



**HUMANE SOCIETY
INTERNATIONAL**

AFRICA

June 9, 2017

Mr. Johan Hansen
Chief Executive Officer
Ittur Industrier AB
Vasatorpsallén 64
SE-253 54 Mörrarp, Sweden

Mr. Mikael Kjell
Vice President
Ittur Industrier AB
Vasatorpsallén 64
SE-253 54 Mörrarp, Sweden

Mr. Bo Lerenius
Director
Ittur Industrier AB
Vasatorpsallén 64
SE-253 54 Mörrarp, Sweden

cc:

Embassy of Sweden in Washington DC, USA
Embassy of Sweden in Pretoria, South Africa
Office of the Stockholm-based Ambassadors

SUBMITTED BY ELECTRONIC MAIL

Dear Messrs. Hansen, Kjell, Lerenius:

On behalf of the undersigned conservation and animal welfare organizations representing hundreds of millions of people worldwide, we urge you to immediately and permanently halt plans to capture and export five young live elephants from your Namibia property, *Eden Wildlife* (which appears to be owned by the Ittur Group),¹ to *Safari Park Dubai* in the United Arab Emirates.² *Eden Wildlife* has already previously exported nine live elephants to Mexico in 2012.³

Elephants are extremely intelligent, sentient animals, with a highly organized social structure including strong family bonds that can last a lifetime. Elephants are significantly harmed by trauma of forced

¹ www.eden-wildlife.com; Capuder, A. [I'm not supposed to be seen](#). HD. June 22, 2007. (Translated by Google: "For three years, the Ittur Group has its African headquarters in Namibia's capital, Windhoek. It includes Eden Wildlife, Namibia's second largest farm with commercial hunting."); New Era. [Energy crisis can be averted, says NEC](#). Nov. 23, 2015 ("The NEC group in turn is owned by the ITTUR group, which is the Namibian subsidiary of the Swedish ITTUR AB, owned by industrialist Johan Hansen.").

² Namibia Sun. [Baby elephants sold to Dubai zoo](#). May 9, 2017. Also available at: <https://conservationaction.co.za/recent-news/baby-elephants-sold-dubai-zoo-namibia/>; Smit, E. [CITES criteria met in elephant sale \(Namibia\)](#). Namibian Sun. June 5, 2017.

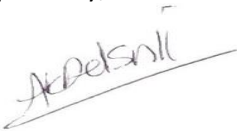
³ Modern Ghana. [Namibia slams poaching claims in Mexico elephants export](#). June 8, 2012; Youtube. Puebla Noticias. [Nine elephants arrive for African Safari](#). June 6, 2012; Youtube. Casos Veterinarios. [Transfer of elephants by plane from Africa to Mexico](#). Dec. 29, 2016.

removal from their herds. Young elephants are dependent on their mothers and the herds to acquire necessary social and behavior skills. Disruption of this bond is physically and psychologically traumatic for a calf. In recognition of this, Namibia's neighbor, South Africa, prohibits the capture and export of wild elephants for captive use.⁴ Furthermore, the IUCN SSC African Elephant Specialist Group opposes the removal of African elephants from the wild for captive use because there is "no direct benefit for *in situ* conservation."⁵ Finally, if the removal of these elephants from the wild is intended as a population growth control measure or a response to drought, we note that immunocontraception has proven extremely effective for this purpose; indeed, over 800 elephant cows in 24 reserves in South Africa are being treated with immunocontraception.⁶

Instead of a life in their natural habitat with their families, what awaits these five animals is cruelty, stress, and potential death, during capture, taming, transport, and a lifetime in captivity in Dubai. Indeed, four wild-caught young elephants shipped from Zimbabwe to captive facilities in China over the past few years reportedly died either during transport or shortly after arrival.⁷ Once in Dubai, the *Eden Wildlife* elephants are likely to be offered for elephant rides,⁸ which may require "taming" using harsh techniques including withholding of water and food and painful physical restraints in order to force the animals to submit to human dominance. Further trouble may await the elephants including exposure to extreme desert heat in temperatures well in excess of those in Namibia, which will further compromise their welfare.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that you immediately and permanently halt the planned capture and export of any live elephants from your property in Namibia for captive use in Dubai or elsewhere.

Respectfully,



Audrey Delsink

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Ph.D. Candidate, University of KwaZulu-Natal's Amarula Elephant Research Programme

Freelance elephant ecologist, The Greater Makalali Private Game Reserve, South Africa

⁴ South Africa Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism. [National Norms and Standards for the Management of Elephants in South Africa](#). Feb. 29, 2008.

⁵ IUCN African Elephant Specialist Group. [Statement from the African Elephant Specialist Group of the IUCN Species Survival Commission on the removal of African elephants for captive use](#). Dec. 8, 2003.

⁶ Delsink, A and Kirkpatrick, J. [Free-Ranging African Elephant Immunocontraception: a New Paradigm for Elephant Management](#). 2012.

⁷ Russo, C. and Cruise, A. [Secret footage obtained of the wild elephants sold into captivity in Chinese zoos](#). The Guardian. Apr. 6, 2017; Zimbabwe Independent, [Exported elephant dies in China](#). Jan. 29, 2016.

⁸ Show Me Dubai Youtube Channel. [Dubai Safari - Dubai's latest Safari theme park](#). 2016.

With support from the following organizations:

- Animal Conservation and Welfare Foundation
- Animal Defenders International
- Animal Welfare Institute
- Animals Asia Foundation
- Annamiticus
- Ban Animal Trading South Africa
- Born Free Foundation
- Captured in Africa Foundation
- CATCA Environmental and Wildlife Society
- Center for Biological Diversity
- Cetacean Society International
- Conservation Action Trust
- David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation
- Djurens Rätt
- Elephant Reintegration Trust
- Elephant Specialist Advisory Group
- EMS Foundation
- Fondation Franz Weber
- FOUR PAWS International
- Grey Solutions
- Humane Society International Australia
- One More Generation™
- Outraged SA Citizens Against Poaching
- Performing Animal Welfare Society
- Pettus Crowe Foundation
- Pro Wildlife
- Rainbow Eco-Farm and Training Center
- Rettet die Elefanten Afrikas e.V.
- Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
- The International Primate Protection League
- The Humane Society of the United States
- The Humane Society of Canada
- The Pegasus Foundation
- Wildlife Protection Society of India
- Youth 4 African Wildlife