THE TRUTH ABOUT:
AFRICAN WILD DOGS

STATUS:
- Most endangered large mammal in Africa*
- Most endangered large mammal in Namibia
- National population of perhaps just 300
- Protected species under Namibian Constitution
- Now extinct from 24 of 39 sub-Saharan countries
*Except for highly endemic Ethiopian wolf

MAIN CONSERVATION THREATS:
- Human persecution, habitat loss, road kills, disease contracted from domestic dogs & loss of wild prey

CONFLICT WITH FARMERS:
- Farmers accuse wild dogs of killing too much livestock
- But wild game are natural prey as with all predators
- Wild dogs kill only what they need to survive
- When wild game numbers are depleted wild dogs occasionally kill livestock if husbandry is poor
- Losses are often hugely exaggerated

LIVESTOCK LOSSES:
- Research shows that wild dogs are responsible for just 2-3% of livestock losses
- Stock theft, disease, poisonous plants, birthing problems & drought are much more important causes of livestock death

THE IMPORTANCE OF IDENTIFYING LIVESTOCK LOSSES CORRECTLY
- Only by identifying the true stock loss cause can the right management steps be taken to minimise future losses
- Refer to livestock management guides by R.E.S.T, CCF or NARREC to help identify stock loss causes
- Speak to your Farmers Associations about support in identifying livestock loss causes

LIVESTOCK LOSSES:

- Cattle losses to Predators
  - Wild dogs 15%
  - Cheetah 4%
  - Domestic dogs 1%

- Small Stock Losses to Predators
  - Cheetah 1.5%
  - Wild dogs 0.6%
  - Domestic dogs 6.7%
  - Jackal, Caracal & Leopard 91.2%

ROLE OF PREDATORS:
- Removing weak, old & diseased animals from wild population, improving health & fitness of wild game
- By reducing large predator numbers, smaller predators (e.g. Jackals) increase, causing severe small stock losses
- Predators form part of the rich cultural traditions inherited by local communities from their ancestors

ECOLOGY:
- Live in close family units, much like humans
- Have very large ranges in Namibia (>2000km²)
- Natural prey = duiker, steenbok, hares & calves of kudu & eland
- Chase prey to exhaustion, killing it very quickly
  This is not cruel, but very efficient & specialised

HOW MANY DOGS?
- A wild dog pack can easily move 50km in 1 day
- One pack reported in 3 places, often reported as 3 packs because numbers are hard to count accurately
- Farmers insist several packs are using the area when the reverse is true with one pack using many farms
- False numbers often used to motivate persecution

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IMPROVED LIVESTOCK HUSBANDRY & WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT DECREASES LOSSES, INCREASES PROFITS
- All predators are afraid of people so keep people near livestock at all times
- Keep livestock near homestead & kraalled (dusk to dawn) when predators feed
- Associated benefits include rapid detection of disease outbreaks, injured animals, birthing problems, bulling effectiveness, poisonous plants & very importantly, reduced stock theft
- Help your conservancy reduce poaching of wild game to provide more natural prey species for predators

IF YOU SEE WILD DOGS IN YOUR AREA:
- Be more attentive of your livestock & ensure herders are present at all times
- Tell your neighbours to do the same & inform your local Conservancy members

SUPPORTED BY: