



Acknowledgement: Clive Curtis

Thank you for positive engagement and constructive feedback received on our first newsletter two weeks ago. Please share any information relevant to our industry that you would like us to include in future newsletters.

As we settle into the year ahead, you may have noticed a significant increase in our social media activity, with daily posts now being shared. Growing the Custodians brand and communicating what we stand for relies heavily on the active support of our members. We therefore encourage you to follow us on **Facebook and Instagram**, and to like, comment on, and share our posts to help extend our reach and strengthen the voice of our Association.

- [Instagram](#) [Facebook](#)

The increased social media presence forms part of **Tracking Custodians**, an initiative introduced to members at the 2025 AGM by our Chairman, Jacques Senekal, and is aimed at showcasing who we are as Custodians and reinforcing our brand and values. Over and above following and sharing our social media pages, we also invite members as part of the **Tracking Custodians** initiative, to tag us on your photos and experiences, with or without clients in the bush and not necessarily hunting-related. You can also forward photos and stories for our consideration for publication on our website.

We also introduce a new section in our newsletter, effective from today, to recognise and appreciate our conference partners, sponsors, and donors, ensuring they receive the acknowledgment they deserve. In addition to the list published on the final page, each edition will feature a special acknowledgment of a group of supporters, allowing readers to become better acquainted with them and encouraging ongoing support throughout the year.

We trust that you will enjoy this newsletter!
Adri & Nonkie (editors team)



to all who celebrate their birthdays
during February:

Itani Netshianane (2nd)

Edmond Malatji (4th)

Gordon Brace, Andrew Pringle, and Norman Mabvula (7th)

Radcliffe Robertson (13th)

Andrew Walker (16th)

Norman Simpson and Clive Curtis (19th)

Matthew Birch, Roelof Burger, and Rykie Fourie (20th)

David Bursey (21st)

Antonie Kloppers (25th)

Graham Jones and Jan Kleynhans (3rd)

Garry Kelly and Kevin Bowker (5th)

Nonkie Kunene (10th)

Witold Jakutowicz (14th)

Ridge Morgan (18th)

Chantal Kloppers and Gert Harding (22nd)

Hein Van Heerden (26th).

We hope your day is filled with joy, celebration, and memorable moments!

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Membership Fees – 2026

As a follow-up, this serves as a friendly reminder that 2026 membership fees are now due. Members who have queries or would like to make instalment payment arrangements, please contact Nonkie or Adri to arrange.

A sincere **Thank You!** to those members who have already settled their fees – your commitment strengthens the work we do and the voice we carry forward.

Firearm licence motivation endorsements

A quick reminder that you can forward your new or renewal firearm licence application motivations to us for endorsement. As per the arrangement with Central Firearms Registry, accredited associations may endorse a motivation in terms of the need, purpose and suitability of the firearm.

Contact Adri or Nonkie to find out more.

CUSTODIANS ACTIVITIES

Meet Custodians at Upcoming International Conventions

We will be represented at two major international events this season.

If you're attending either convention, please stop by, say hello, and connect with our team.



SCI: We'll be in the Associations' Lane

DSC: We'll be in the OPHAA booth

Here's a helpful travel tip:

if you're attending one of the upcoming conventions, it's wise to pack at least three days' worth of essentials in your carry-on bag. This can help you avoid any inconvenience, since several travelers have experienced delayed checked luggage this year.

