

MESSAGE FROM CHAIRMAN

CRAIG KELLY-MAARTENS,

Dear Custodians Members,

With most of our members returning from their international marketing tour and nearing the end of the first quarter, I want to wish you all a successful season.

I am very excited about Custodians' new Corporate Identity and the growth of our brand, reflecting our progress and relevance in the industry. Custodians remain committed to maintaining high standards, promoting South Africa as a unique hunting destination, and ensuring sustainable hunting and wildlife practices.

Welcome to all new Custodians who have joined our Association over the past few weeks! To both new and longstanding members, my gratitude for your dedication to our Association's values.

Thank you to over 70% of members who have paid their 2025 membership fees. For those who haven't yet, please do so urgently. Membership fees are vital for our financial stability, along with successful annual conferences, AGMs, and auctions, which sustain our association and its initiatives.

Kudos to Nonkie and Adri for consistently updating our members through this excellent, new bi-weekly newsletter, keeping everyone informed about our activities and aspects affecting both Custodians and the industry. Custodians have taken an active role in government forum meetings and contributed to discussions on and comments to proposed legislation, including the proposed Elephant Heritage Strategy. Please participate in future submissions when notified by the office, as the proposed legislation may impact our profession and livelihoods and merits consideration.

The full Executive Committee convened earlier this week for two days of discussions and strategic planning for the upcoming year, including specific Conservation and Transformation initiatives.

Reflecting on the conversations and decisions from the EXCO meeting, I am optimistic about Custodians' future – Watch this space!

Wishing you all the best, and stay safe in the field.

Craig



MEMBERSHIP

Welcome New Members

A big welcome to our newest members Len Ferreira, David Temba Adam, Gareth Davies, Ross Phillips, Hannes Swanepoel, Simphiwe Valiso, Sesde Nel and Norman Simpson to the Custodians family.



Welcome aboard!!!

We've Got a New Digital Home!

Exciting news! Custodians has updated our email address – because change is as good as a rest (or a great day in the bush!).



You can now reach us at admin@thecustodians.co.za or ceo@thecustodians.co.za for all inquiries, updates, and industry news. Make sure to update your contacts so you don't miss out on anything important.

Same team, same passion—just a fresh inbox!

Membership Fees Reminder – Thank You for Your Support!

A big thank you to 77.5% of members who have already renewed their 2025 Custodians membership—your support is greatly appreciated! Thank you for being part of Custodians and for your continued commitment and support.

A reminder to paid-up full (professional hunters & outfitters) and field members: Remember to add the SATIB EVAC911 24/7 emergency contact details on your phone.

Custodians EXCO Kicks Off with First Meeting

The Custodians EXCO held its first meeting of the year on 10–11 March 2025, focusing on key industry matters, upcoming initiatives, and member priorities for the year ahead.



A big thank you to Badger Cargo for generously providing their boardroom for the meeting—we truly appreciate the support!

Stay tuned for updates as we work towards another productive year for professional hunting and conservation.



Thanks to Pieter Erasmus from Badger Cargo for taking us on a tour of their warehouse and giving us a detailed breakdown of the trophy export process. From getting the right paperwork and permits, including veterinary certificates, to the careful packaging and preparation of trophies, as well as handling shipping logistics and customs clearance—Pieter walked us through it all. It was a great insight into the behind-the-scenes work that ensures hunting trophies reach their final destination safely and legally.



Register for Your RPL in Professional Hunting Before the June 30, 2025 Deadline

This is an important reminder for all members who still want to register for their Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) assessment, with the aim to obtain a national qualification (CATHSSETA Certificate). The deadline for registration is 30 June 2025, just a few months away!



If you have decided but not yet started the process, we encourage you to do so as soon as possible. The RPL is a critical step in ensuring that your experience and expertise are formally recognized under the new regulatory framework. Please refer to the details published in the newsletter #4 (28 February 2025). If you need any further information or assistance with the registration process or have any questions, please reach out to the office at admin@thecustodians.co.za or ceo@thecustodians.co.za



GOVERNMENT FORUMS & LEGISLATION

Custodians submission to the proposed Elephant Heritage Strategy

We have submitted our comments on the proposed Strategy to the Department. Our submission views the draft Strategy as a framework for planning and decision-making regarding landscapes with elephants. Besides content feedback, we requested the Department to introduce key measures that will guide future legislation. Download Custodians' submission [here](#).



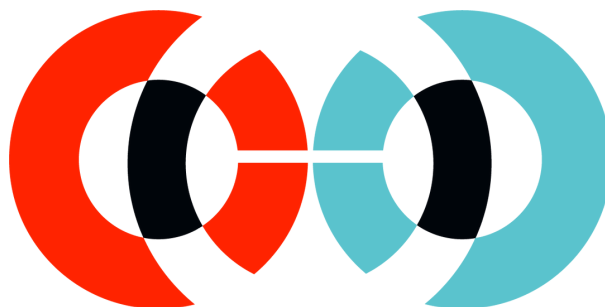
Combined National Wildlife Forum & Wildlife-Wellbeing Forum meeting:

The national wildlife forum was formed during 2005, providing an opportunity for National DFFE, Provincial Nature Conservation Authorities and stakeholders within the wildlife industry, like Custodians to discuss regulatory matters affecting our industry. The Wildlife Well-being Forum exists for 1-2 years is made up by, what we generally would refer to as ARA associations, e.g. NSPCA, Blood Lions, Humane Society, Four Paws, etc. Both forums remains consultative (no binding decisions taken at meetings) for:

- Discussions without prejudice to either parties (party of wildlife or well-being)
- without prejudice for government.

Currently, the wildlife forum members may sit in as observers in a Wildlife Well-being Forum, but not vice versa.

At the inaugural annual combined meeting in early March, the chairmen from both forums presented their mandates and objectives. From the wildlife forum side, Mr Matibe made it very clear that our government supports the principle of sustainable utilisation, which remains imperative as a policy. The purpose of the meeting was for members of the two forums to identify areas of common interest on which they can have joint collaboration, which eventually did not happen and Mr Matibe proposed that the forums take it upon themselves to discuss it further within their respective forums, with the goal to identify such areas on which they will be able to work together, e.g.: the upliftment of rural communities.



LOCAL NEWS

Exciting News: Custodians Joins SECSICOM!

Thanks to our successful follow-up application, Custodians is now a member of SECSICOM (Sector of the Eastern Cape Safari Industry Committee). This committee allows stakeholders, including Nature Conservation officials, to discuss and share industry-relevant matters and promote adherence to legislation. Our Eastern Cape members look forward to being represented and working with other industry stakeholders in the province!

AFRICA NEWS OPHAA (Operators' and Professional Hunters' Associations of Africa): Adri taking up the chairperson position on behalf of Custodians

Congratulations to Adri, who was recently confirmed as the OPHAA chairperson, on behalf of Custodians as chair-association. This follows the OPHAA CEO stepping down in early January. We look forward to the new OPHAA Exco and members, driving the OPHAA mission statement forward: *Africa's recognised professional hunting, guiding and operators' organisations support the conservation and ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources for the benefit of current and future generations through the promotion of ethical hunting.*

The purpose and scope of OPHAA is for member associations to subscribe to and comply with an African Cross Border Hunting Policy, agreed to by all.



The Aims and Objectives of the Policy entails amongst others, developing fellowship and cooperation among professional hunters and organisations in Africa, to promote and safe guard the hunting profession in Africa, sustainable hunting as a conservation tool through responsible wildlife management and utilisation, the empowerment of all Africans wishing to participate in the hunting profession, engagement with governments, adherence to Associations' codes of conduct, etc. OPHAA members currently consist of: Botswana-BWPA; Ethiopia-EPHA; Mocambique-AMOS; Namibia-NAPHA; South Africa-Custodians and SAHGCA Tanzania-TAHOA; Zambia- PGOAZ ; Zimbabwe-ZPHGA

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

CIC General Assembly:

Through discussions with the CIC leadership in Hungary and fellow-CIC members in South Africa, Custodians has played an important role in formalising an official CIC South African Delegation and we congratulate the SA Wildlife College for being elected as the chair-association, with Dr Thabang Teffo taking up the position as chairperson. Custodians look forward to contributing to the discussions and ensuring that South Africa's professional hunting and conservation sector remains actively involved on the world stage. Adri will attend the CIC General Assembly to be held in Doha at the end of April. The event provides a key platform to engage with global stakeholders, discuss pressing conservation matters, and strengthen collaboration for the sustainable use of wildlife resources.

