

2019 Conservation and Empowerment Fund Chairman's Report

By Pieter Potgieter, Fund Chairman

This was my second year as chairman; definitely a very interesting year, where we learned a great deal, ventured into virgin territory and, in the end, much was accomplished.

I wish to thank everyone on the board for their excellent work, our office ladies, and the PHASA Exco members who often attended the Fund meetings and gave valuable input, regardless of whether they were on the board or not.

Our sincerest gratitude and thanks to all our donors. Without your support, the Fund would not be able to continue its vital role within PHASA, and the hunting and wildlife community. Certificates will be awarded to you as a small token of our appreciation.

The total contribution of professional hunting to community upliftment in South Africa and other African countries has been significantly understated, and PHASA's capacity to give a full assessment of the industry's humanitarian impact has been hampered, due to the diverse nature of its members' contributions.

Fundraising

The Fund generates income through voluntary conservation contributions made by clients hunting with PHASA members and donations from a variety of sources, including our members, international and local affiliates, and corporate sponsors. Since its inception, the Fund has raised more than R18 million for worthy projects.

Without funds, we cannot support PHASA, our communities or our wildlife.

A few of our main income sources are:

1. US\$10 Voluntary contributions

So much has been said about this and still, there are only a few outfitters that support this wonderful and potentially 'life-changing' project, which is probably the easiest way for the Fund to earn a sizeable income with minimum effort. You buy the booklets, each containing 50 certificates, at R1 500, and hand the certificates out to your clients, who pay US\$10 per animal hunted. You can then voluntarily pay the net amounts collected over to the Fund, after deducting the cost of your booklet.

If only half of our PHASA outfitters (200 outfitters) each paid US\$10 for 100 animals hunted, we would be looking at an income of R3 million.

PLEASE SUPPORT THIS INITIATIVE. It does not cost you anything and, from personal experience, I can assure you that clients gladly pay the requested amount and are very proud of the certificates they receive. As an added benefit, you will be entered into the draw for a hunting rifle each year.

2. Online auction

We held our annual online hunting auction from 21–28 October. We received 28 donations of different game-hunting packages, including, among others, some buffalo and sable, of which 23 hunts were sold. Our net income for the auction was R340 000. The idea with this auction is to give our members donating hunts as part of their marketing strategy, the opportunity to support locally, in their home country, where the money earned in this way

will be used. This seems to work very well.

3. PHASA gala auction

We had a very successful auction, which brought in R54 000 from donated items sold. A further R1 209 105 was raised for hunts to be conducted in the Makuya Reserve, of which 30% belongs to the Fund and 70% to the Makuya community. Unfortunately, due to various reasons beyond our control, several of the hunts did not take place and two will take place in 2020. Consequently, not all the income will reflect in the 2019 statements.

4. Toyota raffle

A 4x4 Toyota 2.4 SRX Double Cab was bought at a very favourable price with the help of our good friends and loyal supporters from Waterberg Toyota, Rudi Boonzaaier and Manie Kriel. Raffle tickets were sold, where possible. Not only did we earn some good money with this venture, but the exposure PHASA received with this beautifully branded 'bakkie', at expos such as Huntex and various others, was phenomenal.

5. Donations from individuals and companies

These are people or businesses with whom we share a common goal, who donate cash or goods to be utilised for specific projects.

The Four Pillars of the Fund and its Projects

The functioning and existence of the Fund are based on four pillars: Conservation, Research, Empowerment and Social Responsibility. I would like to share some of the projects of the past year where we were involved by lending a helping hand, or donating funds or goods.

1. Conservation and 2. Research

Conservation and Research Fund (CRF)

The CRF went through some troubled times with many challenges and setbacks, and many still do not believe the way forward is through scientific research, but, as was proven beyond a doubt at the recent CITIES meeting in Genève, many of our species would cease to exist without research and sustainable utilisation, as we know it.

Since the signing of the MOU with Tshwane University of Technology last year, we have decided that it was better to go our separate ways, due to differences in our opinions and viewpoints.

The Fund signed a MOU with Rhino Connect NPO and Singatha Conservation Research Fund, and I am happy to report that research is already underway and the first 40 trail cameras have been bought. They are currently being used in the Limpopo province on the first 13 000ha block. Research is already being conducted in two other blocks, as well, and this data will be shared with us.

We also have representation on the Scientific Steering Committee for Leopard Monitoring at SANBI through Dusty Joubert.

- *Donation to South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI)*

One hundred thousand rand was donated to SANBI to assist them with their leopard-monitoring project in the North West province, where funds were limited due to budget cuts.

- *Stakeholders in the EC Safari Industry Committee (SECSICOM)*

A leopard cage was donated to SECSICOM to enable them to catch and relocate problem leopards, and gather stats on them, instead of them being killed.

- *Conservation Force*

An international organisation with the main objectives of wildlife conservation, education and research. They receive an annual grant.

- *True Green Alliance (TGA)*

An organisation that protects and advocates sustainable utilisation of living resources (both wild and domestic) for the benefit of mankind; supports and embraces the animal welfare philosophy; and rejects the animal rights doctrine. The TGA is devoted to bringing common sense principles back into the wildlife arena.

3. Empowerment

In our current political environment, empowerment is not a 'nice to have', but a 'need to have'. We should embrace it and become involved, as we are currently doing.

