

AFRICAT COMMUNITY SUPPORT LIVESTOCK PROTECTION PROGRAMME 2010

2004 saw the start of the AfriCat Human-Wildlife Conflict Mitigation programme on communal farmland in the Kunene Region.

Attempts at repairing the boundary fence between communal farmland and adjacent Hobatere and Etosha Parks proved unsuccessful due to the fact that wildlife movement or migration, especially that of elephant in search of water, should not be blocked. A lesson learned brought the AfriCat Livestock Protection Programme to the fore, whereby livestock farmers are encouraged to concentrate on employing herdsmen, up-grade their holding kraals (pens) and bringing their herds home to kraals at night, ultimately reducing livestock losses to marauding predators.

A number of generous donations over the years enabled AfriCat North to purchase rolls of mesh and steel wire, and in 2009, the first goat kraal was up-graded on the communal farm Marienhöhe, to the west of the Etosha National Park. During the first half of 2010, two cattle kraals on communal farmland were up-graded and family Uribe received 24 goats from AfriCat North, as compensation for high losses to marauding lions and in support of their commitment to the AfriCat Livestock Protection Programme.

This programme encourages improved livestock management and farming techniques. Effective, well-planned herd management will produce higher quality livestock allowing for improved mass and higher prices fetched at auctions.

By improving on their livestock protection methods, both communal and commercial farming communities will lose less livestock and, with continued support and education, these communities will destroy fewer lions.



Left: The Uribe family hold skulls, representative of the lion attack on livestock on 07 July 2008.

Note the weak, low kraal in the background and the granite rock, which the lions used as a springboard to scale the kraal fence.



Right: AfriCat North donated mesh and steel wire to Jeremias and Maria in support of their commitment to AfriCat's Livestock Protection Programme. The Uribe family joined this programme in 2004, playing a vital role in the fence repair and maintenance project initiated by AfriCat (then Afri-Leo). Their commitment to change was evident in their adoption of AfriCat's 'herding-and-kraaling' programme, whereby a herdsman was employed to protect their goats during the day and penning / kraaling them at night.

Despite their efforts, approximately 6 lions from the adjacent game reserve scaled the kraal fence one night in July 2008, killing the entire herd of 47 goats. This huge financial set-back of approximately N\$25000.00 initiated the AfriCat Farmer Support Fund, whereby farmers who commit to the AfriCat

Programme could be compensated should their livestock be killed, despite their adopting the livestock protection guidelines.



Left: The newly up-graded goat kraal with increased fence height of 2.3 metres and mesh wire stretching to the same height and secured at the base with large rocks. To effectively prevent lions from jumping into the kraals it is imperative to have a fence higher than two metres. Phase 2 includes packing a 2½ metre barrier of acacia (thorn) bush around the exterior base, hereby increasing protection from digging and burrowing predators such as jackal and hyaena.

July 30th 2010 saw the first AfriCat-sponsored goat herd in their new home, the up-graded kraal.

Right: Family Urib proudly displayed the ear tags, a necessary method of identification, officially recognised by the Ministries of Veterinary Service and Agriculture.



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AfriCat North
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