RESEARCH

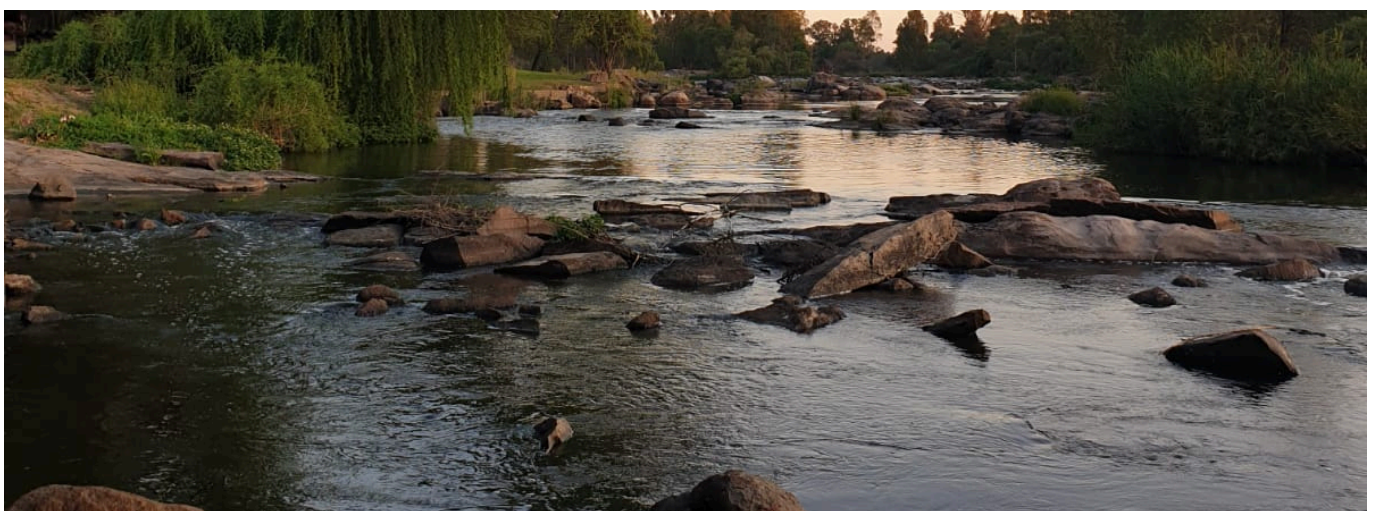
Help Update the IUCN Red List for Servals!

Prof. Lourens Swanepoel, the lead assessor for the IUCN Serval (*Leptailurus serval*) assessment, is seeking input to update the species' Global Red List status. If you have any relevant info, your contribution would be greatly appreciated!

They're specifically looking for: Sightings & records – Camera trap data, survey results, or confirmed sightings Mortality data – Roadkill, human-wildlife conflict, or disease-related deaths Legal trade info – Permits for live trade, hunting, or skin trade Illegal use – Poaching incidents, confiscations, or reports of servals in the illegal pet trade.

Deadline for submissions: 30 June 2025

Every bit of data helps! If you have anything to share, please check out the attached request for details. [CLICK HERE FOR THE PDF](#)



MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Badger Cargo Partnership

Support conservation with every permit application!

Badger Cargo handles interprovincial transport and export permits for Custodians members.

Here's how you contribute to the Custodians Conservation Fund:

- Full Service: Badger Cargo manages your export and permits—R500 goes to the fund.

- Permit Only: Badger handles permits while another agent manages export—R500 still goes to the fund.

Permit fees are charged at cost, ensuring every contribution makes a difference.

During the EXCO meeting, a tour through Badger Cargo's warehouse highlighted the importance of correct paperwork, secure packing of trophies, and certification of crates. These measures are essential to prevent any negative consequences upon the crates' arrival at their destination. We will share more detailed information with members soon. Meanwhile, please ensure that all necessary permits and documentation are in order to facilitate a smooth shipment process.



TOYOTA

Custodians' members in good standing purchasing any of these vehicles, will qualify for the Toyota-SA special discount OVER AND ABOVE the dealer discount, even if the dealer's discount would be more than the minimum dealer discount.



