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Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia  
Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority

ቁጥር DA46/37/01  
No. 04/05/2009  
ቀን 04/05/2009  
Date

**Mr. Merle Shepard, President**

**Safari Club International,**

**501 second street, Washington, DC 20002**

**USA**

Dear Mr. Shepard,

This is to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated 6 April 2009 addressed to Honourable Minister of Culture & Tourism with regard to regulation number 163/2008: Federal Negarit Gazette of 18/2/2009. We appreciate the concern and the comments of from SCI as a lead supporter of the sustainable use of wildlife and the equitable share of benefits from such uses. It is worth mentioning that Safari Club International is not new to wildlife conservation and utilization in Ethiopia, in one way or another SCI has contributed a lot in promoting sustainable trophy hunting in the country. The current Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority appreciates the concerns of all stakeholders during the past and at present.

However, it is very difficult to think that SCI would fail to understand the Ethiopian huntable wildlife species price which is about more than 17 years old should remain untouched for lifelong in order to benefit only the safari operators and booking agents rather than the country. EWCA would think that this is the time for revisiting the huntable wildlife species prices, regardless of the global economic situation. The regulation mentioned above had been drafted a decade ago, and it was circulated and commented by the regional concerned offices since 2004 before it was forwarded for approval. In general, it is not mandatory and also difficult to consult some of the stakeholders in the process of formulating laws and regulations.

We think it is unrealistic to think that the regulation was brought to the council of Ministers for approval during the economic recession; it was only by chance that the recession and the approval of the regulation happened at the same period of time.

Some of the ideas forwarded so far from different corners are skewed towards favouring the safari operators and booking agents but not the communities and the government.

Therefore, it is very important to explain this using some examples for the above mentioned fact. Ethiopia as a country has received **486 tourist** hunters since March 1996, that is, 42-43 tourist hunters per year and **generated 3,596,155 USD** whereas the safari operators **earned 7,635,449 USD** during the same period. This makes the official share of government to safari operators **32 to 68% respectively**, which was unfair.

During this period the government had approved 800 USD/day for safari operators, however, published records show that operators were charging 1000USD/day for the safari duration during the same period. This means that Safari operators and booking agents have been violating the government directives to minimize taxes on their income. Currently, as we have explained to our safari operators there are also documented facts that shows package of Mountain Nyala in the country costs as high as 50,000 USD for the safari duration of 21 days whereas the cost of Mountain Nyala is 5000 USD as before. When the 1996 directive was violated no one came into picture to comment on the prices of huntable wildlife species in favour of the government and the economic sustainability of the country at least to make a reasonable balance of economic benefits.

Therefore, when we talk of hunting in Ethiopia it has to be ecologically sustainable socially acceptable and economically sound not only for individual beneficiaries but also for the country. To do this, the revenue generated by tourist hunting safaris must be balanced to favour the local communities living in and around the controlled hunting areas. We also believe that sustainable development of any nation cannot be achieved by favouring enlightened groups like in this particular case the safari operators and the booking agents only.

We thank you for your concern and look forward to work with you.

Best regards

  
Kifle Argaw (Dr)  
Director General

C.C



H.E Ministry of Culture and Tourism

Addis Ababa