

# CORRUPTION IN CONSERVATION AND CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

—by Peter Hammond

Recently commuters were shocked at the sight of two giraffe being transported on the N1 motorway, north of Pretoria. Photographs snapped by motorists revealed how the long necks of the blindfolded giraffes loomed far above the vehicle as it approached the Garsfontein Bridge.

Witnesses expressed their horror as the

said, "Accidents do happen - but this is one of those things that could have been prevented. It's just common sense."

## Unacceptable negligence

The South African Bureau of Standards has published a code for the public transport of wild animals, which states that open

wrote: "Common sense is evidently in short supply among some lorry drivers on South Africa's roads, for a giraffe has died after hitting a bridge!"

## Shocking animal rights abuses

Investigations have revealed that a second giraffe also died, allegedly while being captured at the Meyersdal Eco Estate. Ainsley Hay of Wildlife Protection at the NSPCA has confirmed that they are investigating the incident: "Animals dying in game capture operation is not normal."

The Scripture is clear: "A good man takes care of his animals, but the wicked men are cruel to theirs." Proverbs 12:10

Another appalling example of cruelty to animals was the discovery of 82 dead farm animals, including decomposing pigs, chickens, geese and sheep, on a farm owned by Thandi Modise, an ANC leader and chairwoman of the National Council of Provinces.

## Madiba's cattle

Then the alarm was also sounded when the cattle of beloved

**Christians must be aware of God's clear standard regarding treatment of animals: "A good man takes care of his animals, but the wicked men are cruel to theirs". Prov 12:10**

truck went under the bridge and a tremendous crack was heard as one of the giraffe hit its head on the concrete bridge. Despite vehicles hooting for the truck to stop, the driver ploughed on.

## Unbelievable

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (NSPCA) rejected the explanation of the driver who was transporting the animals, for Ditjabe Wildlife Services, from Meyersdal Eco Estate. Rick Allen, of the SPCA

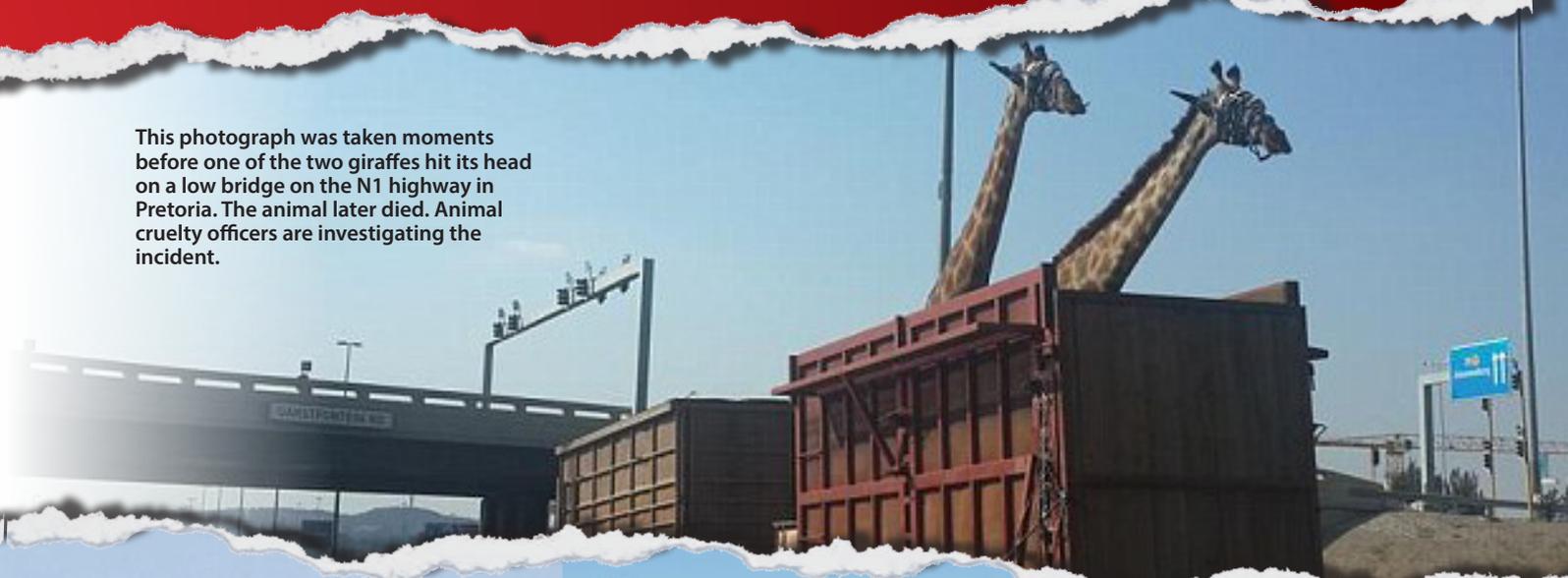
transport, with the heads of giraffes sticking out, is unacceptable. Those responsible for the giraffe's death are to be prosecuted under the Animal Protection Laws. The NSPCA has declared that they will lay criminal charges under the Animal Protection Act.

