

# Call for comment on draft amendments for the management of elephants

Acting Environmental Affairs Minister Derek Hanekom has published draft amendments to the norms and standards for the management of elephants in South Africa.



Image: © Shan Radcliffe

The norms and standards, or Elephant Norms and Standards, have been published in Government Gazette No. 42015 on 2 November 2018 for public comment for a period of 30 days.

The Elephant Norms and Standards, which were originally published for implementation on 29 February 2008 and came into effect on 1 May 2008, were developed to ensure that elephants are managed in a manner that ensures their long-term survival within the ecosystems in which they occur, and may occur in future, and to promote broader biodiversity and socio-economic goals that are socially, economically and ecologically sustainable.

The existing Elephant Norms and Standards promote the objective-based management of elephants in protected areas as well as on private land.

Since the coming into force of the Elephant Norms and Standards, the Department of Environmental Affairs has become

aware of implementation and enforcement challenges facing owners and managers of elephants, but also conservation authorities.

These challenges and gaps were noted mainly around the management plan and in particular requirements, information required, approval process, as well as clarity on roles and responsibilities on the management of roaming (wild) elephants in instances where the origin cannot be readily ascertained.



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Ross Harvey 10 Sep 2018



In addition, certain provisions did not adequately specify whether they apply to wild or captive elephants.

The department said the revised Elephant Norms and Standards create greater flexibility in the management of elephant populations on state and private land, while retaining the guiding principles on which the existing Elephant Norms and Standards have been based.

The amendments further provide provisions promoting evidence-based approaches in the form of research on management and related activities.

Non-invasive disturbance management interventions and activities related to escaped and roaming elephants are clarified, while specific requirements for population management including the use of contraception are outlined.

The adoption of the amended Elephant Norms and Standards, once finalised, will mark the replacement of the 2008 Elephant Norms and Standards.

This proposed amendments, therefore, include a transitional provisions relating to anything being done in respect of the management of elephants in terms of the repealed norms and standards.

Members of the public are invited to submit to the Minister, within 30 days after the publication of the notice in the Gazette, written comments or inputs to the following address:

**By post to:** The Director-General  
Department of Environmental Affairs  
Attention: Mr Khuthadzo Mahamba  
Private Bag X447  
PRETORIA  
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**By hand at:** Environmental House, 473 Steve Biko Street, Arcadia, Pretoria, 0083.

**By e-mail:** [elephantnorms@environment.gov.za](mailto:elephantnorms@environment.gov.za).

Any enquiries in connection with the notice can be directed to Khuthadzo Mahamba at +27 (0)12 399 8845.

Comments received after the closing date may not be considered.