Harvesting and Processing of Wild Game in Namibia

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Overview

• Namibia has abundance of wildlife;
• Over 2 million head of wildlife;
• Combined value of wildlife and tourism - contributes 3.5% to GDP compared to 3.2% for agriculture;
• Meat processing contributes further 2.3% to GDP.
Overview

- Wildlife sector in Namibia has major role to play in Namibia’s growth strategy;
- Underutilised wildlife use sector - huge potential for value-addition and diversification of income opportunities – especially for communal conservancies in Namibia........
Overview

• Both livestock and game – part and parcel of Namibian ecosystem;
• However - expected that climate change will be more severe on livestock than wildlife;
• Therefore – crucial to deal with Food Security and maintain a biological resource base;
• This includes the promotion of game meat as a sustainable animal protein source for food supply.
Overview

• More than 80% of the larger game species in Namibia found on private farms;
• Wildlife numbers projected to rise to 5 million in the next 50 years;
• Thus wildlife will become important economic activity.
Overview

- Climate change is real!
- Predicted that southern Africa will experience an increase in temperature of 2-6 deg C
- Central and northern Namibia - rainfall will decrease 10%
- Southern Namibia – rainfall will decrease with 20%
- Well-adapted game species will become increasingly more important...
Rights over wildlife

• Utilization of game meat linked to Article 95 of National Constitution of Namibia;
• Vision 2030 – aims to ensure biodiversity conservation and sustainable utilization of wildlife;
• Freehold farmers - rights over wildlife 1967;
• Communal farmers - same rights in 1996.
Wildlife utilisation

• Namibia - moving away from a preservationist philosophy to more sustainable utilization;

• Previous study estimated - of 16,000 to 23,000 tonnes of game meat are produced in Namibia annually......
Marketing of wildlife

- Tourism - strongest driving force - creates about 103 500 jobs – 19.4% of total employment;
- Trophy hunting contributes largely to tourism industry - although lowest return per unit area;
- Live sales (N$ 60-100 million);
- Game meat sales (N$ 500 million – N$ 1.2 billion).
Livestock and game

- Tourism, live sales, trophy hunting – cannot alone sustain growth;
- Trophy hunting only removes 1% of wildlife herd;
- Farming with wildlife aiming at commercial meat production - an option;
- Generally game occupies app. 30% of the farming area and realizes only 20%, if, of the income;
- Important to note: Livestock and wildlife often do not compete for the same grazing.
Namibian wildlife species most suitable for meat production

- Gemsbok
- Kudu
- Springbok
- Red hartebeest
- Eland
- Mountain zebra
Game meat – the healthy choice

• Demand for game meat increased locally and internationally;

• Competitive advantage - < 3% fat, can be considered as organic; high in polyunsaturated fatty acids; high protein content; energy value < 500 kJ / 100 g

• Hygienic slaughter and processing of game meat – IMPORTANT;
Harvesting for commercial purposes – professional manner

- On-farm *ante-mortem* inspections
- Registered harvesting teams
- Trained game meat examiner
- Workers - medical evaluations
Harvesting truck transporting shot springbok to veld abattoir
Harvesting truck transporting large game to field abattoir
Requirements for veld/field abattoir

- Veld abattoir
- Light source
- Hygiene system
- Two – knife system
- Water - warm (> 82 °C or chemically sterilized)
- Refrigerated truck on site
- Carcass cooling to 7 °C of less within 24 hrs
- Carcass ultimate pH = less than 6
Mobile veld/field abattoir in operation
Veld/field abattoir for large game
Game meat processing
Biltong and droëwors production
Harvesting Regulations and Guidelines

• Numerous acts and regulations - applicable to the harvesting and processing of game in Namibia;

• **Directorate of Veterinary Services (DVS)** – competent authority overseeing meat exports;

• **Ministry of Health and Social Services (MOHSS)** – custodian for local game meat trade;

• **Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET)** – regulates quotas and registration of harvesting teams.
Guideline booklet – Harvesting and Processing of Wild Game - updated

• Need to hygienically harvest game - spearheaded the writing of guideline booklet in 2010 and the recent update in 2016;
• Intention of being used by Namibian game farmers and stakeholders;
• Supported by MET and GIZ.
Thank you....
Authors and co-authors
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MET
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