

HOW THE FARMING OF ENDANGERED SPECIES CAN SAVE THEM FROM EXTINCTION

Windhoek, Namibia
13 September 2016

Ross Hyland
Hamilton, New Zealand
ross@rosshyland.co.nz

Introduction

Ladies and Gentlemen, what a thrill to be in Namibia.

Today I want to run you through three New Zealand examples and outcomes that I believe have lessons for South Africa, CITES and the world on how you can save the Rhino.

I have read the wildly fluctuating views and global commentary. I have even read about the court cases and divergence of views within South Africa about whether to legalise the Rhino horn trade or not. In my view you have no option. Since placing the moratorium on horn trade in 2008, poaching has exploded.

However, farming Rhino and legalising the Rhino horn trade will only be successful if you wrap it up in carefully evaluated and strict set of protocols from the farm to the market. This is the lesson from New Zealand.

I have read about re-locating animals to safe havens, skyrocketing security costs, stem cell reproduction, even 3D printing of horn; but none address the twin outcomes that come with **perception** and **profitability**.

Perception

- We have all heard that with perception comes reality.
- In the case of Rhino horn you have people such as the Vietnamese and Chinese believing all sorts of idiotic health kicks and miraculous outcomes that have zero basis of any kind.
- Rhino horn is Keratin, the same stuff that makes up human finger and toe nails, horse or cows hooves.
- My advice to the users of Rhino horn is to save up and boil your own toenail clippings and slice and dice and make your own medicines and herbal potions. It will certainly save you an awful lot of money.
- Sadly, they have ignored all the scientific evidence to date, so we simply have to find another way to skin this cat.
- For me farming these magnificent animals is the only genuine and long term solution to saving the Rhino from extinction.

Farming Rhino Profitably

- ▶ Commercial farming of Rhino is the only credible long term solution. Not only can income be generated from horn sales, but also game ranching for tourism is obvious.
- ▶ In my view you need to be farming as many Rhino as are left in the wild today, that's a minimum of 20,000 farmed Rhino. This will require a significant breeding programme and will only be successful with a serious injection of cash to support this initiative. People, CITES and Governments need to refocus attention, energy and resources to a farmed programme.
- ▶ We know the Rhino's horn grows back over 2-3 years after removal.
- ▶ Thus, these farmed Rhino could deliver 20 tonne of horn onto the market, a 7x to 8 fold increase over todays illegal trade of some 2.5 tonnes pa.(plus the stockpiles that are in secure storage could be leaked back into a legalised trade.
- ▶ Current prices of reportedly USD \$60,000-\$100,000 per Kg would crash to a realistic level that would still make returns from farming attractive.
- ▶ Importantly, putting your life at risk as a poacher would be decidedly less attractive if the current ridiculous financial rewards are slashed and the animal was worth more alive than DEAD.
- ▶ SO HOW CAN WE DO THIS? Here's three examples that hold lessons for you.

Sustainable, Commercial, Profitable

Mesopotamia Station; Rangitata NZ

High Peak Station; Windwhistle NZ

Ngamatea Station; Taihape/Napier NZ

#1 Mesopotamia Station



Mesopotamia Station, Headwaters of Rangitata River; Southern Alps New Zealand

- ▶ Owners; Malcolm and Sue Prouting
- ▶ Area; 26,000 Ha's (64,250 acres). 5000 hectares freehold and 21,000 hectares of DOC hunting concession.
- ▶ Mesopotamia operate commercial hunting for Himalayan Tahr, (including a small number of incredibly rare white tahr) Chamois, red and fallow deer and Rams.
- ▶ In addition to the hunting operation the property runs 10,500 merino sheep producing 40 tonne of fine 19 micron wool, 3000 Red deer producing 3 tonne of deer velvet and 350 Angus cows plus young stock.

