

Press Release

13 September 2018

Umbabat responds to recommendations from Parliament's Portfolio Committee

Parliament's Portfolio Committee on Environmental Affairs released a statement on 12 September 2018, highlighting shortfalls in the current management of protected areas around Kruger National Park. It also commented on the relationship between private reserves and Kruger National Park. The UPNR is an 18,000Ha reserve within the APNR and open to the KNP. The UPNR falls within Mpumalanga Province and therefore complies with Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency (MTPA) regulations.

Currently, certain Provinces have not adopted the Threatened or Protected Species (TOPS) regulations. However, the UPNR Management will engage with relevant authorities to consider how to comply, with TOPS henceforth.

The Greater Kruger hunting protocol, is reviewed continuously. This protocol is governed by current legislation, including the NEM:PA Act. The UPNR Management remains committed to compliance with the latest protocol revision.

Furthermore, the statement advises a revision of co-operative agreements between the Kruger National Park and the Associated Private Nature Reserves (APNR). This process has commenced. An extensive consultative process has ensued, to ensure that it aligns with the Greater Limpopo Trans-Frontier Conservation Area (GLTFCA) vision, objectives and outcomes. The UPNR has been a part of this engagement and looks forward to the conclusion of the revised agreement.

The UPNR Management remains committed to a sound co-operative relationship with neighbours, stating, "Our focus is on what is best for the biodiversity of our region, with guidance and alignment with our partners namely: The Kruger National Park, MTPA, GLTFCA and other APNR reserves. The UPNR Management plan will dovetail into the Management plan of the KNP and neighbouring reserves."

Lenny Willson, Chairman of the UPNR added, "through this robust engagement, reserves, such as ours, will be able to strengthen their governance structures, based on science and experience. The dream of a 6-million-hectare open area system, a partnership relationship between State and Private, one country and another, should be the hope, focus and aspiration of all citizens of ours and all nations, not only the reserves."

The current UPNR Management will therefore continue to support processes that will improve biodiversity management of protected areas and will work closely with Greater Kruger role players. These processes need to account for all management dimensions, including the significant costs involved in protecting species like rhino and securing its area. The UPNR Management believe we all have a collective responsibility towards the open system, it's members and its partners.

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