

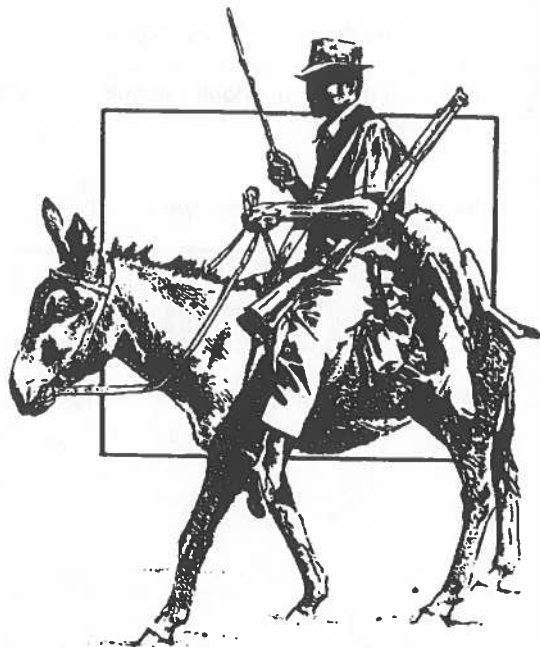
Indigenous Peoples and Wildlife Schemes

Botswana is noted for its diverse and abundant wildlife resources and for the people who are heavily dependent upon these resources for their livelihoods. Over the past few decades Botswana has come to be recognised for its emphasis on conservation, as indicated by the significant percentage of land which has been set aside as parks and reserves. In 1986 the Botswana Government published a White Paper which announced a new Wildlife Conservation Policy, part of which was devoted to plans regarding wildlife management, consumptive utilisation and the establishment of Wildlife Management Areas.

Approximately 80 percent of Botswana's population is rural. Many of these people have always utilised wild plants and animals for subsistence and income generation. In some areas, up to half the diet comes from wild foods, though the percentage fluctuates, depending on environmental, economic and political conditions. Recent estimates indicate that there are 160 species of mammals, 157 reptiles, 38 amphibians and over 500 different birds in the country. Data on subsistence ecology reveal that the !Kung San exploit 29 species of mammals while the Tyua of the northeastern Kalahari utilise 52 species. Reptiles, amphibians, and insects are also exploited by remote area populations.

Under the Fauna Conservation Proclamation of 1961 traditional foragers were allowed the right to continue to hunt without fear of penalty. In practice, however, game scouts and police sometimes arrested people who hunted without licences even if they were members of hunting and gathering communities. This situation led to difficulties for indigenous peoples, who felt that they were being deprived of their hunting rights.

In the 1970s there began to be less of an emphasis on preservation of wildlife and more concern with further developing wildlife utilisation. While there has been discussion in Botswana about promoting better management and increased utilisation of game resources, few efforts have been made to enhance wildlife utilisation and promote the incomes of rural people as they related to wildlife. One of the problems that people in remote areas of Botswana face is that there are major marketing constraints which affect the potential for the commercialisation of hunting. In most cases, people who sell meat or game skins do so locally. There are restrictions on taking of wildlife products across international borders (eg in to South Africa). When



Hunting — sketch from KCS workshop proceedings.

foot and mouth disease was found in Botswana in October 1977, the movement of animal products from one veterinary control zone to another was stopped completely. If wildlife utilisation is to be enhanced, effort will need to be made to ensure transport and marketing opportunities and veterinary approvals for rural people.

Efforts were made in 1979 to revise the hunting regulations for Botswana. Efforts of wildlife biologists, anthropologists, government officers in the Remote Area Development Programme, and, significantly, rural people themselves, led to the creation of a "special licence" for subsistence hunters. The Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP) issues these special licences to people who qualify on the basis of their membership in communities which are largely dependent upon foraging for their subsistence and income. People who in the past were arrested for violating hunting laws theoretically would now have protection if they had one of these licences in their possession at the time they were checked by a game scout or policeman.

The late 1970s and early 1980s saw some significant changes in faunal numbers and distributions in Botswana. Because of the rapid expansion of

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settlements and the droughts in 1979 and 1982-87, the numbers of wild animals declined precipitously. It became increasingly difficult for people to obtain animals, particularly if they lived in areas with large numbers of people. A whole series of technological and strategic changes occurred in hunting, with increase in the use of horses dogs, and, importantly guns.