Mesopotamia Station

- ▶ Wild Himalayan Tahr are incredibly difficult to manage or handle and as such selection is confined to culling females to maintain a stable population in the wild herd.
- ▶ Mesopotamia have some 450 Himalayan Tahr and aim to grow 12 inch plus horned Bull Tahr for its hunting clientele.
- ▶ The terrain is difficult and almost impossible to prevent outside poachers from getting access, although the mountains themselves are a natural impediment for all but the dedicated hunter.
- ▶ With their Himalayan Tahr, Chamois, red and fallow stags, and Ram's; Malcom and Sue offer extraordinary multi specie options for the dedicated Hunter

**Himalayan Tahr New
Zealand's Southern
Alps**



Himalayan Tahr on Mesopotamia Station



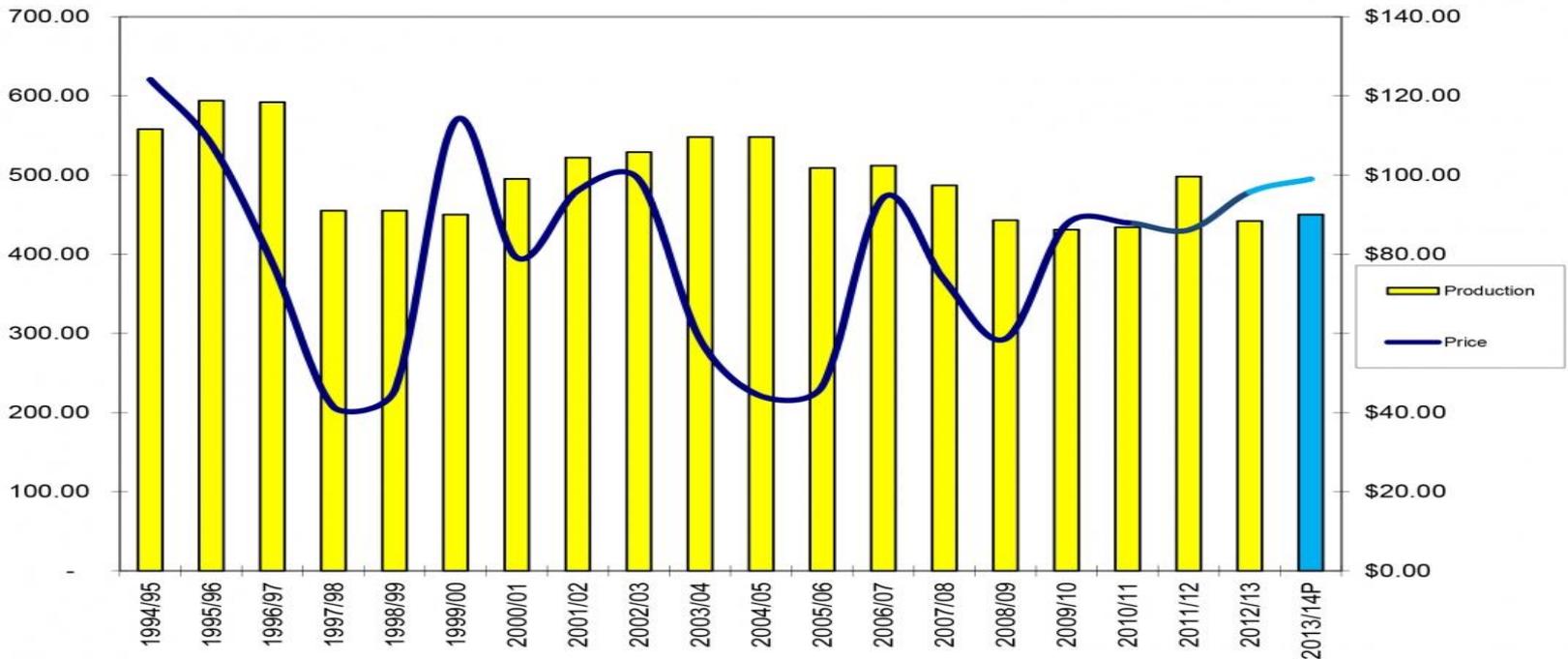
Himalayan Tahr on Mesopotamia



How Can A Pathway Through Farming Protect the Endangered Animal ?

- ▶ I believe the New Zealand (NZ) experience with farmed deer is the classic example of what can be achieved with the African Rhino and save it from extinction.
- ▶ The deer horn or antler is in fact harvested at what's known as the velvet stage and over the past 40 years the industry has now matured into a highly successful export enterprise.
- ▶ This has been supported by scientific research programmes that look in depth and detail at the medicinal and herbal impacts and or outcomes of deer velvet. This research has been sustained in New Zealand for the past 40 years and has discovered unique health benefit properties in NZ velvet.
- ▶ In addition, NZ has developed an entire legal and animal welfare system second to none around the harvest, export and sale of approximately 250 tonne of deer velvet per annum.
- ▶ Last year NZ farmed deer accounted for FOB \$185m USD in total exports with \$125m in venison, \$30m of velvet and \$22m of bi-products such as pizzles and sinews.

