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### **The SUCo-SA Coalition Members:**

Suco is a coalition of some of the largest member associations in the Wildlife Industry, representing some 85 000 individual members and around 5000 businesses, creating around 150 000 jobs.

Confederation of Hunting Associations of South Africa (CHASA)

National Hunting and Shooting Association (Natshoot)

Parrot Breeders of South Africa (PVSA/PASA)

Professional Hunters Association of South Africa (PHASA)

PHASA Foundation

South African Falconry Association (SAFA)

South African Predators Association (SAPA)

South African Taxidermy and Tannery Association (SATTA)

South African Wingshooters Association

The True Green Alliance (TGA)

Wildlife Ranching South Africa (WRSA)

### **Why SUCo-SA?**

SUCo-SA is an umbrella body. We coordinate, we guide, we embark on joint projects.

The formal objectives and mission of SUCo-SA is described in the SUCo-SA Constitution, Website and Facebook pages, and can be summarised as:

*ensuring that our heritage, values, conservation benefits and the wellbeing of all our people derived from ongoing sustainable use of renewable natural resources, is secure into the future.*

**Executive Committee:** Chair Pieter Swart, (SATTA), Vice-Chair Mr. Stephen Palos (CHASA), Sec-General Mr. Trevor Oertel (SAFA), Treasurer Mr. Richard York (WRSA)

**Additional Members:** Mr. Ron Thomson (TGA); Dr. Herman Els (Natshoot),

Translating the concept into more practical terms, requires specifically explaining why SUCo-SA is of actual value even though our member organizations are already doing a lot of the work, or at least similar work.

### **Strength in unity, and strength in numbers.**

Until the founding of SUCo-SA, member associations and NGOs in the South African hunting and wildlife sector, by and large, operated in silos. Certainly, there were some collaboration and support; but nothing to the extent which the founding of SUCo-SA made possible.

Without a united front, our detractors (animal rights extremists, some government officials, some politicians, and some conservationists who are actually preservationists) could destroy our sector, and the livelihoods of thousands. But more importantly, they could destroy the only real hope for the future of conservation; that is *conservation through sustainable use*. This is vital to the survival of our sector.

### **The success of SUCo-SA rests on three legs:**

- Communication
- Co-operation
- Trust

Of these three TRUST is the most important, without, which the other two cannot be possible.

We need to trust each other:

- To communicate properly and timeously i.e., share any and all information/ research/ knowledge of upcoming meetings and events, or their outcome, etc.
- To share the workload and ensure the best people amongst us are used to their specific strengths.
- To share resources and costs a bit more efficiently and equitably.
- To talk with each other, not about each other.
- To represent any and all our interests at any of the numerous forums and meetings. It is impossible for all of us to be everywhere, even though we try!
- To have each other's backs at all times.
- To work for the good of the entire industry.
- To each stay in our dedicated focus areas. While we are mostly hunting related organizations at present, each represent a specific sub-sector, i.e., local hunters/ sport shooting/ taxidermy/ game farming/ outfitters and PH's. We need to trust each other in this regard: not to infringe in each other's core business or internal operations, but having said that; also, to listen when we provide advice and accept assistance when required, whether

solicited or not. SUCo-SA has been instrumental in this way in helping more than one of our members organizations, and we have all benefited by listening to other members).

The SUCo-SA coalition members, or alliance partners, deliberately chose each other based on our similar beliefs, values and organizational capacities that we all could trust and depend on for reliability, honesty and willingness to collaborate for the greater good of the sector as a whole.

We are purposely growing SUCo-SA slowly to allow us to handpick other organisations and people that have the same principles, values, and beliefs as we do.

SUCo-SA intends to represent a far wider contingent than simply hunting/ wildlife, and have already included the Parrot-breeders Association of SA as a member, who bring special knowledge and experience especially relating to CITES work. We aim to include many other elements where sustainable utilization of natural biological resources is their core business.

### **Why SUCo-SA is required at CITES:**

The importance of our presence at CITES and its various events are not readily understood by all.

The CITES structure, and the composition of the “anti-use” organizations is such that a coalition or group makes much more impact than individual or single participants. Without going into too much detail – at CITES they often read the room in lieu of voting and allow interventions at random. It therefor helps a great deal to have various people spread through the venue.

It is the only avenue we currently are engaged in through which we can effectively address all governments and NGO’s and build international networks beyond the obvious hunting associations. It is currently the only forum where we can truly voice our concerns, by attending the various events and committee meetings. SUCo-SA is, through our member associations, represented on the majority of the CITES Animals and Plants standing Committees, where we can make a difference that will also filter through to the COP.

In time and when capacity allows, we envisage widening this to others critical - such as the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

For all of this we need a large team. We also need to ensure proper continuity and transfer of information, which did not happen prior to the founding of SUCo-SA.

The SUCO-SA team at CITES is comprised of different talents – there are some with exceptional research skills, some speechwriters par excellence, a few that are brilliant orators, strategists, report writers, negotiators, networkers, experts on the CITES rules and regulations and inner workings, and last but not least, those with outstanding logistical capabilities... we need everyone, and we need each other.

The SUCO-SA team offers support: If any individual participant for some reason is absent due to meetings taking place at the same time, one of the team can and will temporarily occupy their seat. There is huge savings in shared accommodation, travel arrangements, etc. as well as subsidized participation, which has already enabled smaller member bodies and more delegates to attend these and other high-level international wildlife forums.

### **In Closing: Working together**

But most important is that as a collective, SUCo-SA is a first in getting the majority of the hunting and wildlife sector in this country to work together and to work to achieve shared objectives.

That is a first and probably the most important benefit of walking-the-walk with SUCo-SA.

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