

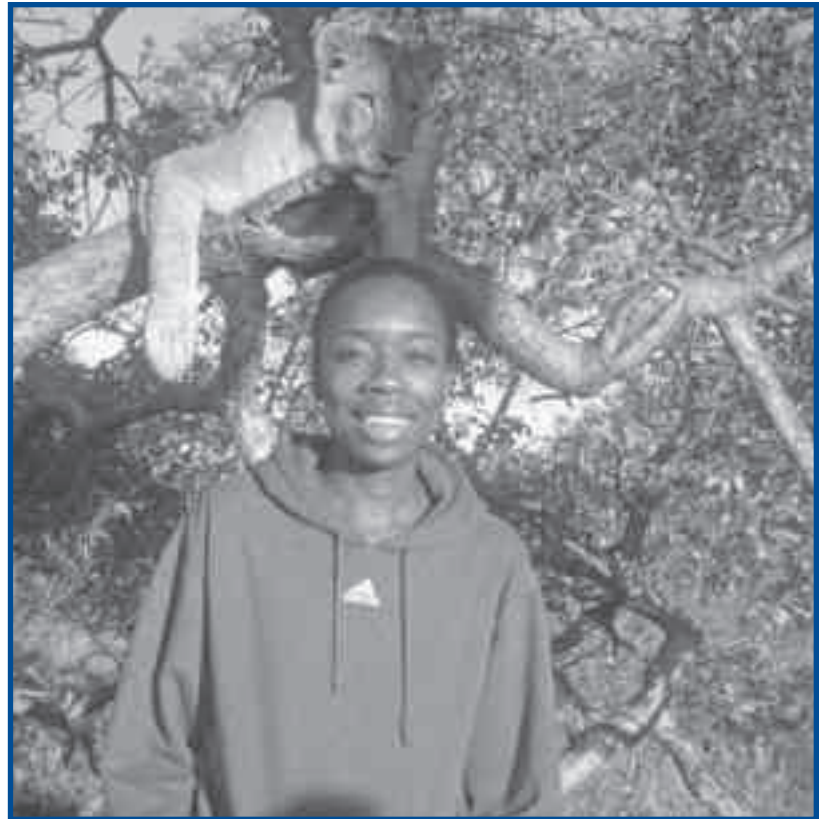
Wildlife Based Land Use and Cattle Production on Private Land in South Africa

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Wildlife based land use has been spreading rapidly on private land of south Africa as individuals harness the benefits of wildlife in semi-arid areas where traditional agricultural activities of livestock rearing are challenged by the harsh agro-climatic conditions. South Africa is one of only three countries on the African continent that allow wildlife use on private land. Private game ranches in South Africa cover 14% of the country's total land area, far in excess of the 6.3% represented by official national and provincial conservation areas. With the majority of natural areas lying outside of state protected areas, private ranches present an increasingly important avenue for conserving biodiversity and natural habitat outside these protected areas as well as contributing to the growth of the national economy.

Despite the widespread adoption of wildlife utilization there is little scientific knowledge on the economics aspects of this industry. The purpose of this study is to better understand the financial and economic profitability of commercial wildlife utilization (consumptive and non-consumptive) and commercial livestock production on private land in the semi arid rangelands of South Africa.

The study focuses on land use in the Limpopo province. Data collection for the study was conducted in eastern Limpopo province, an area with a large concentration of game farms. Data collection included in-depth interviews with game ranch



owners to determine the costs and revenues of wildlife enterprises. The game ranches displayed diversity in enterprises including traditional safari viewing tourism, trophy hunting, venison hunting and wildlife breeding. In addition, interviews with provincial conservation authorities and agricultural officers provided information on the policy and regulatory environment and enterprise budgets for cattle production.

Data collected will be analyzed using the Policy Analysis Matrix framework, which allows estimation of both private profitability and economic comparative advantage of wildlife enterprises relative to cattle. Quantifying the benefits of wildlife resources and their impact on local

economy will assist in understanding of the role of wildlife utilization in the development process in semi arid areas.

Jessica Musengezi is a doctoral student in the Department of Food and Resource Economics. Her research was funded by grants from the Wildlife Conservation Society-Animal and Human Health for the Environment and Development (WCS-AHEAD) and the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area Seed Grant Programme.

