

WRSA has been involved in several meetings this year to discuss and work with the Alsson Group and the Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment (DFFE) regarding the development of a voluntary, market driven certification scheme. The certification scheme can unlock many of the industry's challenges, if it is truly market driven by, and for, the industry. Much of the positive work in helping to create an enabling environment within the certification scheme has been overshadowed as well as compromised due to government inconsistencies. The release of the High-Level Panel Report, Draft Policy Position of the Conservation and Ecologically Sustainable Use of Elephant, Lion, Leopard and Rhinoceros, White Paper on Conservation and Sustainable Use of South Africa's Biodiversity and, most recently, the promulgation of the Revised Threatened or Protected Species Regulations and Lists, accompanied with the Norms and Standards for Elephant Management and Hunting of Leopard, all raise more questions than answers regarding government's intent.

What is becoming increasingly evident is that the DFFE is of the view that they can regulate the industry with overburdensome legislation, despite not having the capacity or manpower on the ground to support these proposed policies and regulations.

WRSA, will however continue to engage with the department regarding the certification scheme as it could potentially open the door towards self-administration. However, the process to negotiate the incentives for the game ranchers may take several months even years to finalise. Without effective incentives the certification Scheme will not be feasible.