Case study of anti-poisoning campaign in Kenya

Darcy Ogada
and
Martin Odino

With particular acknowledgement to Dr. Paula Kahumbu who led the campaign
Furadan use in Kenya: A survey of the distributors and end-users of toxic Carbofuran (Furadan) in pastoralist and rice growing areas

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January 2008
Stop Wildlife Poisoning Campaign

First meeting April 2008
• Led by Dr. Paula Kahumbu of Wildlife Direct
• Guest speaker Dr. Richard Leakey
• 8 presentations
• 50 people attended
• Stop Wildlife Poisoning Taskforce set up with 14 members
Reporting and Monitoring of poisoning incidents

• Sent incident reports to:
  Pest Control Products Board
  Agricultural Association of Kenya
  Kenya Wildlife Service
  Ministry of Wildlife & Tourism
  Ministry of Agriculture

• Developed poisoning database

• Developed and distributed poisoning reporting sheet

• Ministries demanded numbers of poisoned wildlife because they still didn’t believe poisoning evidence
International publicity

March 2009

Program on lion poisonings in the Masai Mara aired on 60 Minutes one of the most watched television shows in the U.S.

News

Lion deaths could prompt carbofuran ban

Oisin O’Doherty

Unconfirmed reports of the poisoning of two lions in Kenya has led to the suggestion of a possible ban on the chemical in the region. Government officials have yet to determine the cause of the deaths, but experts at the Kenya Wildlife Service confirmed that this was highly suspect. Analysis of forensic evidence presented at the hearing of the committee has already revealed the presence of carbofuran in the carcasses. According to Peter Odondo, a seniorWildlife officials at the Kenya Wildlife Service, a research assistant at the National University of Kenya, in a press conference on the issue, "We are pleased to be able to address the concerns raised by the public." The case highlights the current situation in Kenya, where the number of natural predators is declining, and the use of pesticides is increasing. Leo, a seniorWildlife official, said: "We are working with the authorities to try to find a solution to this problem." He added that the issue of carbofuran poisoning is not only a problem for lions, but also for other wildlife species, such as elephants, giraffes, and zebras. The issue is not only a problem for wildlife, but also for human health, as carbofuran is a highly toxic chemical. There is a need for more research to understand the impact of carbofuran on wildlife and human health.
April 2009 FMC representatives visit Kenya

1) Withdrawal and buy back (not ban) is taking place in Kenya. No more product is being distributed to Tanzania and Uganda.

2) After some time an assessment will be done in each country individually to decide on whether it can be re-introduced while ensuring that it will be used responsibly.

3) FMC noted that the method used by the Government Chemist lab was unreliable for testing Furadan.

4) Concern was raised about lack of trust between NGO’s and some government agencies on reporting incidents.
ORDERS OF THE DAY
TUESDAY JUNE 02, 2009 AT 2.30 P.M.

MOTIONS

The Member for Naivasha (Mr. John Mututho) to ask the Minister for Forestry and Wildlife:-

(a) If the Minister is aware of the airing of a damaging documentary on Kenya in the international Media on 14 April, 2009 by CBS, a television network in USA, regarding the death of lions in a Kenyan Park;

(b) If he can confirm that the pride of seven (7) lions found dead in the parks were as a result of Furadan poisoning; and

(c) When the Minister will, through NEMA, effect an immediate ban of Furadan chemical, pending further investigations.
Results of parliamentary debate

Setting up of inter-ministerial taskforce to include individuals from:

• Dept of Agriculture
• Dept of Tourism
• Dept of Livestock
• Dept of Environment
• Kenya Wildlife Service
• Two conservationists
Immediate Release
Tuesday, 2 June 2009

Wildlife Poisoning in the Maasai Mara

An incident of wildlife poisoning occurred in the Mara on the evening of Saturday 23 May, 2009 at Ooolaimutiak area barely 2 Kms away from Ooolaimutiak gate but within the reserve. According to the KWS senior Scientist, Dr. Domnic Mijele, a pride of 5 lions reportedly killed 4 cattle. The local people chased the lion (s) away .....
Involvement of Prime Minister’s office

• Prime Minister issues a directive for a new taskforce

• In particular investigating poisoning in Bunyala Rice Scheme

• Requested a report on poisoning problem

Evidence for revoking registration of carbofuran in Kenya


Paula Kahumbu
5/17/2010
End of the Campaign

- Elections came

- Motivation on all sides declined

- Prime Minister’s office was dissolved after the elections

- Issue of poisoning reverted to back to square one, no government involvement
Outcomes and Lessons Learned

- Consider starting with social surveys to understand the broader situation regarding poisoning and to identify potential hotspots.

An Assessment of availability and use of Carbofuran and other Agro-chemicals used to Poison Lions, around Queen Elizabeth Conservation Area (QECA) and in Kampala, Uganda

Edward Olset Omoya and Andrew J. Plumptre

March 2011
Outcomes and Lessons Learned

• Buy-back program (not ban) was somewhat effective

• International pressure can work and may be one of our most effective strategies

• Creating awareness amongst conservationists, Government officials, and internationally

• We need government will to succeed