

PRIVATE BAG BO 199
GABORONE
BOTSWANA

TEL: (+267) 3914955
FAX: (+267) 3951092



REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION AND TOURISM

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All Media Houses

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**MEDIA INVITATION- PRESS CONFERENCE- LIFTING OF THE
HUNTING SUSPENSION IN BOTSWANA**

The Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources Conservation and Tourism wishes to inform the public that following extensive consultations with all stakeholders, the Government of Botswana has taken a decision to lift the hunting suspension. Since its imposition, the hunting suspension has become a topical subject in the country. There developed two schools of thought with some of the view that if hunting was re-instated, communities would support conservation as they realise the potential value and associated income to be derived from wildlife resources and related activities; and as a result, the annual population would increase. On the other hand, some people were of the view that the suspension would lead to animal population increases; it would promote conservation especially for the species that experienced reduction.

It was against this background that in June 2018, a Cabinet Sub Committee on Hunting Ban Social Dialogue was established to kick start a social dialogue aimed at reviewing the suspension on hunting. The process involved a nationwide process including holding Kgotla meetings and consulting with Local Authorities, affected communities, NGO's, tourism businesses, conservationists, researchers and other stakeholders.

The fundamental issue that emerged was the appreciation by citizens that they were being consulted. This was seen as necessary for building on the

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national principles of: Democracy, Development, Self-reliance, Unity and Botho.

Some of the findings of the Cabinet Sub Committee on Hunting Ban and Social Dialogue were as follows:

- i) The number and high levels of human-elephant conflict and the consequent impact on livelihoods was increasing;
- iv) Predators appear to have increased and were causing a lot of damage as they kill livestock in large numbers;
- v) There is a negative impact of the hunting suspension on livelihoods, particularly for community based organisations that were previously benefiting from consumptive utilisation;
- vi) The lack of capacity within the Department of Wildlife and National Parks leads to long response time to problem animal control reports; and
- vii) The general consensus from those consulted was that the hunting ban should be lifted.

On the basis of these issues, the Government has reflected and assessed the recommendations, and lifted the suspension.

You are therefore invited to a press conference that will be held by the Minister of Environment, Natural Resources Conservation and Tourism, Honourable Onkokame Kitso Mokaila which will focus on the lifting of the hunting suspension, details of its implementation and decisions made regarding other recommendations from the Cabinet Sub Committee on Hunting Ban and Social Dialogue. The press conference will be tomorrow afternoon, 23rd May from 1400hrs at the Ministry Conference Room.

The Ministry would like to reiterate that it will work with all stakeholders to ensure that re-instatement of hunting is done in an orderly and ethical manner, and in accordance with the Wildlife Conservation and National Parks Act and the Wildlife Conservation and National Parks (Hunting and Licensing) Regulations.

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