



Dear Custodians Family,

Welcome to Edition 29 of our 2025 newsletter!

It's been a whirlwind couple of weeks, and just like that – it's newsletter time again!

This edition is packed with elephant-sized updates (yes, quite literally), along with some uplifting news about our long-necked friends, the giraffes.

Don't forget to get your registrations in for our annual conference this November – spots are filling up fast! A special shoutout to our incredible sponsors and donors – you'll find them featured on the last two pages. Their support makes a successful conference possible!

As always, we're grateful to have you on this journey. Grab a cuppa, get comfy, and dive into the latest news.....

With appreciation,

Editorial Team

Adri and Nonkie



Let's celebrate our September birthdays:

Richard Dorrington 02nd, Vorster Mola 03rd, Mike Birch 4th, Murray Odell 9th, Alan Sutton 9th , Evert van Deventer 9th , Bobby Hansen 10th , Greg Hayes 13th , Sean van Zyl 14th , Carl Knight 17th , Ashley King 18th , Thomas Dreyer 20th , Joshua Hayes 20th , Richard Field 24th , Andrew Gooden 24th , Paul Inman 28th , John Oosthuizen 30th , Richard Sowry 30th..

May the year ahead be filled with health, joy, and success.

Celebrating Heritage: Sarah Ripley Forsyth Nominated for Cultural Landscape Award

Sarah Ripley Forsyth, Custodian Shadow EXCO member from Kedar Heritage Lodge, was nominated for the Outstanding Cultural Landscape Award at the National Arts and Culture Awards, hosted by the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture.

Kedar is home to the Paul Kruger Country House Museum and numerous heritage monuments, including tributes to Paul Kruger, Kgosi Mokgatle, Jan Smuts, Mzilikazi ka Mashobe, General de la Rey, Mahatma Gandhi, and more – each telling the story of South Africa's rich cultural history. Forsyth is a Professional Hunter, Outfitter, Lodge Owner, and Game Breeder with a deep passion for preserving and sharing South African heritage.



CUSTODIANS AWARDS

CALL FOR ENTRIES FOR CUSTODIANS AWARDS TO BE HANDED OVER AT THE GALA DINNER: 18 NOVEMBER 2025

We hereby invite entries for the following prestigious awards, to be handed over at the Gala Dinner, to be submitted to the Exco by email to ceo@cphc-sa.co.za by latest 10 November 2025:

Basie Maartens Award:

Awarded to a professional hunter / outfitter acting as a professional hunting in the trophy hunting profession for their exemplary ethics, trophy quality, personal conduct, and dedication to their profession, over-all hunting skills, any act of bravery and comradeship exhibited to clients and fellow professional hunters and outfitters.



Ian Goss Award:

Awarded annually to a person that goes the extra mile to demonstrate and enhance conservation and ecologically sustainable development through the responsible use of natural resources to ensure that South Africa's biodiversity and conservation heritage is protected for the benefit of present and future generations.



Garry Kelly "Essence of Safari" Award:

Awarded to an individual who writes and presents a unique story regarding a hunt that he or she conducted or participated in, in the sense that, the sum of all its parts captivates and audience in the spirit of the true tradition of safari in its uniqueness, its effort, incredulity or the mere description of a hunt that the individual deems to be uniquely special.



The story can be one of success or failure and is not about the trophy but must capture the essence of why hunters awaken each dawn, go out in search of the unexpected and the unknown, in our world of safari. Note: Please submit your stories, to also be published on our [website here](#).

Note: Entry forms available from Nonkie

CUSTODIANS ACTIVITIES

SADC CITES JOINT WORKING GROUP MEETING:

Adri recently represented Custodians at the SADC CITES Joint Working Group (JWG) meeting, which brought together delegates from various SADC countries. The meeting provided a valuable platform to review and discuss CITES CoP20 proposals that may impact the region. Custodians was one of only three SADC hunting tourism associations in attendance, and the discussions proved to be highly insightful in preparation for the upcoming CITES CoP in Uzbekistan at the end of November.



TOURISM GROWTH PARTNERSHIP PLAN EXECUTION LAB:

Custodians was proudly represented by Nonkie Kunene at the recent Tourism Growth Partnership Plan Execution Lab, led by Minister Patricia De Lille. The Lab brought together key stakeholders from government, the private sector, and across the South African tourism value chain to translate strategy into actionable outcomes. This initiative aligns with the priorities of the Government of National Unity—namely driving inclusive economic growth, creating jobs, reducing poverty and the cost of living, and building a capable and ethical state.



