

van der Walt P, Grisham J. 1989. Memorandum of understanding between Directorate of Nature Conservation and Recreation Resorts Department of Agriculture and Nature Conservation Namibia/South West Africa, and Species Survival Plan (SPP) for cheetah of the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums (AAZPA).

Keywords: 1NA/AAZPA/Acinonyx jubatus/agreement/AZA/captivity/cheetah/conservation program/MoU/project/Species Survival Plan/SSP/wildlife

Abstract: The purpose of this MoU is to formalize an agreement between the signatories to enter into a collaborative project of which the goal is to preserve and conserve the worldwide population of cheetah through a multidisciplinary conservation program both in the wild and in captivity. The Directorate of Nature Conservation and Recreation Resorts and the Department of Agriculture and Nature Conservation Namibia/South West Africa have agreed to place a number of opportunistically captured "problem animals" in the Species Survival Plan of the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums. The animals will be used to enhance significantly the SSP's masterplan of research and propagation which ultimately can and will provide reinforcement of wild populations of cheetah.

DEPARTEMENT VAN LANDBOU EN NATUURBEWARING  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURE CONSERVATION

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EN ONTSPANNINGSOORDE



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U verw. nr. / Your ref. no.

Mr. Jack Grisham : Chairman : SSP Propagation Group  
Ms. Laurie Marker : Cheetah Studbook Keeper  
c/o : Dr. S. O'Brien (per hand)

Dear Ms. Marker

Enclosed please find a preliminary draft proposal for the suggested importation of 50 wild caught cheetah from SWA/Namibia to North-America.

This project was discussed in detail by this directorate and the three AAZPA-SSP-cheetah group advisors : Dr. S.O'Brien, D.Wildt and M.Bush on the 21 October 1988 in Windhoek.

This directorate now awaits the official confirmation from your organization for this project as outlined in the attached proposal. As soon as this confirmation is received we will submit the proposal to our next Nature Conservation Board Meeting in March, and the Cabinet of SWA/Namibia thereafter.

We look forward to be hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. P. van der Walt  
Deputy Director

for: DIRECTOR : Nature Conservation and Recreation Resorts

THE DONATION OF 50 WILD CAUGHT CHEETAH FROM THE  
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DIRECTORATE OF NATURE CONSERVATION OF SWA/NAMIBIA  
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TO THE AAZPA - SSP-CHEETAH GROUP IN THE U.S.A.  
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A. INTRODUCTION :  
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This project was initiated by Laurie Marker of Wildlife Safari with a request to this directorate in 1984, to import cheetah from SWA/Namibia as AAZPA critically needed new founding stock for the captive breeding programme in North America. (See copy of letter dated 20/1/'84)

This directorate expressed it's willingness to partake in such an export of "wild" cheetah caught - and due to be shot - as stock marauding individuals on privately owned farmland. (See copies of letters dated 12/4/'84; 15/9/'84; 24/4/'85)

In August 1987 discussions were held in Windhoek between the top management of this directorate and Mrs. Marker on the conditions and general outline for this project. It was decided that the AAZPA - SSP-cheetah group would provide financial assistance for the expenses incurred by this directorate in obtaining and exporting the animals. It was also mentioned that this directorate would appreciate a donation from the AAZPA- SSP-cheetah group as their contribution towards the future research and management of the cheetah in SWA/Namibia - and for the "privilege" of obtaining specimens of an internationally endangered species for their captive breeding programme.

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING****Between****DIRECTORATE OF NATURE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION RESORTS  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURE CONSERVATION  
NAMIBIA/SOUTH WEST AFRICA****And****SPECIES SURVIVAL PLAN (SSP) FOR CHEETAH  
OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF ZOOLOGICAL PARKS AND AQUARIUMS (AAZPA)****Preamble**

The cheetah, Acinonyx jubatus, is an increasingly endangered species. In the wild, the pressures of human population growth and development are intensifying and are necessitating more innovative approaches by conservationists to insure the successful co-existence of this predator with people. In captivity, which will be important to the long-term survival of this species, a much more vigorous program of research, management, and propagation is required to develop self-sustaining populations capable of reinforcing conservation efforts in the wild.

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding is to formalize an agreement between the signatories to enter into a collaborative project of which the goal is to preserve and conserve the worldwide population of cheetah through a multidisciplinary conservation program both in the wild and in captivity.

The program would involve the implementation of several conservation initiatives in Namibia including management, education, and stabilization of wild cheetah populations with the ultimate aim of balancing the legitimate interests of private land and livestock owners in Namibia with the conservation interest of the African cheetah. Preservation of cheetah on private lands will almost certainly be important to maintain viable populations of such a large predator, which require vast home ranges. Protected sanctuaries may simply not be large enough to accommodate the numbers of cheetah necessary for long-term survival.

However, permitting cheetahs to occupy private lands used for livestock has created problems. A clear regulatory element for cheetah populations seems to be the occurrence of other large carnivores, namely lions and hyena in the same habitat. The private lands where cheetah management is being attempted in Namibia has neither of these predators, which has apparently led to an abnormally high cheetah proliferation on the private lands. The cheetah's increase has in turn caused intensified livestock attacks by marauding cheetahs which find livestock attractive prey.

