

## **On the occasion of the TGA Breakfast Session (Pretoria Country Club. 20.05.2016)**

**Attending: Wiaan van der Linde (WRSA); Stan Burger (PHASA); Fred Camphor & Andre van der Merwe (SAHGCA); Neels Geldenhys (Editor, African Outfitter magazine; Magda Naude (TGA's media representative and advisor); Elma Britz (TGA. Organiser and acting P.A. to the TGA's-acting President)**

Good morning ladies & gentlemen,

I would like to welcome you all and thank you for coming to this breakfast gathering – for which we have to thank Tommy Frazer and Villacrop. Tommy and I have been working together for over a year now – striving to get the TRUE GREEN ALLIANCE (TGA) off the ground; and I value the huge support and encouragement that he has given me in that time. Thank you Tommy! You have been one of the most significant stepping stones on our journey to this point of advancement.

The TRUE GREEN ALLIANCE – a new NGO – came into being on the 27<sup>th</sup> February 2016 when its four founding members signed its legally constructed constitution. The Founding members – besides myself – include Ian and Lisette Withers of the Knysna Elephant Park and their lawyer, Franz Fischer of Knysna. A three man Board of Directors was created – with an interim President and an interim CEO. All these factors were prerequisites to the TGA's formal application for registration with the South African government as a Non-Profit Organisation (NPO/NPC) (and later, with SARS, as a Public Benefit Organisation (PBO)). We can do nothing until legal status is granted, which we anticipate will take place by June. Only then can a bank account be opened in the TGA's name; and only then can we solicit memberships and donations – which will all be tax deductible.

The TGA's official inaugural meeting will be held immediately following confirmation of its NPO status. The Board will then be expanded to five directors – in terms of legal prescriptions; and final appointments for the positions of President and CEO will be determined. The CEO will be employed under contract for five years.

In front of you are four documents: (1). The TGA manifesto – which includes its Vision and Mission statements; (2) a TGA Position Statement (following on behind the manifesto) outlining the TGA's assessment of the animal rights doctrine; (3) a somewhat dated proposal entitled “The African Wildlife Initiative Programme” (AWIP) (The TGA fully endorses the AWIP initiative which, basically, prescribes the integration of the needs of our national parks with the needs of their neighbour communities); and (4), finally, a copy of a small booklet – “Managing Our Wildlife Heritage” – which

explains the principles and practices of science-based wildlife management. The essence of these four documents forms the cornerstones of TGA's beliefs and goals.

The TGA already believes that it is an integral element of the wildlife industries of southern Africa – insofar as its primary endeavour will be directed towards upholding their business interests and ethos in the public domain. TGA supports ethical hunting; wildlife harvesting; and fully transparent sustainable trade – local and international – in wild animals, wild plants, and their products. But the TGA is not a formal component of the industry and it has no ambitions to be such. We have absolutely no interest in interfering in the domestic affairs of its various institutions, or becoming involved in whatever internecine disputes erupt between them. TGA has not been created to pass judgment on any of its allies. The TGA sees its main contribution to the industry as being a focused attack on our common enemy – the animal rights brigade.

Whether you support ONLY what you call ethical hunting – that is, free-range/fair-chase hunting; whether you support – or not – the breeding and hunting of colour variant animals, or animals which have been selectively bred for the production of big trophies; whether you support, or not, what is now being called 'ranch lion hunting' – formerly 'canned lion hunting'; whether you are a wildlife rancher who breeds animals for sale into the industry, or who breeds white rhinos and cuts off their horns for sale into a possible future international rhino horn market – everybody has the same animal rights movement threatening their livelihoods. It is that common enemy which the TGA will be aiming to destroy.

It shall be the TGA's primary purpose, therefore, to totally discredit the doctrine of animal rightsism within the public domain. It will best be able to achieve this from the periphery; and that is where we wish to remain because that is where our attentions will be focussed.

We intend to emasculate (destroy) the animal rights brigade at every turn: by constantly negating every utterance it makes; by revealing to the public the iniquities of its pernicious philosophy; by exposing the false statements in its propaganda; and by constantly warning society that if it takes up the animal rightists' cause it will be consorting with racketeers, organised crime and the biggest confidence industry the world has ever known.