Discussions focused on the five strategic priorities of the Tourism Growth Partnership Plan:

- **Ease of Access – including the anticipated rollout of the Electronic Travel Authorization system**
- **Coordinated Destination Marketing**
- **Tourist Safety & Security**
- **Tourism Product Development**
- **Job Creation**

The Lab reinforced the need for innovation, collaboration, and measurable impact to unlock the full potential of South Africa's tourism sector. With the industry already supporting 1.6 million jobs, reaching the target of 15 million tourist arrivals by 2030 is both ambitious and within reach.

One key issue raised relevant to our sector was the difficulty experienced by hunting tourists from Mexico in obtaining visas. Custodians will compile and share all available information with the Tourism Business Council of South Africa (TBCSA) to support further engagement on the matter.

Custodians remains committed to ensuring that professional hunting and the sustainable use of wildlife are recognised and valued as integral parts of South Africa's diverse and world-class tourism offering.

NORTH-WEST ELEPHANT TASK TEAM STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Thank you to Michael Botha for representing Custodians at the workshop. The session was facilitated by Dr. Sam Ferreira, with support from Pieter Nel of North West Parks & Tourism and Dr. Jeanetta Selier from SANBI.

The purpose of the event formed part of the Provincial Elephant Task Team's engagement with stakeholders on the management of elephants in Madikwe and Pilanesberg.

Discussions focused on both immediate challenges such as elephant impact on biodiversity and socio-economic development, and long-term management principles. The Task Team will now review and consolidate all stakeholder input from the meeting to identify the approaches that will best serve the needs of each Reserve.



GOAL MADIKWE

Madikwe Game Reserve to be a leading model of responsible wildlife tourism that drives socio-economic growth while conserving biodiversity, celebrating cultural heritage and ensuring lasting benefits for local communities through inclusive partnerships and sustainable stewardship.

GOAL PILANESBERG

Pilanesberg to be a leading model of biodiversity conservation, safeguarding eco-systems and wildlife, while offering responsible tourism that supports local communities, celebrates cultural heritage and fosters lasting benefits through inclusive partnerships and sustainable stewardship.

OUR INDUSTRY

21.08.2025

The Tourism Business Council of South Africa (TBCSA) has noted with disappointment the decision to dissolve the South African Tourism (SAT) Board.



In the last 24 hours, the TBCSA met with both the Minister of Tourism and the now-dissolved Board. Following those engagements, our view was clear: the Board had the right mix of expertise and leadership to help address instability within SAT. The Minister's decision to dissolve it is therefore not aligned with the position we shared and raises serious concern within the sector.

While we recognise that government has cited governance challenges as part of its rationale – and we note that the appointment and removal of the Board is a prerogative of the Minister – equally so, the dissolved Board shared serious challenges it faced in executing its mandate. We believe the Board had begun to bring stability and continuity at a time when this was most needed. Industry stakeholders had confidence in its composition, and we had seen encouraging signs of progress in strengthening SAT's credibility and focus.

The TBCSA has worked well with the Board and believes it was equipped to serve the long-term interests of tourism in South Africa. We urge that decisions affecting SAT balance accountability and good governance, with the need for stability, industry expertise, and continuity of leadership. As an industry, we have set a goal of attracting over 15.6 million inbound tourists by 2030, while also increasing domestic travel. We can only achieve these goals with a stable and functional SAT.

As the voice of the private sector, the TBCSA will continue to put the tourism industry first. Our commitment is to support growth programmes, sustainability, and the millions of livelihoods that depend on tourism. Importantly, even while this transition unfolds, we will find ways to ensure that critical programmes continue to progress.

TBCSA Statement cont....

“ We will remain a constructive partner to government but will also continue to advocate strongly for decisions that build, rather than destabilise, the sector,” said Tshifhiwa Tshivhengwa, CEO of the TBCSA.

Statement Issued by Tshifhiwa Tshivhengwa: **TBCSA CEO**



We encourage our members who hunt in neighbouring countries to read through the cross-boarder hunting policy agreed to by OPHAA members associations



OPHAA Cross Border Hunting Policy

a. Aims and Objectives of Nationally Recognised Organisations and Associations in Africa:

