

MEDIA RELEASE - 28 September 2001

SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL PARKS - TAHR POSITION STATEMENT

The South African National Parks (SANParks) would like to state its position in response to a request from the Friend of the Tahr (FoTT) to extend a moratorium on the removal of the Himalayan Tahr from Table Mountain, Cape Peninsula National Park.

SANParks re-affirms its position that the Himalayan Tahrs have a significant deleterious effect on the natural ecosystems of the park and should therefore be removed in accordance with the CPNP's approved Management Policy.

Although SANParks considers shooting to be the most appropriate and humane way of removing the animals, a six month moratorium (until 01 October 2001) on the culling operation was agreed to, in order to give all interested parties an opportunity to investigate, resource, test and implement alternative "live" capture methods. SANParks and the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT) have now received a request from the FoTT to extend the moratorium until at least May 2003.

SANParks, in consultation with DEAT, cannot agree to extending the moratorium, but will continue to co-operate with any agency that has the necessary expertise and financial resources to carry out a live capture programme to remove the tahrs from Table Mountain, should such be practical, humane and technically feasible. We have in this regard, indicated to representatives of the Indian Government and to FoTT, that we fully support the principle of relocating the tahrs to India (should it be possible to do so), but applicable diplomatic protocols would have to be followed.

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