sup>9</sup>; favouritism among the distributors (i.e. ≠Khoadi //Hôas committee) towards family and friends; and that there is too little meat to share equally. Furthermore, in certain locations people reportedly receive more meat than others – at Anker, for example, where the majority of the committee resides. Some respondents stated that they had to travel some distance to collect the meat from the distribution points. There are costs involved in travelling to the distribution points (hiring donkey carts and expenditures of time). This reportedly had the effect of raising the expectations about the quantity of meat they would receive. Unfortunately for a variety of reasons it isn’t always possible to meet these expectations. The case study in Box 4 gives a sense of some people’s frustration.

The overall perceptions among those interviewed of the good and bad things associated with community hunting and meat distribution (from both own-use hunts and trophy hunts) are presented in Table 24.

**Meat distribution as an incentive or disincentive?**

Survey respondents were asked if they had changed their thinking or behaviour in relation to the conservancy and looking after wildlife due to meat distribution or the community hunting processes. In Torra 71% stated that yes, they had; but in ≠Khoadi //Hôas 44% said yes, and 44% said no, they hadn’t. In ≠Khoadi //Hôas the 44% that have changed their behaviour and thinking stated the reason was that now they look after the wildlife because they receive benefits from it. Therefore it is acting as an incentive for them to conserve wildlife.

“Because people are conserving their wildlife they will benefit from this wildlife.” (Unemployed youth, ≠Khoadi //Hôas)

However, the 44% of people in ≠Khoadi //Hôas who stated that they had not changed their behaviour said it was because they felt as though they weren’t receiving enough or any benefits from maintaining the wildlife. At the time of the interviews there were some very heated remarks made against the conservancy and in particular the committee. It is widely known that there have been problems regarding

**Table 24: Positive and negative aspects of community hunting and meat distribution in Torra and ≠Khoadi //Hôas**

Positive aspects	Negative aspects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receiving (free) meat</li> <li>Pride in receiving meat</li> <li>Training people on slaughtering and shooting techniques</li> <li>Gaining money for development from the trophy hunter</li> <li>The conservancy receives money from the trophy hunters to provide the community with benefits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unfair meat distribution</li> <li>Meat received too small or rotten</li> <li>Localised employment</li> <li>The community not being involved in decision-making and not informed about the distribution and hunting process</li> </ul>

<sup>9</sup> Since the dissemination of WILD project findings to the ≠Khoadi //Hôas Conservancy, the committee has taken measures to address the issue of rotten meat and purchased a freezer. First impressions from the community suggest that they were satisfied with the 5kg bags they received. It was reported that although ≠Khoadi //Hôas Committee were annoyed at the reports distributed by WILD concerning meat distribution, they ultimately stated that they were able to address the problem directly (Bob Garoeb pers. comm. 05/10/03).



the distribution of benefits from hunting in ≠Khoadi //Hôas. These essentially stem from the problems in terms of the ratio of wildlife to people (or the availability and sufficiency of wildlife), and with mismanagement of the process. The issues raised here provide some indication of the care needed to address issues of equity in respect to the management and use of collective resources. In ≠Khoadi //Hôas the new committee is aware of these problems and has taken measures to address them, including the purchase of a freezer and carefully bagging meat for preservation and distribution (see footnote 9).

“It has worsened my behaviour, I am harvesting [wildlife] now.”  
(Farmer, ≠Khoadi //Hôas)

In Torra 71% stated they had changed their behaviour and thinking because they receive benefits from meat distribution and are therefore rewarded for their involvement in NRM.

“Since the establishment of the conservancy we were told that benefits will come to us and it has happened so we are conserving the wild[life].” (Young farmer, Torra)

However, 29% of respondents in Torra who stated they hadn't changed their behaviour or thinking said it was not an issue with meat distribution *per se* that was a problem, rather it was issues related to the generation of money from trophy hunting and that the conservancy prohibited them from using wildlife themselves.