What is empowerment? It is a multidimensional social process that helps people gain control over their own lives. It is a process that fosters power in people for use in their own lives, their communities and their society. This is exactly what we are trying to accomplish with the following projects:

Makuya Nature Reserve

The 13 800ha reserve is situated just south of the Pafuri Gate and shares a fenceless border with the Kruger National Park. We received a donation of three buffalo, one nyala and one elephant, which were auctioned at the PHASA gala auction in November 2018. As there were a few challenges with these hunts, some will only take place in 2020, but there will be another buffalo hunt on auction this year. An anti-poaching project was planned for 1-6 November 2019, but had to be cancelled, due to a lack of support from the Makuya Nature Reserve.

Sanctuary of Hope

A few women from the community are given lessons on sewing, dressmaking and baking, as well as being empowered with skills to create their own jobs and income. These women were introduced to us by the late Mel du Plessis.

4. Social Responsibility

Abraham Kriel Children's Home, Nylstroom

This is a safe home to around 170 children and a project very close to my heart. Last year, the Fund made a sizeable donation to empower the home to continue their great work. We will do the same this year, with the specific goal of paying for the Christmas lunch for the kids. I would like to make special mention of Peter de Villiers, who went out of his way to collect donations for the children's Christmas lunch. The Fund and several of its members, as well as their clients, are very involved in

donating meat, clothing, toys and money. Next year, several of the older boys will have the opportunity again to hunt with some of our PHASA members, after undergoing a short hunter's training course, and the meat will go back to the children's home.

Exodus home for the elderly

We donated 22 blankets to this home, accommodating some 22 elderly people with no family and nowhere else to go. They perform tasks such as planting vegetables and doing odd jobs to try and be self-sustainable, and receive help from the community to make ends meet.

Kuierkidz

Kuierkidz Learning Centre is a holistic, independent, special needs school situated in Melodie, Hartbeespoort. Some 35 autistic and other physically handicapped children come here to receive daily care. We support them financially.

FC Prinsloo

On 13 August 2019, PH FC Prinsloo was hunting elephant and, while looking for tracks in the Makuya Nature Reserve bordering the well-known Kruger National Park, he was charged by a buffalo that was injured by a poacher's snare. FC was able to get one shot off before the buffalo was on top of him. With only an unarmed game scout and tracker accompanying him, he was on his own and was badly injured by the snared buffalo. Due to the rugged terrain, it took hours to have him airlifted to the nearest government hospital.

Since he had no medical insurance, an appeal was made to friends, family and fellow hunters to assist him and his wife Estelle financially, so that he could be moved to a private hospital that could provide him with the necessary care. The PHASA Conservation and Empowerment Fund set up a fund to help with raising the necessary finances and a total of R885 000 was raised. DSC Frontline Foundation was a major contributor and I would like to thank John Patterson for their swift reaction.

Unfortunately, FC was never stable enough to be moved from ICU to a private hospital and he sadly passed away on 24 August. He will be dearly missed.

Suley Pieterse

We assisted an eight-year-old girl living in Groblersdal with only 5% sight left in her one eye and blind in the other with urgently acquiring a device to enable her to see, and be able to continue her school career in a normal school.

Amy Bell Charity Foundation

Amy Bell of Weatherford, TX, passed away very unexpectedly from a pulmonary embolism at the age of 33. During her short life, she began a very private, but significant work dedicated to making life better for those less fortunate. That was especially true for children. Amy left some very specific instructions on how her passion and the projects she started should continue. Amy's family is deeply committed to honouring these final wishes by supporting Amy's programmes and projects, and sharing her 'pay-it-forward' spirit throughout the world.

PHASA was recently invited to join their annual fundraiser in Cradock in the Eastern Cape, where Tam Safaris plays a leading role in, among others, building schools and hostels, and feeding children among the local community. What a wonderful day it was, with R1 million raised for charity.

This was another excellent example of what hunters and wildlife contribute to the communities around them.

Drought relief

Many of us understand the horrible drought suffocating our country all too well and are, or were personally caught up in it. It is very disturbing and sad to see animals starving, unable to get up, and farmers with no hope. We had to get involved by sending several loads of feed to the Northern Cape.

#Helpjag

With their slogan: 'STOP HARTSEER. STOP HONGER. SKEP HOOP'

'STOP SADNESS. STOP HUNGER. CREATE HOPE'

In co-operation with Solidariteit Helpende Hand, Helpjag distributes game meat to some 7 000 kids. For many of the children, this is the only meal they receive per day. During the year, PHASA members donated around 2 000kgs of meat to this worthy project, as well as a sizeable cash donation from the Fund. We would like to increase our meat donation considerably during 2020.

The role that the Conservation and Empowerment Fund plays in polishing the image of PHASA and hunting, in general, is largely underestimated; we have opened so many doors by helping others. The onslaught from the animal-rightists is increasing daily, as could be seen by the Cecil act, the actions of CITES and many other examples. Through your continuous support of the Fund, we can prove that 'Hunters Care'! I urge you again to send us photos and details of what you are doing, whether it be donating meat to the community, or your clients donating soft toys to a local school. We need to know about it, so that we can share your activities with the public to address the misconception that hunters are only there to kill.

There is so much that each of you do that many don't know about. I would like to thank you for your unselfish deeds that often go by without recognition, although you never intended to receive acknowledgement. However, I want to assure you that He knows what you are doing for His children and His creation.

Giving is not just about making a donation; it's about making a difference!

–Kathy Calvin