New Zealand Deer Velvet Pricing Over Past 20 Years



Animal Welfare is the Key to Legalising the Trade of Rhino Horn from Farmed Animals.

- ▶ Developing and maintaining animal welfare standards will be critical.
- ▶ Greater knowledge, changing public attitudes and social media, mean that decisions must be backed by credible science, as they are all keys to breaking current perceptions and thinking.
- ▶ Global human populations have tremendous empathy for wildlife and this is especially so around Africa's 'Big 5' large animals. You will only be able to 'tap into' these reserves of global goodwill if you have got the model right that puts animal welfare first.
- ▶ The public's support and acceptance of the harvesting of horn from farmed Rhino will only ever come on the back of the best animal welfare protocols available.
- ▶ CITES means well, was set up for all the right reasons, but there is growing recognition that its 'blanket ban mantra' has failed the very animals it was aimed to protect and especially Rhino.

Farm Protocols and Pathways Toward Acceptance

- ▶ Farmers must be put through rigorous practical and oral animal handling and welfare testing regimes. Not because they need to be told how to farm these animals as many of you are already onto it.
- ▶ However, it will require such rigorous and robust testing regimes supported by; farmers, vets, politicians, CITES and all stakeholders alike; only then will a perception of fairness and doing what's right prevail. And this has to be supported by Government regulation.
- ▶ The reasons testing, certification and enforceable record keeping are so important is it will provide the catalyst for both getting the support of the wider public, but also to grow consumer trust for a legalised channel.
- ▶ Veterinarians and farmers must enter into enforceable contracts for animal welfare practices and the supply, storage and use of prescription drugs to ensure the animals receive the very best care and attention possible.
- ▶ Farmers must ensure accurate, reliable and current records are kept up to date and all individual 'sticks' or horn are tagged with tamper proof tags or bands for full traceability. (And of course DNA tests are another tool to ensure this full traceability and identity).

A Licenced Register of Legalised Farmers and or Traders must be developed.

- ▶ Tamper proof tags and bands provide the opportunity to match the product with the farm and or the farmer along the entire supply chain.
- ▶ Bar coding, chipping, bluetooth and wireless transmitters are all modern technologies that can be downloaded from the farm to the wholesaler, the exporter, the nutraceutical manufacturer 'in market' and ultimately the consumer can validate 'farm and country of origin' at point of sale or purchase.
- ▶ This provides the framework for Government to Government protocols to be set in place for the establishment of a legal trading environment. This again sets in motion the legal framework with full traceability that will choke off illicit and illegal trade.
- ▶ The NZ Velvet market failed initially to put in place a tightly regulated pathway to market. Most of the volatility in the price point graph above was a result of ticket clippers and intermediaries that manipulated the market and farm gate price.
- ▶ No more excuses, no more dark illicit trading. With a legalised Rhino horn trade, you have the chance to build a genuine and legitimate pathway with appropriate regulations, supported by inter Government agencies and finally to grow this opportunity into a sustainable and profitable commercial business.

**Sue Prouting and
Her Excellency Mrs
Zodwa Lallie, the
South African High
Commissioner to NZ
on Mesopotamia
Station**



Malcolm Prouting inspecting sticks of NZ red spiker velvet with Mrs Lallie and Sue



Sue Prouting with the High Commissioner Holding Individually Identified Sticks of New Zealand Velvet.