- i. To promote and safeguard the interests and good name of all nationally recognised organisations in Africa and each of their members;
- ii. To promote and safeguard the hunting profession in Africa;
- iii. To promote and participate in the conservation of Africa's natural resources;
- iv. To promote and facilitate sustainable hunting as a conservation tool through responsible wildlife management and utilisation
- v. To promote and facilitate the empowerment of all Africans wishing to participate in the hunting profession, conservation and related activities;
- vi. To engage with all Governments of Africa in all matters affecting professional hunting, conservation, responsible wildlife management and related activities;
- vii. To collaborate with and assist, wherever possible and to the extent reasonably feasible, all officers of organisations and authorities tasked with the conservation of natural resources;
- viii. To co-operate with those (wherever situated) who by business or other circumstances are connected with hunting and to provide opportunities for discussion between them and members of the Associations on matters of common interest;
- ix. To promote adherence to its Codes of Conduct by all African organisations' members and organisations to sanction members who contravene these Codes of Conduct;
- x. To render assistance to and serve the needs of members of the Associations; and
- xi. To develop fellowship and co-operation among professional hunters and organisations in Africa.

b. Code of Conduct: Each member of a nationally recognised African organisation shall commit themselves to this Code of Conduct, which will define ethics, and whereby they:

- i. Shall promote, observe and drive the Aims and Objectives
- ii. Shall obey the laws of any country in which they operate at any time in professional hunting or related activities;
- iii. Shall encourage the hunt with licensed professional hunters and operators registered with the national organisation or association under OPHAA of the country they hunt in;
- iv. Shall hunt with licensed professional hunters and operators registered with the national organisation of the country they hunt in;
- v. Shall only advertise, promote or sell any hunts in countries where he/she is duly registered and legally authorized to conduct such a hunt;
- vi. Shall conduct themselves in a manner which will reflect honesty, integrity, and morality.
- vii. Shall respect the natural resources of the countries in which they hunt;
- viii. Shall respect the rights and interests of property owners, concessionaires and local communities;
- ix. Shall not misrepresent himself to clients, professional hunters or operators;
- x. Shall not mislead clients, professional hunters or operators in any way;
- xi. Shall take every reasonable step to ensure that their clients, professional hunters or operators receive the services contracted for, and to ensure their safety, comfort and satisfaction; and
- xii. Shall not act in any manner that brings the good name of their recognised national professional hunter or operator organisation and its members into disrepute.
- xiii. Shall promote the safeguarding of the credibility and public perception of hunting.

INDUSTRY NEWS

IUCN Confirms Four Giraffe Species

The IUCN Giraffe & Okapi Specialist Group has officially recognized four distinct giraffe species: Northern, Reticulated, Masai, and Southern. This landmark assessment, based on genetic and morphological evidence, highlights that each species faces unique conservation challenges. With some populations critically low, this shift is set to transform giraffe conservation strategies across Africa.

[Read more here](#)



OTHER NEWS

Unexplained Buffalo Deaths in Niassa Reserve

In a concerning development, nine buffaloes have been found dead under mysterious circumstances in Mozambique's Niassa Special Reserve. Authorities are investigating potential causes, including drowning due to increased river flow and possible poisoning from toxic substances. The reserve's administrator, Terêncio Tamele, noted



that some local residents had already taken portions of the buffalo meat before authorities arrived, prompting health safety measures to prevent potential poisoning. Established in 1960, the Niassa Special Reserve is Mozambique's largest protected area, covering 42,400 square kilometers and home to significant wildlife populations. The incident underscores ongoing challenges in conservation efforts and the need for enhanced monitoring and community engagement. [Club of Mozambique](#)

Tourists Spark Controversy at Wildebeest Migration Crossing

A dramatic video from Kenya's Maasai Mara shows tourists exiting their safari vehicles and crowding the riverbank—leaving less than a meter between themselves and wildebeests forced back into a crocodile-infested river during the dramatic Great Migration. Wildlife officials have expressed alarm, calling for tighter enforcement of park rules and greater accountability from tour operators to protect both wildlife and visitors.

[Watch here: Watch the full footage](#)

ABOUT CUSTODIANS

We've started sharing abstracts from our Constitution in our newsletters, to help members learn more about our Association.

14.DISPUTES AND DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

14.1 Disputes

14.1.1 No legal proceedings shall be instituted by any Member against the Association or any formal or any informal structure, or group, or office bearer of the Association, or against any Member in regard to any matter which in any way arises from, or relates to, the work, activities or governance of the Association.

14.1.2 The mediation and arbitration processes provided for herein shall be used by all Members and the Association in such circumstances.

14.1.3 A Member shall report any dispute in writing to the Executive Committee, within a reasonable period after gaining knowledge of the alleged dispute, but in any case, within 3 (three) years thereof, who shall forthwith refer the complaint or dispute for mediation and/or arbitration.

14.1.4 In such circumstances the matter shall be referred to an independent practising attorney or advocate, having at least 10 (ten) years of civil litigation and/or labour law experience (hereinafter the Mediator or Arbitrator, as the case may be), for mediation or, alternatively, arbitration. The Mediator/Arbitrator shall be jointly nominated by the parties, and failing such nomination, appointed by the Chair of the Legal Practice Council or his successor in title.