CUSTODIANS attending a National Wildlife Forum Meeting



forestry, fisheries
& the environment

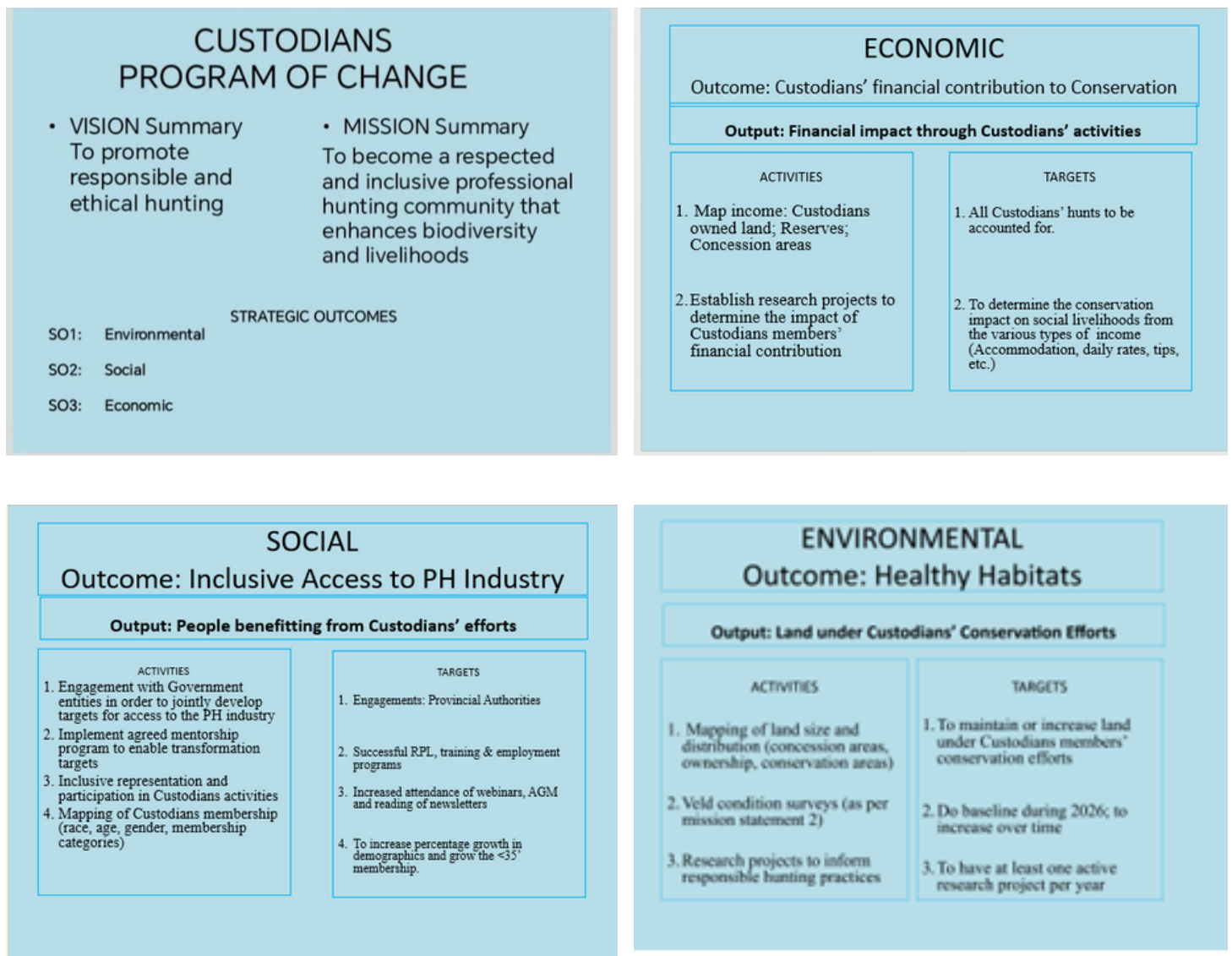
Department:
Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

We will attend a national wildlife forum meeting scheduled for the **29th of January** and will provide any relevant and important information to members in our next newsletter.

Custodians' Program Of Change:

In his Chairman's Report at the 2025 AGM, Craig Kelly-Maartens highlighted the progress made in advancing our conservation agenda through ongoing government consultations at various levels. These engagements reinforce our commitment to sustainable wildlife management and confirm Custodians' role as a credible and constructive stakeholder in national policy development. Through continued dialogue with members and partners, Custodians remains at the forefront of measurable transformation, creating opportunities, expanding capacity, and promoting meaningful inclusion across the professional hunting and conservation sectors.

