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Predasiebestuur: SA veeboere een voor dié van Amerika



Predasiespesialis Niel Viljoen is van mening dat Suid-Afrikaanse veeboere hul eweknieë in die VSA vêr voor is wat kennis van predatore en hul gedragspatrone betref.

Viljoen het in September verlede jaar 'n studietoer na Amerika onderneem om sy persoonlike kennis van en passie vir predatore en spesifiek predasiebestuur te verbreed. Daar kon hy sy waarnemings vergelyk met omstandighede in Suid-Afrika. Volgens Viljoen is die VSA – 'n eerstewêreldse land wat baie geld aan die nuutste tegnologie en navorsing spandeer, vele navorsingstasies en 'n sterk staatsbetrokkenheid het – se veeboere steeds soekend na die *silver bullet*, daardie een enkele blitsoplossing vir predasie, wat nog nie bestaan nie.

Die enigste plek waar Suid-Afrika volgens hom dalk iets by die VSA kan leer, is oor die tipe toerusting soos vangysters en vanghokke wat daar oor jare heen vir die vang van predatore ontwikkel is.

Die gebrek aan kennis van predatore by die VSA-boere was opmerklik en die afleiding kan gemaak word dat die staat se betrokkenheid die bestuur van die probleem uit die boer se hande geneem het. Baie van die boere en veral die jonger geslag beskou dit as die staat se verantwoordelikheid om predasiekwessies op te los.

Om boere, en veral nuwe toetreders, oor predatore en hul gedragspatrone op te lei is van die uiterste belang om predasie te bekamp. In Suid-Afrika is die bedrywe wat 'n belang by veeboerdery het self by opleiding daarvoor betrokke. Dít teenoor kontrakteurs van buite die bedryf wat opleiding in die VSA behartig. Viljoen se beskeie mening is dat hierdie toedrag van sake die gebrek aan kennis by veeboere oor predatore geweldig vergroot, met katastrofiese gevolge vir Amerika.

Predatore moet gesien en bestuur word as 'n boerderyvertakking en verg dieselfde kundigheidsvlakke oor en kennis van rooijakkalse en rooikatte as van 'n Hereford, Angus, Dorper, Merino, of swartwildebees. Ongelukkig gaan predatore nooit op veeplase verdwyn nie. "Bestuur hierdie vertakking van jou boerdery met dieselfde kennis, tyd en deernis as die res van jou boerderyvertakking," sê Viljoen.

Vir die volledige verslag,



Predation centre enters its second year

March will see the start of the second year of the functioning of the Predation Management Information Centre (PMiC), hosted by the University of the Free State (UFS). The annual report was presented at the most recent PMF Steering Committee meeting and the continuation of the contract will be negotiated depending on whether funding from the industries is available. The following progress was noted:

Communication with stakeholders

Over the past year, the PMiC has strengthened its ties with various stakeholder groups. The PMiC thanks everyone who made (and continues to make) contact, and encourages further communication from especially the livestock-farming, wildlife-ranching and predator-control communities. Whether it is to request information, or to supply information on predation experienced, or predation management practised in your area, all information is welcomed.

Information management

Databases have been created and are continually being updated. The information contained in these databases includes the national and provincial:

- contact details of the relevant authorities and permit offices;
- current legislation;
- contact details of predation management specialists and predator biologists;
- suppliers of predation management aids (guarding animals, devices and equipment); and
- PMF representatives.

The PMiC has also expanded its collection (of over 5 500 copies) of published literature (popular, as well as scientific) on damage-causing animal species and the strategies employed locally, as well as internationally, in animal damage management.

Valuable information has been received from individual farmers and specialist predator hunters, which will allow us to create a better picture of the predation management situation prevailing in certain parts of South Africa. The continued supply of this kind of information is important to help interested parties identify areas where the threat of predation is the greatest, and also to see which methods of predation management are used with success in specific areas, so encouraging the use of such methods in similar areas.





Research

One of the projects currently under way within the PMiC is the collection and review of all available information on past systems of coordinated predation management in South Africa. A good deal of progress was made in the past, but several factors have prevented further progress. The most important of these is arguably the geopolitical shift that occurred in April 1994, resulting in large chunks of important institutional memory being lost. Our aim is to use the information collected to identify all the strengths and weaknesses of these past systems, so that coordinated predation management can pick up where it left off, and that renewed efforts focus on tried-and-tested methods that are practicable in today's situation. The project therefore also focuses on legislation that is currently effective across South Africa in managing damage-causing animals.

Another project that has been running over the past year is the processing of information on predation management received from various sources in the past, so that the results can be disseminated to interest groups in the near future.

A research aid in the form of a mobile application is being developed to make the process of collecting predation management information easier and less time-consuming. The application is ready for field testing and then wider application.

Coordination

To achieve coordinated predation management, there needs to be cooperation within and between the various stakeholder groups. The PMiC has made good progress in terms of establishing internal communication, as well as with the various government departments and some other individual stakeholders. We continue to strive towards improving communication and cooperation between all stakeholders.

The PMiC has also started affiliating with international bodies specialising in human-wildlife conflict mitigation, to learn from the best where predation management is concerned (in other words, countries where mitigation strategies have been a priority, and where they have been practised and developed over a very long time).

Progress of DCA norms and standards



At the most recent meeting of the PMF Steering Committee, the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) representative Magdel Boshoff reported that the proposed norms and standards for damage-causing animals (DCA) were unfortunately not yet ready for implementation due to other departmental processes being prioritised.

The norms and standards will be finalised and submitted to working group meetings in April for approval to implement. As the scientific assessment should be concluded at the end of March, resulting in recommendations to policymakers, Boshoff suggested that their findings could perhaps be included in the norms and standards.



Stuur inligting

U word vriendelik versoek om enige inligting oor predasie, suksesvolle beheermetodes en interessante navorsing aan te stuur. Ons wil die jongste nuus hoor, asook enige aktiwiteite in u bedryf, en die datums waarop dit plaasvind. Wenke oor die voorkoming of bekamping van predasie, asook foto's, is welkom. Kontak Bonita by nwga@nwga.co.za.

