



RE: U.S. House of Natural Resource Committee, CECIL Act

We, the Chairpersons of the Regional Associations of Community Conservancies in Namibia, write to you and the U.S. House of Natural Resource Committee concerning the CECIL Act bill that would effectively ban trophy hunting products from Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe from entering the U.S. We would like you to consider our local perspective as the custodians of wildlife in our various regions in Namibia as this would affect us as well because we share borders, wildlife and cultural values with these countries.

In our experience, hunting or what we call conservation hunting in Namibia, is currently done sustainably and based on scientifically set quotas. All hunts are managed by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET), the local community together with NACSO and professionals under NAPHA's code of conduct. This tourism activity is vital for Namibia's success in wildlife conservation and community development. It provides benefits in the form of direct revenue, employment, investment in health and water projects and a protein source. It also incentivizes against poaching and decreases human wildlife conflict, a serious concern for us living with elephants, lions and other species.

This bill will negatively impact the communities in our neighbouring countries. Local people will be the ones negatively affected by your decision and will suffer because of the loss of benefits derived from conservation hunting. The ban on hunting will result in an increase of human-wildlife conflict, increased wildlife crime and loss of employment opportunities. We are forced to ask, if this bill passes, will the U.S. provide alternative livelihoods for the people and compensate the communities? We urge you to listen to these community voices. We, the signed, support local communities and conservation hunting in Namibia, and across Southern Africa.

Signed

Southern Kunene Conservancy Regional Association

Kunene Regional Community Conservancy Association

Erongo Communal Conservancy Association

North Central Conservancy and Community Forest Associations

Kavango East and West Conservancy and Community Forest Regional Association

Zambezi Conservancy and Community Forest Chairpersons Forum