

CO-EXISTING WITH NATURE IN A SUSTAINABLE AND BUSH-FRIENDLY MANNER

A GPNR forum on guidelines relating to the interaction between humans and the natural environment

Guidelines 3 and 4 from our Constitution:

- 1. To allow the unhindered movement of game (clause 7.7.1)**
- 2. To act at all times in line with the ethos of a nature reserve and not to disturb fauna, flora or any other Members (clause 11.1)**

Comments received from readers (abbreviated)

- 1. To allow the unhindered movement of game** means that all obstacles should be removed to create a broader wildlife community and a more entire ecosystem. This obviously means removing fences (only one to go) and obsolete gates, but in a wider sense should also include the removal of “plot-rot” or old wire, rusting metal, rubbish pits, old reservoirs and any other thing which could hinder or injure game.

To act at all times in line with the ethos of a nature reserve and not to disturb fauna, flora or any other Members:

All of us who have chosen to live in the bush are responsible for preservation of this environment. **And selective responsibility is not an option.** If we all excuse ourselves from one or two points, we will destroy this bush we love. Keep in mind that we are fortunate to live in the Greater Kruger, **and yet you would complain bitterly if you experienced in the Kruger some of what you are doing on your land.**

- Minimise noise, as honestly, who wants to hear dogs barking and roosters crowing in the Kruger Park?

- Be sensitive to visual pollution. Before you build any structure on your land, consider the visual impact it will have on others. Would you like to look every day onto your type of structure on your neighbour's property?
- Therefore, remove derelict structures, wrap highly visible water tanks in latte poles, and keep lights pointing downwards - and switch off those spotlights.
- Remove invasive plants from your land. The most common are cacti (queen of the night, prickly pear, devils rope) and syringa or bessiesboom. (*Melia azedarach*). Birds eat the syringa berries and spread the seeds. The continual eradication of this plant in the Kruger is time consuming and expensive. Actually, the berries and leaves are poisonous to animals and humans.
- Please don't introduce non-indigenous plant species to your gardens.
- Do not feed animals.
- Running a business which is not pertinent to a game reserve will devalue the reserve.

2. I decided to keep it simple and look at what is actually happening on Grietjie, for example:

Content removed to protect land owners.

- 3. To allow the unhindered movement of game:** To be as unobtrusive towards game as possible, within the confines of one's own property or when travelling in a vehicle on the Reserve. Do not encroach upon the obvious immediate territory, or cross the path of the game in a manner which could startle, threaten, frighten or cause game to take flight, or react in an aggressive manner. Allow the peaceful and relaxed movement of game at all times.

To act at all times in line with the ethos of a nature reserve: To "tread lightly" at all times, treating the land as a scarce and irreplaceable resource, always cognizant of the fact that it belongs to future generations, and should eventually be left in a better state than the one in which we found it.

4. To allow the unhindered movement of game:

- Each landowner should ensure that any manmade structures (especially fences, buildings etc.) has the smallest possible footprint and does not unnecessarily impede the thoroughfare of wildlife.

- All persons should act in such a manner as to reduce their impact on the natural movements of wildlife. For example, affording animals enough space to cross a road unhindered by not cutting them off or not approaching them so closely as to force them to alter their direction.
- Any artificial source of food or water is technically a hindrance in the NATURAL movement of game.

To act at all times in line with the ethos of a nature reserve:

- Maintaining an awareness of the impact of your actions on everyone and everything other than yourself.
- The objective of a Nature Reserve is to protect Nature and maintain its integrity by LEAVING natural components as intact as possible by not removing/disturbing anything, *thus don't*.

Thank you for your contributions