



TO: The Chairman of BTT:
Dalton Gibbs
Email: Dalton.Gibbs@capetown.gov.za

15th July 2019

Dear BTT,

RE: Euthanizing of Baboons as a Strategy

The undersigned organizations are part of the Wildlife Animal Protection Forum South Africa (WAPFSA), an alliance of diverse South African NGOs that share certain values, knowledge and objectives and that collectively comprise a body of expertise from scientific, conservation, legal, welfare, rights, social justice, faith and public advocacy sectors.

Following the euthanasia of five baboons in the last three months, we met with a group of concerned interested and affected parties and discussed their concerns.

The consensus of the meeting was that there is an urgent need to call **for a moratorium on killing baboons**, until such a time that there is a more in-depth assessment of the current situation. The undersigned organisations are in support of such a moratorium.

In our opinion, there is a deep underlying incompatibility between the killing of baboons in terms of the latest Guidelines and not resolving the factors that contribute to the raiding behaviour that create the very basis for the implementation of these Guidelines.

It was agreed that an open, positive and solution seeking dialogue with the BTT to discuss these issues was the best way to go forward. We, therefore, would like to arrange an urgent meeting with the BTT in order to discuss all the options and reach a level of resolution to this very long ongoing conflict around baboons, communities and baboon management.

1. Baboon Management Plan and carrying capacity on the Peninsula

As we understand, there is no formal approved management plan signed off by all members of the BTT. However, there is an informal Framework (as yet not complete), which lists objectives and strategies. This Framework has a verbal agreement from the BTT on some of its content. Could you please make this draft Framework available to interested parties?

In the light of rapid urbanisation on the Peninsula, we believe there needs to be an analysis of the carrying capacity for baboons on the Peninsula, i.e. available space, taking into consideration the dramatic landscape changes due to fires and drought, as well as future development planned for the next 5 years. An overlay map of space available and development planned would provide a good illustrative tool. The last assessment goes back to 2010 and an update is urgently needed to ensure the best decisions are made for the baboons.

2. We advocate for:

a. A Moratorium on the euthanasia of baboons and a review of the Guidelines

In our opinion, there is cause and justification for an immediate moratorium on killing baboons. Current guidelines take little or no cognisance of the level of attractants within communities, businesses and in recreational spaces. This in turn calls for a review of the Guidelines as they are harsh compared with the previous protocols despite the level of attractants.

The current guidelines do not provide effective long-term solutions, as evidenced by the ongoing need to kill individual baboons.

Communities must be held accountable for managing their properties in baboon ranges, such as waste management and baboon proofing. The planned rapid urbanisation will further increase the complexities of human-baboon conflict unless these issues are dealt with effectively.

- b. The **draft amendment by-law** currently with Solid Waste to be escalated and implemented as soon as possible, with strict conditions and appropriate enforcement.
- c. **HWS to have more time** to implement their waste improvement and waste and other educational strategies. Waste management and human-baboon conflict issues in areas of longstanding conflict supports our call for a moratorium.
- d. **A proper, well-designed baboon proof bin** to meet the needs of communities, business and recreational spaces is an environmental imperative. The new bin introduced earlier in the year intended to replace the double lockable bin does not work with plenty of evidence to prove this fact following its introduction in some areas.
- e. **Current information:** HWS reports need to provide up-to-date raiding information timeously.
- f. **There is a need for an early warning system** to identify raiding behaviour of individuals and/or small groups, developing habituation to easy food rewards, in order to take swift preventative action. This coupled with the issuing of HWS 'Point of Source' letters should enhance current efforts.

- g. **Presentation of raiding data in their reports** should be by specific residential location and are raids reported both inside the urban edge and on land or facilities outside of the urban edge.
- h. **Education outreach:** Considerable effort is invested in education, but it needs to be better coordinated with an annual plan and budget that takes into consideration waste management and any City by-laws. This should also include community participation in planning and implementation and effective use of social media. This should lead to increased awareness within communities and neighbours working in partnership to reduce human-baboon conflict. In addition, we believe estate agents and developers need to participate as a stakeholder group, due to rapid urbanisation. Developments within baboon home ranges are currently approved with little or no attention paid to baboon proofing required for these areas.

3. Analysis of data

There is no scientific evidence that killing males, or individual baboons, reduces raiding by implementing the protocols. Available data needs to be analysed to prove the effectiveness of the protocol.

If incursions into the urban edge are not being reduced then the **prime objective of public safety** is not met and the level of attractants found will continue to corrupt baboon behaviour within the troop.

The killing of males appears to be having a much wider and adverse impact on the social fabric and discipline of the troop with, for example, younger baboons now leaving the troop and raiding into villages.

We would also like to receive clarification on whether the raiding category 1 (Inside the urban edge) and 2 (Raid Bin), are incorporated into an authorisation application for euthanasia.

4. Community Representation and Communication

Councillor-Appointed Representatives for Baboon Suburbs (CARBS)

As you are aware, the Councillor together with the BTT chair appointed representatives from each civic to represent communities within baboon ranges. The formation of this group was ratified through Sub Council.

- a. We request that the Councillor makes the purpose, objectives and the names of each representative known to the respective communities, so that they are aware of their representation.
- b. Residents should be encouraged to assist HWS and work with their own neighbours to the common goal of keeping baboons out of urban areas.
- c. Furthermore, we believe there is a need for community representation at BTT level. We therefore propose a **second layer of representation** be introduced and approved through Sub Council to allow for a small committee to liaise with the BTT on issues of policy and decision making. Currently, there is no such

formal civic appointed representation for troops in the North (Tokai, Constantia and Zwaanswyk) and needs to become a part of the existing CARBS group.

5. Census

As detailed on the official website for the collective partners of the South African Baboon Forum, of which the BTT is a member, an annual census forms an important tool in all decision making. The site details the timelines of the annual census as well as the methodology used.

We would like to see the 2019 census which, according to the official source, should be completed in May/June every year. The figures should be immediately available as an open access document and will help to inform residents understand decisions made in line with an overall baboon management plan.

6. Fencing

We would like to see the possibility of electric fencing being discussed again and set by troop and community priority. It has been discussed for many years but set aside due to cost considerations.

An independent proposal for electric fencing, using Scarborough and Misty Cliffs as examples, has been presented to the Baboon Technical Team (BTT) by Dave Gaynor. If it succeeds it will lay the groundwork for further pilot projects to introduce fencing in other areas.

Consideration should also be given to allocating some of the City's budget for fencing.

7. Reccomendations

Our request is that the BTT implements an immediate moratorium on the killing of baboons until such time as the concerns as detailed above are addressed.

Could you please advise a date for a joint meeting with the BTT, within 21 days of the date of this letter. Subsequently, we will provide the names of representative of the interested parties listed below to attend the meeting.

We look forward to your positive response to our request.

Jenni Trethowan and Wynter Worsthorne

Baboon Matters Trust

On behalf of the following

Signatories of WAPFSA

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Signers:

Baboon Matters Trust

Ban Animal Trading

Beauty Without Cruelty (South Africa)

Centre for Animal Rehabilitation and Education

EMS Foundation

Four Paws (SA)

Future 4 Wildlife

Global March for Elephants and Rhinos

Global White Lion Trust

Green Girls in Africa

Humane Society International (Africa)

Institute for Critical Animal Studies (Africa)

Landmark Foundation

OSCAP

SAFCEI (Southern African Faith Communities' Environment Institute)

SEA SHEPHERD

Southern African Fight for Rhinos

Vervet Monkey Foundation

WildAid Southern Africa