In this context, Adri presented the Custodians Programme of Change in her annual Operational Report at the AGM. This programme, as approved by EXCO, is guided by our Vision, Mission and the strategic objectives as set out below:



EXCO has further approved a **Roadshow to be undertaken during 2026**, along with the development of an electronic platform through which members can submit information pertaining to the above. These initiatives are intended to integrate our conservation and transformation efforts more effectively and serve as a baseline for our contributions, to be evaluated in future years.

The engagement will focus on sharing best practices, capturing member achievements, and strengthening collaboration. By connecting with members both in person and online, we aim to amplify our collective impact and celebrate the meaningful contributions shaping the future of our industry.

LOCAL NEWS

Foot & Mouth Disease

Apart from the Disease Management Areas (DMAs) in KwaZulu-Natal, as reported in our April newsletter last year, we are not aware of any additional DMAs currently declared elsewhere in South Africa that may affect the movement of hunting trophies. We will, however, keep members informed should any further announcements or official notices be issued in this regard. For information on the KwaZulu-Natal protocols, please refer to Newsletter 7 of 2025, dated [11 April 2025](#).

[Here](#) is a copy of the Custodians Message of Support that was published on our social media platforms.

OTHER NEWS

Conservation Insight – Kruger National Park

A recent article explores the ongoing ecological dynamics in Kruger National Park, focusing on interactions between elephants and marula trees. According to plant ecologists, populations of mature marula trees have declined in some areas, with limited regeneration partly linked to sustained browsing pressure from elephants. The piece highlights how these changes bring complexity to debates about wildlife and vegetation balance in South Africa's largest game reserve.

[Read the full article here: https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2026-01-14-
elephants-or-marula-trees-a-plant-ecologists-uneasy-view-from-the-kruger-park/](https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2026-01-14-
elephants-or-marula-trees-a-plant-ecologists-uneasy-view-from-the-kruger-park/)

Kruger National Park Introduces Visitor Quota System

Kruger National Park has introduced a gate quota system for visitors with immediate effect following recent heavy rainfall and related infrastructure impacts. The quota system applies at several open entrance gates and is intended to support visitor safety and effective traffic management as road and bridge conditions continue to be assessed. Essential delivery vehicles and certain transfers are being accommodated under specific conditions while SANParks monitors weather and access routes closely. [Read more here:](#)

Surveys

Prof Peet van der Merwe from NWU (TREES) is conducting a research survey on the value of the export quota. Your input is valuable in gathering data to understand the economic impact of these species in the industry. Please take a few minutes to complete the survey using the link below: <https://nwu.questionpro.com/t/AcAUTZ7r1L>

Appreciation to Sponsors & Donors

As noted in the introduction, each newsletter will honour a selection of our conference partners, sponsors, and donors. This week, we are highlighting three key supporters: Our International Main Conference Partner, South African Main Conference Partner, Custodians Sponsor, Splitting Image.

DALLAS SAFARI CLUB:

Dallas Safari Club (DSC) has served as our Main International Conference Partner for the past three years. We extend our sincere appreciation for their continued support. In addition to their role as our International main conference partner, DSC's annual booth donation for our auction has been integral to our budget planning, making a significant contribution to our yearly operations.



www.biggame.org

We are honoured to recognise Dallas Safari Club as a valued international partner and thank them for their steadfast support, shared vision, and ongoing commitment to the professional hunting industry.

DSC's continued partnership over this three-year period reflects far more than sponsorship alone. It represents a shared commitment to ethical, sustainable hunting and to the professional standards that underpin international hunting tourism. Their willingness to stand alongside Custodians year after year has strengthened not only our conference, but the relationship between professional hunters and the international hunting community we collectively serve.

What makes DSC's support particularly significant is the close connection between our respective memberships. Many DSC members hunt with Custodians members, and by supporting this conference, DSC is actively investing in the quality, professionalism, and integrity of the very experiences their members seek. In doing so, they are not only supporting Custodians, but also protecting and advancing the best interests of their own members by ensuring strong, ethical partners on the ground. DSC's involvement helps build trust across borders, reinforces high standards within the industry, and promotes responsible hunting practices that benefit wildlife, local communities, and future generations of hunters. Their presence as an international partner lends credibility, visibility, and global perspective to our conference and our work.