Section 16A Benefits

- Custodians is accredited to award "Professional Hunter Status" under Section 16A of the Firearms Control Act, enabling members to license firearms as professional hunters.
- Assistance with firearm license endorsements.

For more details, visit www.cphc-sa.co.za/section-16-a or contact us at admin@thecustodians.co.za / +27 81 036 1151

SHARE YOUR STORIES

My Journey to an Unforgettable Experience – Nonkie Kunene

The road to earning my Professional Hunter certificate at Kobus Schoeman Hunting Academy was nothing short of an incredible adventure. From the moment we arrived, Oom Kobus set the tone, making it clear that the academy was built on strong Christian values—something that was reflected in everything we did.

At first, I felt completely out of place. I was the only girl in a group of guys and tried my best to blend into the background. That plan failed fast when I was moved right to the front row, sitting directly across from Oom Kobus—like a student caught misbehaving in class!

Diving Into the Theory

There was no easing into the course. Lessons kicked off immediately with the history of safaris in South Africa, the Limpopo hunting ordinance, and trophy measuring methods. By the time we wrapped up at 10:30 PM, our brains were fried—and we still got homework to do! Mornings started early, packed with intense sessions on trophy handling, firearms and ballistics, and spoor identification. Our first ballistics test was a complete disaster—the highest score was a miserable 5/30! We then moved on to practical sessions, tracking animal footprints, identifying trees and grasses, and refining our trophy judging skills. Evenings were just as demanding, with more lessons on hunting laws and, of course, more homework.

From Tracking to Shooting

As the days went by, we covered everything from hunting techniques and photography to the delicate skill of trophy caping. One of the funniest moments for me was when we had to give speeches about our favourite trees..... not exactly what I expected from a hunting academy! Bowhunting theory was fascinating. Learning about different types of bows, the mechanics, and how it is used in hunting, gave me a new appreciation for the sport. Bird and animal identification was another challenge altogether, trying to recall tiny details under pressure was no easy feat.

Then came the shooting evaluation, a mix of terror and excitement. Holding the rifle, lining up the shot, and pulling the trigger with everyone watching was nerve-wracking. But thanks to our member Michael Botha's coaching beforehand, I managed to hit a bulls-eye during speed shooting—a moment I'll never forget!

Bringing It All Together

As we neared the end of the course, our schedule was jam-packed. We tackled bird hunting, shotgun training, CITES regulations, and even an in-depth look at hunting vehicles and accommodation. When it came to trophy skinning and judging, I finally felt confident—huge thanks to Paul Stones for teaching me how to measure trophies according to SCI and Rowland Ward standards. I aced it!

SHARE YOUR STORIES

Our last challenge? Accompanying clients, and I'll admit, I struggled with this one. Trying to maintain a serious, professional whisper while fighting off giggles was harder than I expected!

Then came the final exams. The general exam was brutally tough, but thanks to my background in law, the Limpopo Hunting Ordinance test felt much easier. Even Aunty Caroline Bopape from LEDET, who is usually warm and friendly, had her serious invigilator face on, as she oversaw our final assessments.