The removal of such "problem animals" is the charge of the Directorate of Nature Conservation and Recreation Resorts, and this agency has chosen to solve this problem in the joint interests of Namibian citizens and of species conservation. They have agreed to place a number of opportunistically captured "problem" cheetahs in the Species Survival Plan of the American Association of Zoological Parks & Aquariums. These animals will be used to enhance significantly the SSP's masterplan of research and propagation which ultimately can and will provide reinforcement of wild populations of cheetah.

**I. OBJECTIVES:**

1. Preserve and conserve the worldwide population of cheetah, Acinonyx jubutus, by initiation of a multidisciplinary conservation program.
2. Contribute to the continued survival of cheetah on private lands in Namibia as an important component of the overall wild population by eliminating certain problem animals that jeopardize co-existence of cheetahs and humans.
3. Further contribute to the in situ conservation of cheetah in the wild by providing both financial and technical support from the zoo community in North America to wildlife managers in Namibia.
4. Provide animals to enhance the captive program of research and propagation, which will ultimately reinforce conservation efforts of cheetah in the wild.

**II. RESPONSIBILITIES AND RIGHTS:**

1. Directorate of Nature Conservation and Recreation Resorts/Namibia will:
  - A. Donate up to 50 cheetah removed as "problem" animals from private lands within the area being managed for cheetah conservation.
  - B. Identify "problem" animals which are defined as "marauding cheetahs which represent a clear and present threat to livestock and human populations in the areas of private land under management for cheetah conservation in Namibia."
  - C. Provide personnel for the capture, care, and requested medical sampling of cheetahs prior to their relocation from Namibia to the United States of America.
  - D. Provide holding facilities for cheetah so removed until their relocation from Namibia to the United States of America. Such holding facilities will be inspected and approved in advance by representatives of the Cheetah SSP.
  - E. Provide and arrange for all transportation within Namibia for the cheetah from capture to their embarkation by air from Namibia to the United States of America.
  - F. Construct all transport and export containers (cages) as well as any other holding or transit facilities as requested by the Cheetah SSP.
  - G. Provide all permits and documents required by the Government of Namibia for export of the cheetah to the United States of America.
  - H. Furnish accounting of all expenses incurred in the capture, handling, transport, and holding of the cheetah.

2. The Cheetah Species Survival Plan (SSP) will:

- A. Contribute funds to the Directorate of Nature Conservation and Recreation Resorts of Namibia for their programs of conservation management on the cheetah.
- B. Pay for all logistical and exceptional administrative expenses incurred for capture, handling, transport, and holding of "problem" cheetah in Namibia.
- C. Pay for all costs of medical sampling from and inoculations to the cheetah while in Namibia.
- D. Perform or provide for, including payment of all costs, all analyses whether conducted within Namibia or exported to North America.
- E. Promptly accept for the SSP program all "problem" cheetah so captured with the exception of:
  - a) any animal determined to be infected with feline infectious peritonitis coronavirus or feline distemper-parvleukopenia based on a serum antibody test;
  - b) any male animal discovered to be azospermic, i.e. lacking functional spermatazoa based upon semen evaluation;
  - c) any animal manifesting clearly recognized health problems as revealed by clinical examination.
- F. Provide an inspection/research team to visit Namibia on several occasions to inspect facilities, arrange for protocols, etc.
- G. Be responsible for obtaining all permits and documents required by the United States of America for importation of the cheetah.
- H. Provide any advice or information as requested by the Directorate of Nature Conservation and Recreation Research which may help implement the cheetah conservation plan.
- I. Incorporate the imported cheetah into the SSP's Masterplan for research and propagation of the cheetah by placing them into several cheetah facilities designated as research centers which will manage these animals as colonies dedicated to research and propagation of the cheetah.

### III. START-UP

The collaborative program will commence once all parties have signed the Memorandum of Understanding and once a CITES/Endangered Species Act import permit has been issued by the Government of the United States of America.

### IV. DURATION

This Memorandum of Understanding will be in effect until 50 "problem" cheetah have been removed from Namibia to North America or for a period of 5 years, whichever occurs first. If at the end of 5 years, 50 cheetah have not been relocated from Namibia to North America, the Parties may consider extension of this Memorandum of Understanding for a period of time mutually agreeable.

### V. TERMINATION

This Memorandum of Understanding will remain in effect until expiration or termination. Either party may terminate this Memorandum of Understanding at any time for any reason by providing 60 days advance notification in writing to the other party.

The participants enter into this agreement freely with the support and approval of their respective agencies and agree to implement all cheetah transfers in compliance with national regulations on endangered species as well as international guidelines stated by the Confederation for International Trade on Endangered Species.

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P. van der Walt  
Deputy Director for  
Directorate of Nature Conservation and  
Recreation Research  
Department of Agriculture and Nature  
Conservation

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Jack Grisham  
SSP Species Coordinator for  
Species Survival Plan (SSP)  
for Cheetah  
AAZPA