Because of some of the problems facing rural people in Botswana, the Remote Area Development Programme and various non-governmental organisations began to devote greater attention to promoting wildlife utilisation efforts. In one case, a wildlife harvesting scheme was initiated in the western part of Kweneng District as part of the Kalahari Settlement project. DWNP personnel along with people from the Kweneng Rural Development Association were involved in providing advice and training for local hunters in shooting and game processing. Some of the game products were sold in Molepolole, the district capital. The scheme lasted for a relatively short time and currently there are no further wildlife related efforts in this area.

In 1987 a gemsbok domestication scheme was recommended for implementation in the Kgalagadi District in southwestern Botswana. The DWNP and the Remote Area Development Programme in the Ministry of Local Government and Lands discussed this scheme for several years. A much-revised wildlife scheme was finally established in the early 1980s in the northeastern Kweneng District in what was used to be part of the Lephepe Sandveld Pasture Research Station. The scheme has a number of hartebeest and eland which are contained within a fenced area in which water is

available. As yet, few animals have been cropped, and remote area dwellers have not been part of the scheme, which is managed by personnel from the DWNP.

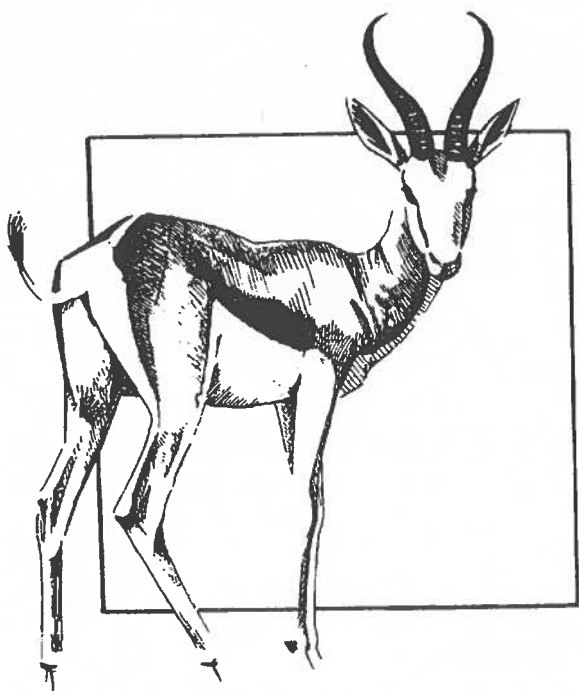
The only scheme which is currently in operation in Botswana which has some benefits for rural people is that at Kedia in the western part of the Central District. Kedia is a settlement of over 800 people which was established in the late 1970s by the Remote Area Development Programme and the Central District Council. The settlement has a school, a health post, staffhousing, and storerooms, some of which were constructed as part of the labour-based drought relief projects which have been implemented in rural Botswana during the drought period of the 1980s. A game harvesting project, largely funded by NORAD, was initiated as part of the remote area development efforts at Kedia in mid-1987 after lengthy planning and discussions both at the national and district level.

While the Kedia Game Harvesting scheme has been useful in terms of providing some families with income, there have been a number of difficulties.

There are problems of distribution of benefits with only a few people gaining any substantial income while the majority have only a small income. The vehicle expenses have been high as have the costs of ammunition per animal shot. These, and other contributing factors, make the cost per kilogram of meat produced uneconomic and the project as it stands is not viable in the long term. There are also practical problems because Kedia village has no borehole and hence no regular supply of water. A regular water supply is essential for the correct treatment of skins which are one of the main products of the project.

Overall though the most important problem is the lack of wild animals to hunt. Local people attributed the dearth of wildlife both to the recent drought and to the large numbers of cattle which compete for grazing in the area, as well as hunting pressure from people from outside the area.

The Kedia Game Harvesting scheme is a useful case to examine for those who argue for enhanced wildlife utilisation for indigenous peoples. It is clear that more attention will have to be paid to the placement of such schemes. Careful surveys will have to be done of the wildlife resource to ensure that there will be sufficient numbers of animals to allow an expanded offtake. Another area of concern has to do with participation of local people in decision-making concerning project implementation and management. Local hunters say that they do not have a large enough role in the administration of the project. As a result, they feel that they should have the right to assess the direction the project is taking and make recommendations as to changes. An important area of local concern relates to training, which they want expanded so that wildlife management and utilisation efforts can function properly. It is clear that greater participation of local people in development schemes relating to wildlife would facilitate a positive impact on the livelihoods of rural poor people.



Springbok — sketch from workshop proceedings.

Robert Hitchcock