

Workshop programme

‘Wildlife-livestock interfaces in northern Botswana’



Concept note

The wildlife-livestock interface is an ecological concept that describes the spatial dimension of encounters between wild and domestic animals (Kock, 2005; Vicente, Vercauteren, & Gortázar, 2021). Such encounters are either direct or sympatric through shared pasture and are often considered conflictual: wild predators commonly depredate on livestock, wild grazers compete with domestic grazers for resources, and both transmit diseases to each other (du Toit, Cross, & Valeix, 2017). Mediating these relations are the interfaces, which can be arranged in different ways. There are interfaces that are open, focal, patchy, buffered and fenced, among other arrangements (Bengis, Kock, & Fischer, 2002; Kock, Kock, de Garine-Wichatitsky, Chardonnet, & Caron, 2014). As such, wildlife-livestock interfaces determine the possibility, mode and location of wildlife-livestock encounters, aligning with dominant human interests (Van Dam et al., 2024).

In northern Botswana, various arrangements of the wildlife-livestock interface can be found. The Ngamiland and Chobe districts are home to large populations of both wildlife and livestock animals, and communal land commonly borders on wildlife management areas, game reserves and national parks. In some of these borderlands, the wildlife-livestock interface is open or patchy, whereas in others, boreholes and other water sources constitute focal sites of encounter. Importantly, in many places fences have been erected to separate the two types of animals (both for sanitary and conservation purposes). Furthermore, bush clearing for tsetse control in the past and other developments today arranged the wildlife-livestock interface in the form of buffer zones. Finally, in some areas the strategy of herding livestock constitutes an important way in which the wildlife-livestock interface is arranged (Heermans, 2022).

This workshop aims to bring together scholars and practitioners in the region to stimulate a discussion on the role of the wildlife-livestock interface in shaping multispecies encounters. Questions include: how have the interfaces in northern Botswana come into being historically? What effects do the various interfaces in northern Botswana have on wildlife, livestock, people and their inter-relations? Who gains and who loses? How are interfaces currently (re)configured as part of various spatial developments? And how do different interfaces shape the possibilities for wildlife-livestock coexistence? By foregrounding the role of the interface itself, the workshop aims to promote reflections on past, present and future arrangements. More than just a given spatial setting, in this perspective, wildlife-livestock interfaces are crucial sites of intervention and management.



References

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- Van Dam, A., Van Engelen, W., Müller-Mahn, D., Agha, S., Junglen, S., Borgemeister, C., & Bollig, M. (2024). Complexities of multispecies coexistence: Animal diseases and diverging modes of ordering at the wildlife–livestock interface in Southern Africa. *Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space*, 7(1), 353-374.
- Vicente, J., Vercauteren, K. C., & Gortázar, C. (2021). *Diseases at the wildlife-livestock interface: research and perspectives in a changing world*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer Cham.



Organizers:

Wisse van Engelen
Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology
University of Cologne
wisse.vanengelen@uni-koeln.de

Dr. Nlingisisi Babayani
Okavango Research Institute
University of Botswana
NBabayani@ub.ac.bw

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<https://www.ori.ub.bw/>

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Venue

Maun Lodge
Plot 1417, Maun
+2676863939
<https://g.co/kgs/254Thj6>



Programme

08:30-09:00 Nlingisisi Babayani - Welcome address
Participant round-table self-introductions

Session one – histories of the wildlife-livestock interface

09:00-09:45 Wisse van Engelen & Arnold Maekopo - The erection of the Southern Buffalo Fence: disease control, wildlife conservation and rural livelihoods in the Okavango Delta

09:45-10:30 O. L. Kupika & S. Gwatibaya - A bibliometric and scoping review of wildlife-livestock interactions research under changing climatic conditions in Botswana, 1990–2024

10:30-11:00 Coffee

Session two – the wildlife-livestock interface and communities

11:00-11:45 Nelson K. Sello - Pain in the beauty: When local communities are losers in their own land

11:45-12:30 Siamisang Seuhula, Olekae T. Thakadu & Wame L. Hambira - Appropriation of Mobile Phones in Human Wildlife Conflict Mitigation in the Chobe Enclave, Botswana

12:30-13:30 Lunch

Session three – coexistence across the wildlife-livestock interface

13:30-14:15 Richard Fynn - Strategic management of livestock to improve local community livelihoods and biodiversity conservation in African savannahs: a conceptual basis for wildlife–livestock coexistence

14:15-15:00 Gobopaone Senatla & Jack Ramsden - CLAWS: Mitigating Conflict through Lion Conservation and Communal Herding

15:00-15:30 Coffee

Session four – student poster session

15:30-17:00 Amogelang Ramathele. Impacts of transboundary animal disease, veterinary control measures on human-wildlife-livestock interface in Northwest District, Botswana since 1970

Ronaldo Katlego Lenyeletse. Governance challenges and policy responses in wildlife-livestock interactions: A public administration perspective in northern Botswana

Katlego Tiny Rantshobotho. Ecological dynamics of wildlife-livestock interfaces in northern Botswana

Mogakolodi Letsweletse Motingwa. Innovative fencing solutions to prevent wildlife-livestock overlap in northern Botswana

Arona Obakeng Moswang. The role of community trusts and their collaborative relations in managing wildlife-livestock interfaces: A case study of Etsha village, northern Botswana