What the material presented above illustrates is the need for careful attention to be paid by the conservancy committee in the distribution of benefits. This is particularly so when the benefits are small and there are a large number of conservancy members to address. In respect to the livelihood impacts of receiving meat, receiving a small portion of questionable quality will not provide any meaningful level of support beyond a few meals. In this context community hunting will not provide an adequate means to address supporting local livelihoods. To this extent receiving meagre benefits clearly doesn't offer an incentive to change existing behaviour. In contrast, when the provision of a valued resource like meat is made in an equitable manner and the amount received is considerable (a whole animal for example), people can tangibly feel the benefit and it can act as an incentive for behavioural change. The key issues here, that affect the extent to which these kinds of benefits meaningfully support people's livelihoods, relate to the management of distribution, to participation and communication and to addressing issues of equity. The Torra example clearly illustrates that when it is well managed community hunting can provide a quick and tangible way of demonstrating the link between management and benefit. Any employment and training opportunities are also positive given the lack of alternatives. Therefore it is more of a link in the chain in developing conservancies' long-term goal of

sustainable and productive NRM by maintaining people's interest in the programme through providing quick and tangible wildlife-related benefits.

A series of specific recommendations relating to community harvesting and meat distribution is provided in the conclusions below.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

### Household wildlife use and livelihoods

Wildlife has historically been an important resource. It is associated with people's sense of cultural and ethnic identity and sense of belonging to nature, landscape and place. The extent to which this remains so varies and people's historical associations with wildlife have been influenced by a variety of factors through time. In a contemporary context the legal situation regarding the utilisation of wildlife by communal area residents provides a strong context within which current use is mediated. The legal situation regarding the use of huntable game within conservancies is clear. Conservancies are entitled to harvest their huntable game for own use without applying for permits. Many conservancy committees and CCGs, however, are unaware of the new clarification regarding the legislation. This could (but currently does not) include the use of wildlife at farm or household levels. Hunting at household level is illegal. Despite this, approximately one quarter of people interviewed reported that wildlife was important to their livelihoods. This chapter investigated this further to establish the extent to which wildlife is an important livelihood resources and for whom. Key findings include:

- Wildlife is a safety-net resource, and it is likely that during times of adversity or resource shortage that its use is more commonplace.
- For those who hunt, wildlife is an important livelihood resource. It provides for both food and to a lesser extent income security. While there are no formal markets for bushmeat, there is some small-scale informal trade.
- Wildlife users tend to be the poorer or less secure households. This was found to be the case for both Kunene and Caprivi. Wildlife use is not exclusive to these groups, however, and other more wealthy and secure members of conservancies also actively hunt.
- The species that are most frequently taken in Caprivi are small game (duiker, springhares and game birds). In Kunene the most frequently taken species include oryx, springbok, kudu and small game (springhares).
- The primary methods used in both regions are snares and traps. In Kunene spears and dogs also feature.
- These methods are reported to have become more commonplace since the establishment of the conservancies.



- Local hunters appear to have a wide knowledge of animal behaviour and reported they could age and sex species easily.
- Much hunting is essentially opportunistic, but planned forays would be undertaken at times when detection was limited (night time and during conservancy meetings).

Household-level wildlife use has implications for the conservancies and CBNRM. While it is likely that the levels of local off-take have dropped since the introduction of game guards, people continue to hunt in clandestine ways. This allows them to reserve their other resources for some future purpose. This strategy has the effect of spreading risks. Risks include those associated with stock keeping in arid environments (periodic drought) and in the presence of predators, and risks associated with cropping in situations of climatic uncertainty and threats from wildlife. However, the conservancies aim to protect wildlife and use the resources for the benefit of all their members. Illegal wildlife utilisation then threatens these objectives.

### Recommendations

The findings presented above suggest that there are a number of issues that conservancies can address to reduce these threats and address the livelihood concerns of those who hunt. Many of the recommendations made here depend on the prior development of broader participatory mechanisms within the conservancies in order that the planning and decisions that are taken are designed in an inclusive manner and involve a wide range of participants. This will optimise the effectiveness of implementing the various options provided below. The extent to which the following options and recommendations may be appropriate will depend on the levels of wildlife in the conservancies and the levels of support available to assist with implementation.

- Guidelines need to be developed providing a concise and accurate presentation of the current legislation relating to the use of huntable game. These need to be widely shared and where necessary interpreted for conservancy committees, game guards and conservancy members – posters are a good format.
- Continue to support conservancies to consider their off-take options based on current knowledge of wildlife populations and trends.
- Conduct conservancy-level assessments (research) as to the extent of illegal hunting in the conservancy and assess the likely impact of this on the wildlife populations. This is of value for management purposes and establishing own-use quotas. Based on these assessments and where appropriate:
  - Develop means to legitimise and devolve community hunting to household, farm or village level.