The Big Moment

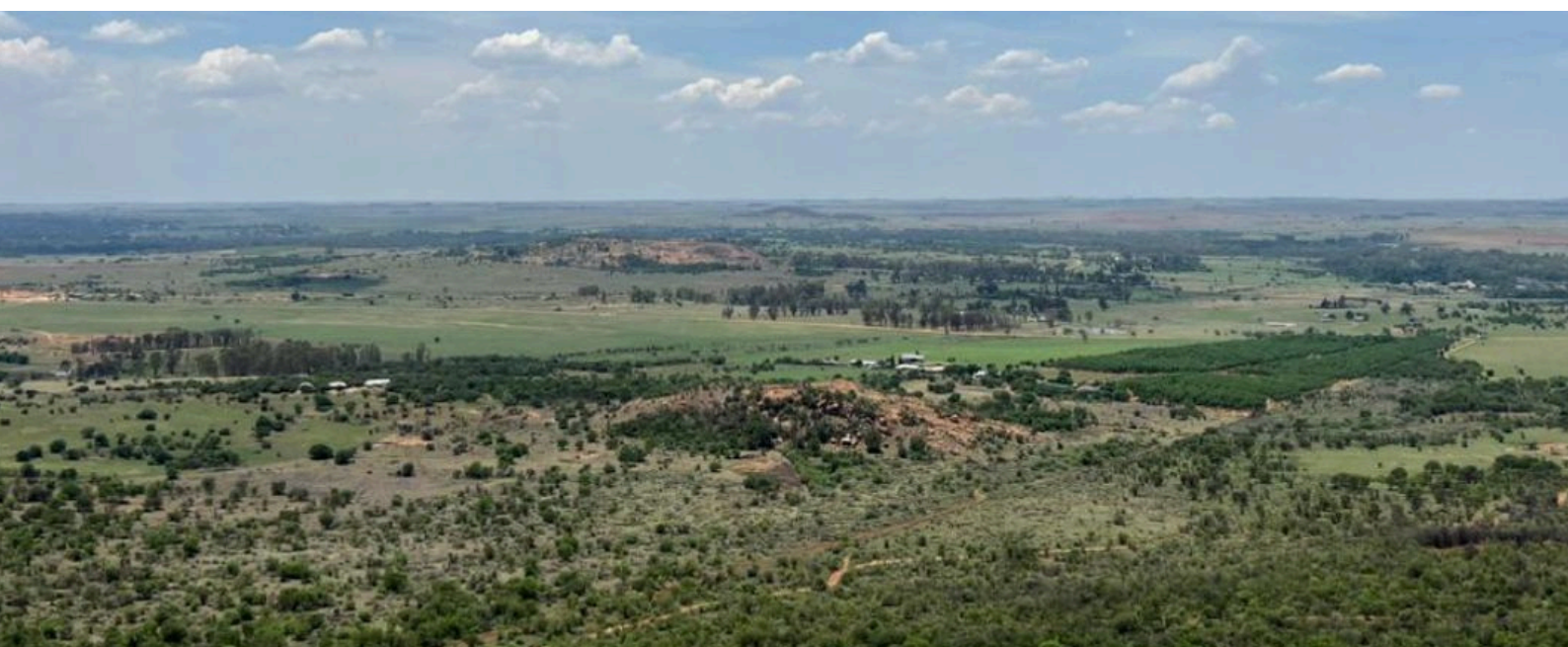
Finally, the moment we had all been waiting for, certificate day. Those of us who passed received our Professional Hunter certificates, marking the end of an exhausting, challenging, and truly unforgettable journey.

A massive thank you to the Custodians EXCO for making this experience possible, and to Oom Kobus and the entire team at the academy for their patience, guidance, and for pushing us to be our best.

This wasn't just a PH-course, it was an epic adventure that I'll carry with me forever!



SHARE YOUR STORIES WITH US.
SEND TO NONKIE AT ADMIN@THECUSTODIANS.CO.ZA



ADVERTISEMENTS

Freelance Professional Hunter Available for 2025 Season.

I'm an experienced and Fully licenced Dangerous Game Professional Hunter based in Mpumalanga Nelspruit South Africa with years of experience guiding on both Plains Game & Dangerous Game hunts.

My experience has been built up from over 20+ years of exposure in the field stemming from hunting / guiding in both Zimbabwe and South Africa with some of the most prestigious Operators.

I pride myself in offering the Outfitters client/s an all-encompassing experience whilst on their safari building lifetime memories through sharing my passion for nature & fair chase ethical hunting encompassing a professional safari adventure.

Please feel free to contact me on my availability whilst planning your client's next South African hunting adventure.

PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALS

📄 Licensed Professional hunter with "Unrestricted Dangerous Game" status

- LP ; MP ; KZN ; EC ; NC
- NW – in process of securing

📄 Code B Drivers License with PrDp for client transport

📄 First Aid: Level 2

📄 Game Ranger – qualifications & practiced

📄 Nature Tourist Guide – MP registered

EQUIPMENT & LOGISTICS

📄 Own double cab pickup

📄 Small & medium calibre rifle available for hire

William J. Jardine

Mobile: +27(0)72 520 6149

Email: ahs.hunt@vodamail.co.za



PH REGISTERS

Contact Nonkie

**admin@thecustodians.co.za to
order your new PH register.**

**We now have advertisement
opportunities for Custodians
members available on our website
and in newsletters.**

**Contact Nonkie
admin@thecustodians.co.za
For more info!**

We once again want to thank our 2024 sponsors and donors



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