14.1.5 Notwithstanding the provisions of this clause 14, the Association may institute legal proceedings in a court of law against a Member if the Executive Committee deems it is in the best interests of the Association to do so.

14.1.6 Once the matter has been referred, the Mediator/Arbitrator shall decide whether the matter shall be subjected to mediation in the first instance, or whether it shall proceed directly to arbitration.

14.2 Mediation

14.2.1 The Mediator shall follow whatever procedure he deems necessary to attempt to settle a dispute by mediation, and the parties to the complaint or dispute shall provide their reasonable cooperation.

14.2.2 At the end of the mediation process the Mediator must submit a report of the outcome of the mediation the Executive Committee within 5 (five) days of the mediation process being completed.

14.2.3 If the mediation fails the matter must be referred forthwith back to the Executive Committee by the Mediator, who shall implement the provisions of clause 14.3 below

14.2.4 Where a party refuses to be part of the mediation process or refuses to co-operate, the Mediator may use such refusal as a basis for finding that the mediation process has failed and may refer the matter to arbitration, and the conduct of the recalcitrant party shall be a factor in determining which party shall be liable for the costs of the arbitration.

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14.2.5 The Association shall bear the costs of the mediation unless one or more parties are recalcitrant as envisaged in clause 14.2.4, in which event the appointed mediator may direct that such Member/s pay the wasted costs thereof.

14.3 Arbitration

14.3.1 A Mediator who presided over mediation proceedings in a matter will not be entitled to be appointed an arbitrator in respect of the same dispute. The provisions of clause 14.1.2 shall apply mutatis mutandis in the event of a failed mediation that proceeds to arbitration.

14.3.2 The arbitrator shall follow whatever procedure he deems necessary to arrive at a decision.

14.3.3 All members of the Association are obliged to co-operate fully with the arbitrator, including but not limited to, the giving of evidence and the production of documentary evidence.

14.3.4 If a matter is referred to arbitration, the finding of the Arbitrator shall be final and binding on all Members and the Association, subject to the provisions of the Arbitration Act, 1965.

14.3.5 The Arbitrator shall decide who shall bear the costs of the arbitration, taking into account such factors as he deems appropriate, including the merits of the matter and the conduct of the parties.

14.3.6 The arbitration costs shall include the fees and disbursements of the Arbitrator, and any necessary travel and accommodation expenses as well as the expenses incurred in securing the attendance of necessary witnesses. The arbitrator's decision in respect of the dispute shall be final and binding on all Members and the Association.

14.3.7 No legal representation shall be allowed at the arbitration.

14.4 Disciplinary Matters

14.4.1 Each Member of the Association shall conduct himself and his affairs in a manner that are in accordance with the letter and spirit of this Constitution, the Code of Conduct, the Member's Pledge and the Rules of the Association. The Members are bound to the undertakings and obligations embodied in each of these documents.

14.4.2 The Code of Conduct and Member's Pledge are attached as annexures A and B respectively, which documents may be amended from time to time by the Executive Committee provided not less than 60 (sixty) days' written notice is given to the Members.

14.4.2 A complainant shall report any disciplinary matter in writing to the Executive Committee within a reasonable period after gaining knowledge of a Member's alleged misconduct, but in any case, within 3 (three) years thereof.

14.4.3 After considering the merits of and information pertinent to any complaint received, the Executive Committee may refer the matter for further disciplinary action to be taken as provided for in the Constitution and the Disciplinary Rules of the Association.

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14.4.5 In such circumstances the matter shall be referred to one or more independent practising attorneys or advocates, having at least 10 (ten) years of civil litigation and/or labour law and/or criminal law experience, who shall act as Disciplinary Panel.

14.4.6 The Executive Committee shall forthwith notify the complainant of its decision and shall, in the event of a decision to not pursue the matter, supply the complainant with a succinct statement of its reasons.

14.4.7 The disciplinary process shall be governed by the Disciplinary Rules of the Association.

14.4.8 The Executive Committee shall, upon conclusion of the disciplinary process and upon receipt of the report and decision of the Disciplinary Panel, make a decision in respect of the sanction to be imposed, if any, which decision shall be final and binding.

14.4.9 The Executive Committee shall forthwith notify the complainant and Member of the outcome disciplinary proceedings and the sanction imposed, if any.

14.4.10 Any Member whose membership is terminated for disciplinary reasons shall, immediately after such termination, deliver to the Association all documents to which it may be entitled, and cease using the logo of the Association in any way whatsoever.



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