

Trophy Hunting: The Tuli Safari Circle in Zimbabwe

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ABSTRACT Trophy hunting is a controversial activity which takes place in a contested socio-economic and natural-wildlife environment. The contestations revolve around issues of development, conservation, sustainability, ownership and distribution of resources. An investigation of stakeholders' perceptions on these issues, within the developmental agenda of Zimbabwe, is the main aim of the study. Through a series of stakeholder interviews it is concluded that whilst local people prioritize the making of economic gains from their environmental resources, government officials and the National Parks authority are more concerned with environmental protection and sustainability. The game farmer or concession holder's priorities are mainly sustainability and profit and the clients' primary objective is to derive satisfaction from hunting down a worthy trophy. In practice, the differences and similarities in environmental perceptions of stakeholders in the Tuli Safari Circle affect decision making realities in light of economic, developmental and sustainability issues. Whilst common perceptions across stakeholders could lead to effective policy making and achieve sustainability, balancing the diverse interests of the various stakeholders to the satisfaction of all remains a difficult objective.