

Veld & Wildlife Management

FACT SHEET

Introduction

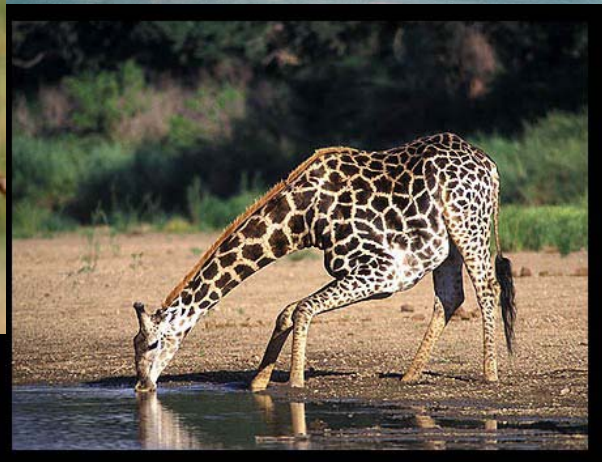
Palabora is dedicated to the protection of the environment in which its activities are conducted. We are particularly conscious of our proximity to the Kruger National Park and the abundance of flora and fauna in the area and attempt to promote harmonious co-existence of people, industry and wildlife through education and responsible management.

Situational Analysis

The nature of the operations at Palabora involves the use and reuse of large amounts of water on a daily basis. This has resulted in many water bodies on the property, which naturally attract wildlife, in particular during the drier months of the year between May and December. This is particularly the case with elephants, hippos and buffalo, which are classified as bulk grazers. This results in an increased demand for grazing material in the form of grass and bush foliage. Because of the open fence system on the southern end of the property, it is difficult to control the numbers of the bulk grazers during the drier months. This in turn often results in overgrazing and puts undue pressure on the vegetation.

Wildlife & Veld Management System

Palabora believes in gathering data so that informed decisions can be made on how to manage the wildlife and indirectly the vegetation component. Information on the wildlife is gathered on a daily real-time basis using a computer palmtop with a global positioning system. Types of information gathered are sightings of animals, birds, reptiles, frogs, trees, alien plants, spoor, diseased animals, carcasses, presence of water, erosion, poaching, tourism and environmental incidents. Each of these aspects can be described in more detail, depending on the specific nature of the sighting. This information has assisted



management in making decisions in the capture and relocation of either problem animals or where there are too many of a species on site, i.e. elephant, buffalo and hippo.

An annual game census is also conducted giving a total picture of animals present on the ground at that particular time. An ecological survey is also done annually allowing the evaluation of the interaction of the wildlife with the vegetation. This allows for trend analysis to be done also taking climatic conditions into account. The grass parameters are compared with neighbouring reserves, estimates of food availability are made and a projection of herbivore biomass is made.

This information is used to calculate a stocking rate for herbivores and is compared to the actual numbers recorded. From this a management decision can be made as to whether any game relocation should take place or not.

Poaching, Problem animals & Diseases

Palabora has trained game rangers who can identify and address issues of poaching and problem animals. Problem animals are reported to the local Nature Conservation authorities, evaluated and appropriate action taken where necessary. Diseases are identified with the assistance of the local veterinary services and the necessary precautions are taken in order to ensure that the disease does not spread any further.



Veld Management

The average annual rainfall in the Phalaborwa region is approximately 530mm. In most seasons it is not necessary to interfere with the vegetation status. It is only when a few consecutive seasons have had above average rainfall that a burning programme will be planned and actioned. Burning under normal conditions at Palabora is most often regarded as a last resort as it is not often needed. The most critical factor is the control of bulk grazers who determine the extent of grazing at Palabora.

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