BADGER CARGO:

The support of Badger Cargo, our South African Main Conference Partner, has played a huge role in the success and growth of our conference over the past two years.



www.badgercargo.co.za

When the call went out three years ago for a South African main sponsor and conference partner, Badger Cargo responded immediately and without hesitation, setting a benchmark for industry partnership and commitment. That initial act of confidence was not only meaningful at the time, but it laid the foundation for a relationship built on trust, shared values, and mutual support. Their decision to renew their sponsorship and support again in 2025 which included gala dinner gifts for the third year in a row, speaks volumes about their belief in our organisation, our members, and the future of professional hunting.

Badger Cargo's contribution has gone far beyond financial sponsorship. In a gesture that truly reflects their partnership mindset, they made their boardroom available for our two-day EXCO strategic planning session last year, providing a professional and welcoming space for critical discussions that helped shape the direction of our organisation. This willingness to go the extra mile underscores their genuine investment

Badger Cargo is a specialised freight and logistics company focused on the importing and exporting of hunting trophies and related goods (such as skins and African souvenirs). They have over 25 years of combined experience in handling specialized commodities and logistics, with a strong clientcentred approach to service. Their team, led by owners Pieter and Ilse, emphasizes solutionsdriven logistics that remove the confusion and frustration often associated with shipping hunting trophies internationally.

Their services help ensure that each hunter's "trophy moment" continues long after the hunt itself, with safe, compliant delivery back home.

For many international hunters, managing trophy export procedures can be one of the most stressful aspects of the trip. Badger Cargo handles the complex logistics from start to finish, so clients can focus on enjoying their hunt and memories. Trophies are often irreplaceable, emotional and financial investments for hunters. Badger Cargo's expertise and tailored handling ensure that trophies arrive safely and intact at their final destination. With experience in crossborder shipping and customs requirements, they help prevent costly mistakes or delays, enabling smooth transitions from African safaris to home taxidermists worldwide. By removing logistical worries, hunters come away with positive memories of their trip, no hassles with freight, which aligns perfectly with the goals of hunting tourism and your annual conferences.

SPLITTING IMAGE TAXIDERMY

www.splittingimagetaxidermy.co.za



Splitting Image Taxidermy is not just a sponsor; they also are a true industry partner. By providing branded custom laptop bags to all Custodians Conference delegates over the past three years, they ensured that delegates can carry their materials comfortably and in style.

The 2025 Conference delegates' very special name badges elevated the conference experience and reflected the personal touch Splitting Image brings. Splitting Image also sponsors the annual trophy for the Krieghoff Shoot winner, linking their brand with excellence, competition, and tradition. Their support enhances delegates' conference experience and underline their commitment to the professional hunting sector.

Splitting Image Taxidermy is an internationally recognised taxidermy and trophy management company based in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, with a global footprint that includes service agreements and networks in North America and Europe. They specialise in creating world-class taxidermy mounts and bespoke trophy presentations that help hunters preserve and celebrate their most meaningful experiences.

Their philosophy centres on the idea that a hunt's memories deserve to be celebrated "Worth Remembering", and that craftsmanship, care, and client service must honour both the hunt and the hunted.

Their team prioritises communication, transparency, and personalised service, guiding hunters through every step so that the finished taxidermy reflects the story and significance of the hunt itself.

Please see the full list of sponsors and donors at the bottom of the newsletter, all of whom will be acknowledged in our newsletters throughout the year.

We encourage you to support them where possible.

2025 CONFERENCE SPONSORS & DONORS

DSC



BADGER
CARGO



TANZANIA



Jackie Thirion



MAGNUM ARMS
Dealer in Arms and Ammunition

BRYLLIANTA
DIAMONDS & TANZANITE



UMDENDÉ
Safaris



Gerhard
Damm

