

# **GAME SA**

Code of Practice for the Humane Harvesting of Wild Game for Commercial Purposes.

## CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION .....	
1. Purpose of the Code .....	
2. Definitions .....	
3. Legislation .....	
4. Structure of the code .....	
2. TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS AND PROCEDURES	
2.1. Centre fire and rim fire rifles	
2.2. Ammunition	
2.3. Shooting Procedures	
2.4. Conditions	
3. SHOOTING FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES	
3.1. Competency	
4. EUTHANASING INJURED WILD GAME	
4.1. Conditions .....	
5. SHOOTING FOR SPECIAL PURPOSES	
5.1. Shooting of animals in circumstances where it might be unsafe to use firearms listed in Schedule 1 Part A	
5.2. Conditions: shooting of animals in circumstances where it might be unsafe to use firearms listed in Schedule 1 Part A	
SCHEDULE 1: Shot Placement for a shot to the brain	
SCHEDULE 2: Shot Placement for a shot to the heart	
SCHEDULE 3: Lambing Calving Season per specie - Guideline	

## PREFACE

The Code of Practice for the Humane Harvesting of Wild Game for Commercial Purposes sets an achievable standard of humane conduct and is the minimum required of persons harvesting wild game. The Code is implemented through education and relevant government authority legislation as appropriate and is derived from the relevant Veterinary Procedural Notices (VPN's).

Environmental sustainability, good wildlife management systems and high ethical standards applied during the harvesting process including the carbon footprint are critical issues to ensure the long term sustainability of the wildlife industry. Game harvesting should be planned and carried out in such a way that promotes the optimization of the total wild game production system.

The Code of Practice is based on the process of harvesting being carried out by Professional Harvesting Teams who are registered with the Department of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries and who through the Department of Environmental Affairs have obtained permits for the harvesting of game and the method used to carry out such harvesting process.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Purpose of the Code

This code has been produced to ensure that all harvesting teams affiliated to Game SA intending to shoot free - living wild game animals for commercial purposes undertake the shooting so that the animal is killed in a way that minimizes stress, pain and suffering. Harvesting teams affiliated to Game SA who do not abide by this code will face disciplinary action and if deemed necessary expulsion from the organization.

### 1.2. Definitions

For the purpose of this Code, the terms:

“Wild Game” means all species of antelope and zebra.

“Commercial Harvesting” means that harvesting takes place for the sole purpose of processing and selling the products derived from wild game carcasses.

“Harvesting” means the shooting of wild game from either the ground or the air (Helicopter).

“VPN” means Veterinary Procedural Notice applicable to harvesting game.

Category ‘B’ wild game Including:

- Kudu
- Red Hartebeest
- Eland

- Gemsbok (Oryx)
- Waterbok
- Blue Wildebeest (Gnu)
- Black Wildebeest (Gnu)

Category 'C' wild game including:

- Springbok
- Rhebuck
- Blesbok
- Impala
- Bushbuck
- Duiker

### 1.3. Legislation

All harvesting of wild game, whether on public or private land, is subject to law. As the laws may differ between provinces, harvesting teams must contact the relevant government authorities in the Province in which the harvest will occur to ensure that they comply with the Provincial laws. Harvesting teams must specifically liaise with the relevant Departments of Nature Conservation to ensure that the required permits are issued. The permits issued will specify any conditions or restrictions that may apply.

The requirements of the Code do not override Provincial animal welfare legislation. A lack of knowledge of the relevant Provincial animal welfare legislation is no defense against prosecution for animal welfare offences.

### 1.4. Structure of the Code

The Code is divided into six sections covering:

- Introduction
- Technical specifications and procedures
- Harvesting for commercial purposes
- Euthanizing young at foot
- Harvesting for special reasons

The Code also has two schedules. These are:

Schedule 1: Shot Placement for a shot to the brain and

Schedule 2: Shot Placement for a shot to the heart

In each section an introduction provides background to the conditions that must be adhered to by all persons shooting wild game.

## 2. TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS AND PROCEDURES

The range of firearms and ammunition available to licensed harvesting teams in South Africa is extensive, harvesting teams must use their experience and discretion when selecting firearms and ammunition most suitable for the harvesting process to be undertaken.

Across South Africa, there are large differences in terrain and prevailing weather conditions that might exist at the time of harvesting. Terrain and weather conditions need to be assessed and where conditions are such as to raise doubt that a sudden and humane death will be achieved then harvesting must not be attempted or if harvesting is already in progress be stopped immediately.

### 2.1. Centre fire and rim fire rifles

Centre fire rifles are specified for the harvesting of all larger game species, with the exception of special circumstances where it might not be safe or practical to do so. Rim fire rifles are lower powered and do not have as long a range as centre fire rifles. In open areas, smaller wild game species can be harvested with either centre fired rifles or a suitable rim fire rifle.

### 2.2. Ammunition

There is a large variety of ammunition that can be used. By varying the powder or the load or the projectile weight and type, the impact delivered to the target can be altered. As new brands and lines of ammunition become available, the ballistic properties of those products must be examined by the shooter to ensure that they meet the requirements as specified. Sub-sonic ammunition must not be used.

### 2.3. Shooting Procedures VPN's

More than one wild game animal in a herd may be shot prior to carcasses being retrieved by the harvesting team, provided that the shooter is certain that each animal is dead before another is targeted. Where an individual animal is wounded, no further animals may be shot until all reasonable efforts have been made to locate and kill the wounded animal (see section 4).

Female animals with dependent young or obviously pregnant must not be harvested except in the case of special circumstances (ie female is sick or injured or needs to be culled for management and/or ecological reasons). If a female animal with dependent young are shot then any dependent young at foot must be shot as soon as possible to avoid dispersal in accordance with the methods in Section 5.

### 2.4. Conditions

The following conditions for the shooting of wild game must be met:

Where the conditions set out below cannot be met, or where there is any doubt about achieving a sudden and humane death, harvesting must not be attempted.

#### 1. Goal

When harvesting wild game, the primary objective must be to achieve instantaneous loss of consciousness. For the purpose of this Code, this is regarded as a sudden and humane death.

## 2. Firearms and Ammunition

- (i) The combination of firearm and ammunition selected for the environmental conditions in which the harvesting team operates must ensure that sudden and humane death of the targeted animal is consistently achieved.
- (ii) A rifle must be fitted with a telescopic sight (exception is helicopter cull) and be sighted in against an inanimate target before commencing each day/night shoot.
- (iii) Self-loading or semi-automatic rifles must not be used at any time.
- (iv) Sub sonic ammunition must not be used.

## 3. Target Animal

- (i) The target animal must be in an upright position (injured animals excepted) and clearly visible.
- (ii) The target animal must be within an acceptable range specified that permits accurate placement of the shot.
- (iii) Female animals with young at foot or obviously pregnant must not be shot except in special circumstances (ie the female animal is sick or injured or needs to be culled for management/ecological reasons).

## 4. Shot Placement

- (i) The shooter must aim to hit the target animal either in the brain or neck area.
- (ii) The shooter must not aim so as to hit the target animal in any other part of the body other than that specified in (i) above. Except in the case where the animal is wounded and the hunter has no option but to target a heart shot to bring the animal down to avoid any further suffering.

## 5. Follow-up

- (i) The shooter must be certain that each wild game animal is dead before another animal is targeted.
- (ii) If a wild game animal is still alive after being shot, every reasonable effort must be made immediately to locate and kill it before any attempt is made to target another animal. The wounded animal must be euthanized in accordance with the methods outlined in Section 4.
- (iii) If a female animal is shot then any dependent young at foot must be shot as soon as possible to avoid dispersal in accordance with the methods in Section 5.

### 3. SHOOTING FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES

In all commercial situations wild game must be harvested in accordance with the relevant VPN's. Commercial wild game harvesting is regulated by Government legislation and Commercial wild game harvesters are licenced under such legislation. Game SA members will only purchase wild game carcasses from harvesting teams who;

- are duly registered under the applicable legislation.
- carry out harvesting in accordance with the VPN's.
- harvest game animals in accordance with this Code.
- Comply to all applicable legislation regarding the harvesting/hunting of wild game.

### 4. EUTHANIZING INJURED WILD GAME ANIMALS

Injured wild game animals should be euthanized quickly and humanely to alleviate suffering in accordance with conditions described in 4.1.

#### 4.1. Conditions

- (i) Injured or wounded animals must be killed by a method that will achieve a rapid and humane death, preferably by a shot to the brain (see schedule 2).
- (ii) Under circumstances where a shot to the brain of an injured/wounded animal is impractical or unsafe, a shot to the heart is permissible (see Schedule 3).
- (iii) If the wild game animal is female then any dependent young at foot must be shot as soon as possible to avoid dispersal, in accordance with the methods outlined in Section 5.

### 5. SPECIAL PURPOSE HARVESTING

#### 5.1 Shooting of animals where it might be necessary to use specialized firearms and/or ammunition.

Under certain conditions there may be a reason to Harvest wild game where it is necessary to use combinations of firearms and ammunition that would be considered prohibited, bearing in mind that in order to do so a permit must be obtained from the Department of Nature Conservation. Under such conditions licensed and competent shooters are to use a combination of firearms and ammunition with the goal to achieve a sudden and humane death in accordance with the conditions set out in this Code.

- (i) Regardless of the circumstances the provisions of this code still apply.
- (ii) The harvesting team must have, in their possession, a permit issued by the Department of Nature Conservation authorizing the method of harvesting used.
- (iii) Harvesting team leaders must use their discretion and grant harvesting team member's approval for each circumstance and location.

- (iv) The waiving of any requirements of this Code shall not relieve the harvesting team the absolute requirement to provide a sudden and humane death for the target wild game animal.

## 6. TIME OF YEAR HARVESTING

Different species of wild game animals lamb/calve at different times of the year. Wild game harvesting must be planned and carried out in such a way as to avoid disruption to the lambing/calving seasons. Due to the nature of wildlife, lambing/calving seasons are not necessarily fixed periods and could vary from year to year and from area to area depending on environmental conditions. Harvesting teams must take note during pre-harvesting inspections that;

- no lambing/calving has recently or is currently taking place,
- that female wild game animals are not heavily pregnant

if so harvesting must not commence unless there are management and/or ecological reasons reasons to remove the animals.

Schedule 3 attached merely serves as a general guideline of lambing/calving seasons applicable per species where harvesting teams must take extreme care and be particularly aware prior to carrying out any harvesting operations.

### SCHEDULE 1:

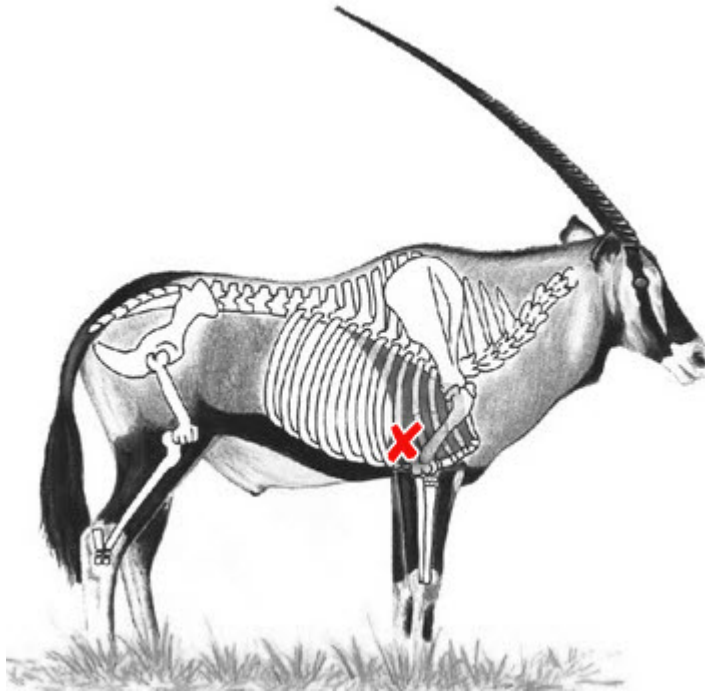
Shot Placement (x) for a shot to the brain and lactation of the brain (all wild game)





SCHEDULE 2:

Shot placement (x) for a shot to the heart (applicable only as described for injured wild game). Note that a shot to the heart should not be attempted from the rear of a wild game animal as it will most likely strike the spine first and may deflect before hitting the heart, paralyzing the animal but not killing it outright.



Schedule 3:

<u>Specie</u>	<u>Lambing/calving months</u>
Springbok	September to October
Impala	September to January
Kudu	November to January
Eland	August to October
Oryx	Any time of year
Waterbuck	Any time of year
Blesbok	November to January
Hartebeest	October to December
Black Wildebeest	November to December
Blue Wildebeest	November to February
Burchell Zebra	Any time of year