- Promote and support means to create more participation in developing conservancy-level policies, guidelines and rules relating to local use.
- To meet current legislative requirements, establish and implement a monitoring system, with the support and involvement of the broader community (not solely game guards), to measure illegal off-take.
- Support and promote the value of indigenous wildlife knowledge – and seek ways to incorporate this into conservancy management systems.
- Work in support of conservancies and their members to address the appropriateness of targeting benefits to the poorer members of the communities and supporting a variety of ways in which this group may improve their livelihoods. (see Conclusions and Recommendations Chapter 5).
- Conservancies should consider hardship funds to offset the costs of giving up using wildlife as a security net during times of crisis (document and share lessons from Marienfluss Conservancy and the establishment of their social fund mechanism) (see Chapter 8).

### Issues relating to governing wildlife

A number of important issues were raised in relation to the discussion of governing wildlife. The first of which is that there is a lack of clarity in relation to what are acceptable procedures for apprehending suspected hunters. While these will vary from conservancy to conservancy the need to formalise these at conservancy level is important in order for the game guards and rangers to follow standard and appropriate operating procedures. There are a range of circumstantial factors that currently affect the ways in which game guards address illegal hunting. While many of these are relatively benign, for example whether a person apprehended is poor or not, or the type of species they have been caught with, and may lead to leniency. Other factors, for example issues relating to position, status and a person's social connections, can be more problematic. There is potential for bias and impartiality on the part of the game guards. In many contexts using discretion and tact to solve a problem is appropriate, but such flexibility also has negative consequences. The situation may be exacerbated if more powers are given to the game guards, for example, honorary ranger status.

For people to be empowered and have a genuine sense of 'ownership' over the management and use of their resources then the issue of establishing and enforcing local rules is important. To date there is not a single conservancy that has developed its own context specific set of policies and rules relating to the management and use of wildlife. Rather the conservancies are essentially implementing the rules and policies of the State. A prerequisite to establishing rules based on consensus is the ability for the broader community to review and agree any rules or procedures prior to their



implementation. The material presented through interviews with local hunters suggests that there are already practices associated with local off-take that in the right contexts could form the basis of conservancy-level dialogue about establishing their own rules and procedures.

Under the current institutional structure of conservancies there is a tendency for the concentration of power to be in the hands of a few – game guards and committee members. In the interview material presented above concerning the hunter and game guard, hunting activities play a role maintaining elements of these networks of power. That some game guards may hunt illegally and with impunity while discouraging others from doing so could prove a strong disincentive for wider cooperation in conservancy activities by the broader community in the longer term.

### **Recommendations**

- Establish within the conservancies, policies, rules and procedures for game guards. These should be endorsed and agreed through participatory processes with the broader membership.
- Share the findings of WILD relating to local hunting with conservancy staff to establish a dialogue that will address the means to sanction the misconduct of game guards and other conservancy staff.

### **Issues relating to community harvesting and meat distribution**

Meat constitutes a part of local diets and has an important cultural and economic value. Therefore it is highly valued and viewed as a valued tangible benefit. Also, any employment and training – even if short term – is positive given the lack of alternative livelihood opportunities.

Further, the timing and the types of species used for own-use hunting are a good fit with the community's own preferences for both.

The contribution, however, of meat distributed by conservancies to household livelihood security is currently not very significant due to distribution not being sufficiently regular and the quantity being inadequate for food security. Other factors limiting the livelihood impact of this activity include the ratio of wildlife to people and the logistics involved in implementing the hunts and distribution processes. Thus, meat distribution is more a 'link in the chain', maintaining people's interest in developing the conservancies' long-term goal of achieving sustainable and productive NRM. Equality and efficiency in terms of distribution are central in providing an incentive.

### **Recommendations**

- Support the conservancies to maintain good communication with membership in terms of the distribution process and those targeted – use appropriate media, for example, radio.
- Improve the efficiency of own-use hunting and meat distribution processes and address this through sustainable means. For example, the hiring of bakkies from community members for short periods, the provision of a cold store room and further training of employees.
- MET CSD to produce generic guidelines for conservancies to meet basic criteria that address issues of equity in the hunt and distribution processes. These should clarify, among other things, who makes the decisions; who receives the jobs; and who receives the meat.