



Future for Elephants e.V. | Reichenbachstr. 21 | 80469 München

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Your Excellency Madame Masire-Mwamba

With great concern we have been following the recent development regarding wildlife/elephant management in Botswana. In recent years, the country has been a unique safe haven for wildlife, especially elephants, and a shining example for conservation.

According to the internationally renowned organization "Elephants Without Borders" there are an estimated 130 000 elephants in Botswana – that is almost one third of the total African elephant population. The pachyderms flee from the surrounding countries where there is high pressure of poaching and hunting and seek protection in Botswana, where they were safe since 2014, when the hunting ban was put into place.

This situation could change drastically if the currently discussed proposals about the re-introduction of hunting and furthermore even culling elephants for the production of pet food were put into effect. Undoubtedly, such measures would cause incomprehension and disgust worldwide, especially among animal-loving tourists. The plans to fence off migration corridors and ease the international trade ban for ivory also gravely jeopardize the survival of elephants and other wildlife. All this would mount the pressure on iconic species like elephants, lions, rhinos, leopards and cheetahs, which are increasingly threatened by poaching, human-animal conflicts and the loss of their habitat.

We are aware of the conflicts that have developed between local communities and elephants in different regions of Botswana. However, experience shows that neither trophy hunting nor culling are promising solutions. On the contrary, these measures are known to disrupt the social structure of elephant societies – resulting in aggressive behaviour and destructiveness of the animals.

We are certain that strategies for peaceful coexistence will benefit people as well as wildlife and provide a sustainable perspective for the future. Successful concepts to achieve this do exist and have been proven successful in many areas. If the goals of the KaZa Transfrontier Project were implemented effectively there would be enough space for elephants and other animals roaming in larger areas outside Botswana.

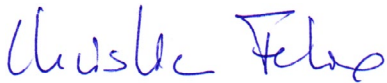
Elephants are an iconic species that is on the brink of extinction. Their extraordinary intelligence, complex social bonds and emotions fascinate people worldwide. Killing these precious animals for fun or the production of pet food is not ethically acceptable any more.

Botswana has earned an excellent reputation as a premier destination and pioneer in elephant conservation. The introduction of trophy hunting and culling would certainly have far-reaching consequences for the country's reputation and flourishing tourism.

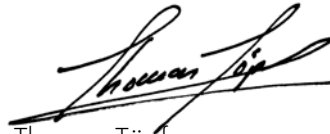
We urgently request you to protect Botswana as a safe haven for elephants and other wildlife. Please appeal to the Botswana government in this regard.

Thank you very much in advance.

Yours sincerely



Dr. Christian Felix
(Board member Future for Elephants e.V.)



Thomas Töpfer
(Chairman Rettet die Elefanten Afrikas e.V.)