

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

The country and the world as a whole is facing a global problem of failing to conserve their environment and natural resources. Production of game meat has less impact on the environment than conventional livestock production. Furthermore, through breeding of healthy trophy specimens, superior genetic material can be conserved in game reserves and parks for future generations to ensure the survival of healthy specimens.

TRANSFORMATION

In the past the wildlife economy has contributed to the creation of over 100 000 jobs. It has a high potential for creating even more direct and indirect jobs in South Africa. Transformation of the wildlife industry remains inadequate and the majority of the sector is still untransformed. It is envisaged that transformation can be supported through land redistribution, sponsorship and training of Previously Disadvantaged Individuals (PDIs) and communities to own and manage game farms or reserves, abattoirs and meat processing facilities, and game auctioning and sales.



BIODIVERSITY ECONOMY - GAME MEAT

Physical Address
Environment House,
473 Steve Biko,
Arcadia,
Pretoria, 0083
South Africa

Call centre: 086 111 2468
E-mail: callcentre@environment.gov.za
Website: www.environment.gov.za



Find us:
Department-of-
Environmental-Affairs



Follow us:
@EnvironmentZA



Follow us:
@EnvironmentZA



EnvironmentZA



environmental affairs

Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



BIODIVERSITY ECONOMY

Biodiversity is globally recognised as a cornerstone for economic growth and sustainable development. South Africa, as one of the mega-biological diverse countries, has established mechanisms in which its biodiversity can be sustainably used to contribute towards addressing unemployment, poverty and inequality in the country.

The biodiversity economy of South Africa encompasses the businesses and economic activities that either directly depend on biodiversity for their core business or that contribute to conservation of biodiversity through their activities. The wildlife economy as one of the sub-sectors of the biodiversity economy; is centered on game and wildlife farming or ranching activities that relate to the stocking, trading, breeding and hunting of game animals, and all the services and goods required to support this value chain. Broadly it includes three areas: wildlife ranching, wildlife activities and wildlife products.

The Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) supports the development of the biodiversity economy through the implementation of projects relating to job creation, redress and transformation of the sector. These projects varies from providing training for anti-poaching initiatives, to fencing, land rehabilitation and infrastructure development in community game reserves and local, provincial and national protected areas. These projects are implemented as part of the national Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), providing poverty and income relief through creation of temporary work opportunities for the unemployed to carry out socially useful activities.

GAME MEAT

Game meat has been identified as one of the major role players in the wildlife economy. Game meat is the meat of animals and birds that is traditionally hunted for sport or food instead of being raised on a farm under controlled circumstances. It is the meat obtained from animals that are mostly found in game reserves. Game meat not only promotes and presents opportunities for land-use planning, environmental management and agricultural planning but also supports economic growth, food security and contributes to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the country through provisioning

of employment opportunities. Game meat production is one of the areas which challenges the inequalities of the wildlife sector through enabling transformation. The most commonly produced and consumed game meat in South Africa is impala, kudu, wildebeest and springbok. Although ostrich meat is game meat, it is predominantly produced through conventional livestock farming methods.

ADVANTAGES OF GAME MEAT PRODUCTION

- R5 million invested in cattle over 5 years has a return on investment of about 4,8%; while investment in sable antelope for the same amount and period the return on investment could be as high as 45,2%.
- Game meat generates on average R220.00 per hectare of economic output while livestock farms generates an average of R80.00 per hectare.
- Game farming requires more labour-intensive work such as managing fences and firebreaks; thus creates about 3 times more jobs than livestock farms.
- Game animals require less water, have lower nutrient requirements, grow faster, mature earlier and have the ability to put on weight in sub-optimal grazing conditions while making efficient use of natural vegetation.
- Indigenous animals are better suited to deal with climate change.
- Game animals are generally more parasite and disease resistant, thus less medicine and antibiotics are required.
- Game animals have different feeding niches making it possible to stock different species together.
- Game animals promote biodiversity conservation.
- Game animals are less impacted by bush encroachment.
- Game animals are not dependent on grain based feeds thus need lower input costs required.

HEALTH BENEFITS

Game meat is a healthier alternative to the more traditional red meat products as it is higher in minerals and protein and has a lower fat content. For example, blue wildebeest and impala meat are both classified as lean meat as it has 21g

and 22g of protein per 100g meat respectively; very low intramuscular fat contents and good fatty acid profiles. Game meat has a lower percentage of inflammatory omega-6 fatty acids and more of the good fatty acids such as anti-inflammatory omega-3. However, as with livestock this varies with species, age, gender, anatomical location, season and diet.

- Game meat is generally free from hormones and antibiotics.
- Game meat is a reliable source of iron and zinc.
- Game meat is organic.
- Game meat contains an important acid for muscle growth – conjugated linoleic acid (CLA). The benefits of including CLA-rich meat in one's diet include the following:
 - Increased metabolic rate
 - Enhanced muscle growth
 - Lowers cholesterol and triglycerides
 - Lowers insulin resistance
 - Reduces food-induced allergies
 - Boosts immune system

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

- South Africa needs to double its food production in the next 35 years. Red meat production in the country is not sufficient and meat is imported to supplement local production. Water availability is the single most important factor that limits agricultural production in South Africa. Furthermore, the situation is likely to become dire due to rapidly increasing demand from other sectors of the economy and climate change. Game meat is a viable option to ensure accessibility of red meat to South Africans, and even further afield.
- Currently game meat contributes R9.1 billion a year (0.27%) to the GDP of South Africa. This has a great potential to increase exponentially as the game meat industry grows.
- Potential game meat export is estimated over 60 000 tons which equates to about R4 billion annually.
- Formal and informal game auctions generate as much as R500 million each year.