We also plan to achieve our goals by re-educating the public with regard to the principles and practices of science-based wildlife management ('conservation') and the wisdom of sustainable utilisation – which is in total contradiction of everything that the animal rightists propose. TGA intends to include within the alliance those elements of agriculture that deal with domestic animal husbandry – which are also animal rightist targets. We want society to understand that it is not ONLY wildlife that is on the animal rightists' chopping block. Domestic animal husbandry, too, is an equally vulnerable target. We intend, therefore, to inculcate in society's mind the fact that wild

and domestic animals are, respectively, WILD and TAME 'products of the land' and that BOTH should be used wisely and sustainably for the benefit (survival) of mankind. By combining both these 'living resources' as valid subjects for protection against animal rights abuse, TGA believes it will have a much wider avenue of opportunities to expose and to condemn the common enemy.

The success of TGA and its credibility within society will require that we establish a broad-based 'alliance', with members representing a wide range of associated corporations and as many individuals as possible.

The TGA Board believes that unless the rabid animal rights brigade can be brought to heel, not one single facet of today's wildlife industry will survive. The animal rightists are winning – all over the world – because people like you and me have given them an open field on which to play – without any opposition – for the last 30 or 40 years. And on that field they have been winning over the hearts and minds of our society. The TGA proposes that the wildlife industry – and society at large – should support it as the one and only opposing team that has ever been put onto that playing field.

In America, the all powerful National Rifle Association (NRA) – representing the hunters of America – is currently girding its loins for what it hopes will be a powerful and successful last ditch stand to fight off an aggressive animal rights bid to ban all hunting in the United States. The NRA is taking this challenge very seriously. So much so that, earlier this month, the association approached me to solicit my support in its campaign to help ward off the onslaught. Apparently, there are a number of NRA members who have become avid readers of my series of articles in the African OUTFITTER magazine – entitled: "Africa's Wildlife Armageddon" – and they have asked me to contribute something in the same vein for their own 'American Hunter' magazine.

I have no doubt, that once the TGA succeeds in southern Africa it will "go global" – which the Canadians have recommended. They believe that the whole world needs such an organisation. But we have to start somewhere. And the best place to start is right here at home. It is my fervent wish, therefore, that ALL the components of our wildlife industry will immediately join the alliance – and help us fight our common enemy. The TGA doesn't promise immediate success but we undertake to do our damndest to achieve our goals.

Ladies and gentleman, I don't know if you appreciate just how much of a fix 'we' are really in. All the indications are that the animal rights brigade is preparing to launch a full blown attack this year: (1) on hunting – all over the world; (2) on South Africa's wildlife industry in particular; and (3) they will be proposing a universal wildlife trade ban at the CITES convention later this year. And they are, regrettably, aided and abetted by the current American administration. I won't bore you with the details of all that has happened over the last 12 months. But this year CITES looms and I think we are all in for a shock – with regard to what the enemy has planned for that ridiculous

circus in September. By then we want the TGA to be fully operational so that we can – legitimately as “an alliance” – counteract the animal rightists’ proposals at that meeting.

Take your cue from the NRA. They are gearing themselves up for some very heavy fighting. And I don’t blame them. The opposition, seemingly, have got all their ducks in a row – whilst we hunters and game ranchers are still in battle disarray.

What southern African hunters and game ranchers have accomplished in the last 25 years approaches the miraculous; but it will all be dashed if we don’t start fighting the opposition immediately. If the animal rightists succeed in banning American hunters from taking their trophies from South Africa back home with them, the southern African wildlife industry will collapse. We simply can’t allow that to happen. It is for that reason that the TGA will give the NRA its full support.

Now... Something none of us want to experience! When our grandchildren become discerning adults – when they realise the magnitude and grandeur of the wildlife industry that their grandparents created in THEIR youth – and when they see it destroyed and lying in ruins – we don’t want to hear them say: “Grandpa/Granny – We don’t understand! When you KNEW how destructive the animal rightist NGOs were, why did you do nothing about them? Why did you just sit back and let it all happen?”

Never forget: **“Evil prevails wherever good men do nothing!”**

I have said enough. All I now ask of you is: Give the TGA a chance to prove its worth. Let it represent you in the looming battle against the animal rights brigade. With your support “our team” will win. Without your support we will ALL lose.

**Ron Thomson**  
**Acting President, TRUE GREEN ALLIANCE**

**FOOTNOTE:** Everybody present at the breakfast table that morning pledged their organisations’ support for the TGA.

**GLOSSARY:**

**WRSA** = Wildlife Ranching South Africa

**PHASA** = Professional Hunters Association of South Africa

**SAHGCA** = South African Hunters and Game Conservation Association.