## International news

The giraffe's bizarre and tragic death even made international news. The UK Metro



This photograph was taken moments before one of the two giraffes hit its head on a low bridge on the N1 highway in Pretoria. The animal later died. Animal cruelty officers are investigating the incident.



Nelson Mandela were found starving in the fields outside his Qunu homestead. The provincial government was required to rush in animal feed and veterinarians to save the neglected herd. The once green pasture had died and the cattle were grazing on dirt and patches of dry grass.

*"How long will the land lie parched and the grass in every field be withered? Because those who live in it are wicked, the animals and birds have perished."* Jeremiah 12:4.



**"How long will the land lie parched and the grass in every field be withered? Because those who live in it are wicked, the animals and birds have perished."**  
**Jeremiah 12:4**

**Irresponsible**

The Farm Manager, Siyakudumisa Gabada, described the situation on the farm as "extremely difficult" and worrying. His personal responsibility as Farm Manager seemed to have slipped his mind. His comments seemed more appropriate to an observer, than that of the person actually responsible.

**Unsatisfactory explanation**

Mandela's grandson, Mandla Mandela acknowledged that the cattle were "not in a satisfactory condition." He commented: "Around this time of year, as a community, we lose a lot of cattle and sheep due to drought. As you can see there »

**RIGHT and ABOVE:** Thandi Modise, ANC leader and President of the National Council of Provinces. Her farm and the animals had to be burned.



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is barely any grass on the farm. There are also other challenges, like the management of overgrazing on the farm.”

## A matter of trust

In his will, Nelson Mandela had stated that he wished farming operations at Qunu to continue after his death. The Nelson Mandela Family Trust should also continue to employ the manager now running the operations and to find a suitable person, should he no longer be available to do it.

When 30 of the bulls were torturously castrated and many dehorned, there was a further outcry. Considering that Nelson Mandela was a patron of the SPCA, this is deeply troubling.

The ritual killing of a bull at the First Fruits

culture”. For 40 minutes, dozens trampled the bellowing, groaning bull, wrenching its head around by the horns, to try to break its neck, pulling its tongue out, stuffing sand in its mouth and even trying to tie its penis in a knot. Gleaming with sweat, they raised their arms and sang in triumph, while the bull finally succumbed.

## Widespread outrage

Tanzania, Sierra Leone, Congo, Kenya, Zimbabwe and delegates from the African Network for Animal Welfare signed the petition calling on the South African Parliament to halt Ukweshwama, but so far to no avail.

Can torture and cruelty really be justified in the name of culture? The Bible tells us: “The

## Health time bombs

Allan Perrins of the SPCA describes these “slabattoirs” as “health time-bombs”, which need to be shut down to prevent the spread of potentially fatal diseases. These organisations violate both health and environmental bylaws, breaking the Animals Protection Act and the Meat Safety Act.

## The creation mandate

In the light of the clear teaching of Scripture concerning creation and mankind’s responsibility for it, we should treat animals with the love and concern of those who must give an account to Almighty God. We must recognise that the welfare and protection of animals is an essential part of our Christian responsibility.

We must do all that we can to secure the wellbeing of all animals, who, with ourselves, inhabit the earth and so fulfil the creative joy and purposes of Almighty God.

“We must all appear before the Judgement seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due us for the things done in the body, whether good or bad.” 2 Cor 5:10. ■

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Festival (Ukweshwama), where young men are to kill a bull with their bare hands, has been the focus of legal controversy. Some claim such cultural ceremonies are protected in terms of the Constitution. However, the Animals Protection Act is meant to prevent the very cruelty and torture which Ukweshwama involves.

## Ritual cruelty

Chief Mlaba admits, “It is cruelty we agree, but it’s our culture. We cannot change our

creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.” Romans 8:21.

## Illegal and unhygienic processes in some abattoirs

Then there are the illegal slaughter houses, “slabattoirs”, that involve unhygienic and inhuman practices. There are no veterinarians to check the animals, nor trained Health Inspectors to make sure the meat does not contain any potentially harmful parasites.

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