GREEN HUNTING AND VITA DARTING

The South African Veterinary Council [SAVC] has declared veterinary involvement in green hunting (the practice whereby a veterinarian is instrumental or facilitates the immobilization / anaesthesia of an animal by a non-veterinarian or by another veterinarian) an unethical procedure with immediate effect as from 1 June 2010. The conduct of veterinarians who are involved in green hunts will be regarded as unprofessional and will be investigated. As from 14 March 2018 Council has declared the over-medication of an animal, especially for recreational or entertainment purposes, to be an unethical procedure. This includes the process of repeatedly darting animals with vitamins and minerals (also known as vita-darting) when such treatment (dose, duration and /or route of administration) is not warranted in terms of current scientific practice.

The SAVC with the support of the South African Veterinary Association [SAVA] took this decision in the interest of the South African community and future generations. This preservation of wild life animal populations of this country is increasingly being jeopardised with the abuse of medicines contributing to some of these harmful activities. It is therefore critical that the veterinary profession of South Africa leads by example to endeavour to end the abuse and destruction of animal populations.

The use of scheduled medicines for the chemical immobilisation /anaesthesia of wild animals is restricted to facilitate movement, disease surveillance and medical treatment. Scheduled medicines may not be used for recreational purposes or to create potential commercial activities whereby animals are unnecessarily stressed.

The SAVC has also informed the veterinary profession that the advertising of veterinary safaris and/or charging of fees to have persons witness the rendering of veterinary services is not permitted.