**Tamper Proof
Traceability ID
Band on Every
Stick of NZ
Velvet.**

**Farmed Red Deer on
Mesopotamia
Station, NZ**





**Mesopotamia Farmed
Red Deer and Sire Stag**

#2 High Peak Station, Rakaia Gorge Canterbury New Zealand

- ▶ Owners; James and Anna Guild and Family
- ▶ Total Area; 3800 hectares (9500 acres) and farm 18,000 stock units made up of sheep, beef and deer.
- ▶ The Rakaia Red deer in NZ originated from Stoke Park in the UK over 100 years ago. Stoke Park had also sourced progeny from Germany. As such many of the reds now on High Peak have Warnham, Woburn, Stoke and German bloodlines.
- ▶ Deer in NZ have no natural predators and the wild herds became the base stock for today's successful deer farming industry. The wild herd are targeted by local domestic hunters and or netted or shot from helicopters.
- ▶ High Peak's Hunting block >1600 hectares (4000 acres) and has some 1000 fallow and approximately 200 Red trophy stags throughout the block.

High Peak Station

- ▶ High Peak is a classic NZ example where the farming of a wild animals has resulted in tremendous genetic improvement resulting in hunting trophy heads that are spectacularly better than the original ancestry 100 plus years ago.
- ▶ High Peak's dedication to game animal management has resulted in significant increases in; bodyweight (almost double), body mass, antler weight and spread, with NZ deer breeders in general, now offering a larger genetic pool to draw from.
- ▶ However High Peak are also mindful that hunting operations can get singularly focused on a single genetic trait, Examples include antler size and the safari club international (SCI) scoring system. This single focus can lead to genetic issues and unforeseen outcomes over time if not managed properly.
- ▶ Objective breeding systems should consider; conformation, temperament, body size and shape, constitution, testicular size, libido and fertility.
- ▶ There can be dangers also lurking when focused on genetic oddities such as colour variants. Such pursuits could lead to unintended consequences.

100 Years of Selection at High Peak



High Peak's Hamish, James and Simon Guild



**High Peak's Hunting
Block looking West to
the Southern Alps**



**High Peaks Hunting
Lodge surrounded by
Black Beech Forest**



**High Peak's Hunting Guide and Game Manager
Simon Guild**



Red Deer Hinds On High Peak's Hunting Block



**High Peak's
Expansive
Hunting Block
Looking South**



Farmed Red Deer Stags at High Peak Station NZ



#3 Ngamatea Station

Napier Taihape Highway, Central North Island New Zealand

- ▶ Owners; The Apatu Family
- ▶ Area; 32,500 hectares (80,000 acres)
- ▶ Located ;headwaters of the Rangitikei River and bounds the Kaimanawa Mountain Range.
- ▶ Farms 55,000 crossbred sheep and 5500 cattle.
- ▶ Have a brilliant Sika and Red deer hunting operation alongside great trout fishing on the upper reaches of the Rangitikei River.(both rainbow and brown trout).
- ▶ Ngamatea actively manage the wild population of Sika deer at approximately 1500 head. And since introducing management programmes for the wild herd, Hunting and Game Manger Bruce Bates says carcase weights have nearly doubled to 30–35 Kgs with their best Sika trophy stags offering 6–8 points.
- ▶ Ngamatea’s management programmes have led to better conditioned hinds, improved oestrus and better fawning results even in the wild herds in the Kaimanawa Mountain Range. It is estimated NZ only has some 2500 Sika deer in total.
- ▶ Ngamatea also have Red deer within their hunting blocks.

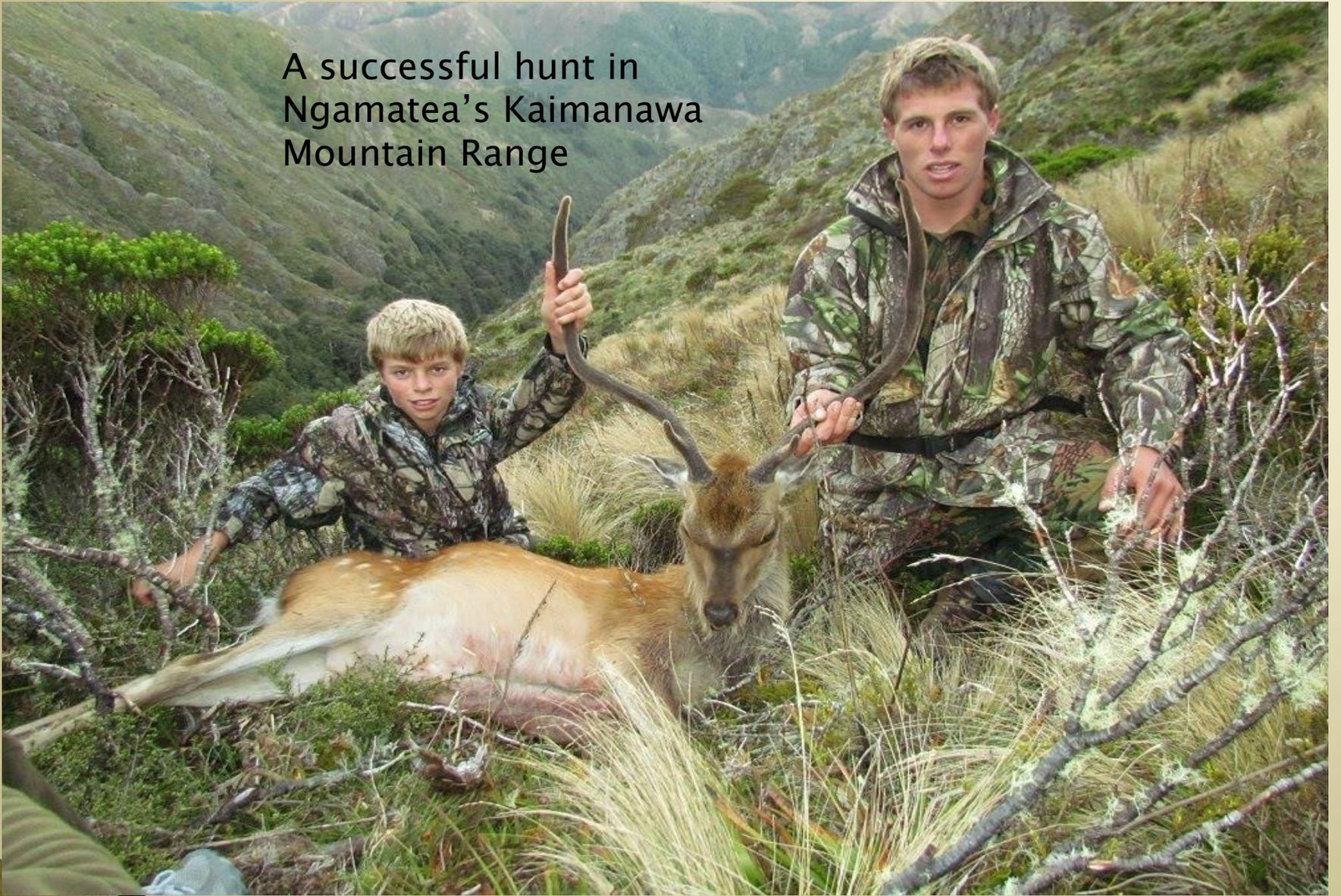


NGAMATEA

**A Sika Stag in open
range country on
Ngamatea.**



A successful hunt in
Ngamatea's Kaimanawa
Mountain Range



A Successful Hunt on Ngamatea





**Rainbow Trout
Ngamatea**

Ngamatea's Game Manager Bruce Bates



Summary

- ▶ I have given you three examples in New Zealand of how you can successfully manage wild game within a balanced ecosystem. In New Zealand's case we have taken what were essentially pests and turned them into a valuable resource under clear and tight animal welfare protocols.
- ▶ Imagine what you could do with an animal that the world really values. However, it will require a truly disciplined internationally managed supply chain. This would have huge influence and significance. A Haphazard one will be a disaster.
- ▶ Thirdly, I have shown you how the NZ deer velvet industry has thrived on the back of extensive in-depth regulations that ensure that only world best practice animal welfare outcomes are achieved at every stage of the animals lives.
- ▶ Fourthly, full traceability and tamper proof ID provides the customer with the knowledge that every stick of velvet purchased has come from a licenced operator and with full accreditation from the NZ Government. Cowboy operators and attempts to counterfeit product are largely shut out completely.
- ▶ Finally, if the Rhino is to be saved from extinction in the wild and from the carnage caused by poaching, then developing the pathways and protocols that will provide the building blocks for both farming of Rhino and a legalised horn trade is now more than critical, its literally the lifesaving of the species.

Another Endangered Species !!

- ▶ All Blacks versus Springboks under Quota's



All Blacks v Springboks try scoring highlights(1).mp4

Thank you, I look forward to answering your questions!

