



**A Report on the Demarcation of Welshet Sala
Controlled Hunting Area**

**By: Tadesse Hailu (W C D, MoARD)
Kahsay G/Tensae (W C D, MoARD)
Meseret Admasu (THPA, SNNPR)
Alemayehu Matewos (THPA, SNNPR)**

March 2008

1. Introduction

It is evident that the most effective way of conservation of wildlife species is recognized through granting protection to the species and their habitat. There are a number of ways by which this could be materialized. The most effective ways of realizing wildlife conservation may include establishing wildlife sanctuaries for an animal or animals confined in particular areas, or setting up National Parks to protect a number of native wildlife species that exist in a similar ecosystem, or setting aside wildlife reserves to protect potential areas of wildlife and peculiar ecosystems, or forming controlled hunting areas for sustainable utilization of the wildlife resource.

In Ethiopia's context, conservation of the wild lands for sustainable utilization of the resource has been facilitated by establishing different categories of protected areas in different parts of the country since four decades ago. However, due to management constraints encountered by then, the process of establishment of conservation areas was not only limited to certain areas, but also it lacks proper management to the designated ones especially the controlled hunting areas. Thus, there is a need to assess the current status of the controlled hunting sites and undertake a sort of delineation process that does not remain on paper only.

Welshet-Sala Controlled Hunting Area (WSCHA) that was established in 2002, is one of the protected areas in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Regional State. To date, it has no well defined boundaries that would enable one to portray its resource base and also enable itself acquire its own legal status. Being concerned with the wildlife potential of this area and considering that greater efforts would be needed to manage and wisely utilize the resource, it has been determined to demarcate and produce a map of the controlled hunting area. Therefore, a team of wildlife experts that has been drawn from the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Department of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture

and Rural Development, and the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State's Tourism, Hotels and Parks Agency demarcated WSCHA .

2. Objectives

The main objectives of this work are:

- To assess wildlife potential areas, demarcate and eventually produce a map for Welshet-sala Controlled Hunting Area, and
- To review the current management condition of the protected area and provide appropriate management recommendations to the concessionaire, if necessary.

3. Description of the Controlled Hunting Area

Welshet-sala Controlled Hunting Area (WSCHA) is one of the controlled hunting areas located in the Southern Nation, Nationalities and Peoples' Regional State, situated between UTM 0661143 -0679380 N and 37N0196810 - 37N0218750 E (Annex 2). Specifically, WSCHA is found in the Sala-Mago Woreda of the Southern Omo zone, about 5 km north of Mago National Park and east of Tama Community Wildlife Conservation Area. It has an area of 341 km² and displays a diverse topography mainly consisting of flat lands (plains) and hills.

In terms of vegetation, the controlled hunting area exhibits vegetation types that include wooded grassland, hilly scrubland and riparian forests. The wooded grassland areas are mainly dominated by *Comberetum* spp., *Acacia drepanolobium* and *Balanites aegyptica*, while the riverine forests comprise of tree species like *Ficus* spp., *Trechlea* sp., *Ziziphus spina-christi* and *Tamarindus indica*. Hilly areas along the northwestern and the southern boundaries of the controlled hunting area are dominated with scrub vegetation mainly consisting of

Acacia drepanolobium, *Dovyalis abyssinica*, *Combretum spp.*, *Grewia spp.* and *Cordia spp.*

The controlled hunting area harbors a significant variety of larger mammals that include Lesser Kudu (*Tragelaphus imberbis*), Defassa Waterbuck (*Kobus defassa*), Buffalo (*Syncerus caffer*), Common Bushbuck (*Tragelaphus scriptus*), Lelwel Haretebeest (*Alcephalus buselaphus lelwel*) Mountain Reedbuck (*Redunca fulvorufula*) and Oribi (*Ourebia ourebi*). Beside mammals, it also harbors plenty of bird species. Drongo (*Dicrurus adsimilis*), Carmine bee-eater (*Merops nubicus*), Long crested eagle (*Lophaetus occipitalis*), Black kite (*Milvus migrans*), Crested Francolin (*Francolinus sephana*), (Helmeted Guinea fowl (*Numida meleagris*), White-headed buffalo weaver (*Dinemillia dinemelli*), Common Bulbul (*Pycnonotus barbatus*), Red and Yellow Barbet (*Trachyphonus erythrocephalus*) and White-headed Vulture (*Aegypius occipitalis*) were among the commonly encountering birds.

4. Materials and Methods

During the field assessment, Geographic Positioning System (GPS), binoculars, note books, field guide books for both birds and mammals and topographic maps were employed to meet the intended objectives.

Data on the area were gathered through direct field observation of the sites. Formal and informal discussion was also conducted with zonal, wereda and local officials and community representatives

The office of the Southern Omo Zone Administration was visited and discussion was made on the mission of the team with the chief administrator on the intended boundary demarcation of WSCHA. Then zonal administration representative was assigned to facilitate and work with the demarcation team. Like wise, similar

discussion was held with the administrator of the Sala-Mago Woreda, representatives from the local communities, and a committee that comprises a police officer, a council member, concerned experts and local kebeles representatives was formed to work together with the demarcation team.

At the site, prior reconnaissance survey of the controlled hunting area was conducted by a team of experts to have an overall insight of the area. After consecutive days of field trips, continuous discussion was made among the team members and consensus was reached on areas to be included in the boundary by roughly delineating it on the topographic map. Then views were exchanged on the significance of the demarcation and consensus was reached on the proposed idea already placed on a map. During the process of boundary demarcation, each chosen point was physically marked on physical object and given a beacon number. Then GPS readings were taken for each beacon number and coordinates were recorded on a data sheet (Table 1). Minutes were also taken and signed by all members of the demarcating group everyday for every day activities.

Furthermore, the process of demarcation has taken the proposed investment activities, existing rules and guidelines and the current wildlife potential of the area in to account.

5. Coordinates of the demarcated Controlled Hunting area

Abbreviation

5.1 Boundary Coordinates

GPS readings taken for each beacon number, the coordinates and local names for the marked points are given below in table 1.

Table1: Recorded Coordinates and Local Names of each Beacon Number

NO	POSITION /UTM/	NAME OF THE SITE	MARKED POINT CODE
1.	37N0196810 0661143	Dubar-Sagara	W1
2.	37N0195010 0662449	Beta-esi	W2
3.	37N0195725 0668470	Nipisi	W3
4.	37N0202110 00676765	Belcor	W4
5.	37N0208150 0679380	Beskini	W5
6.	37N0218750 0677700	Mt. Chumalich	W6
7.	37N0217310 0670670	Mt. Koleshu	W7
8.	37N0215930 0668000	Elbognawign	W8
9.	37N0210384 0663285	Mt. Churach	W9
10	37N0209110 0661420	Mt. Madadrich	W10
11	37N0202150 0661000	Mt. Gobo	W11

5.2 Boundary Description of WSCHA

The boundary of WSCHA is described as follows:

- WSCHA boundary commences at coordinates of 37N0196810 UTM0661143 at a site locally known as Dubar-sagara, which is a marked reference point number (W1) noticeable on the trunk of a tree locally known as ' Kirsech' at approximately 20 meters away from the west bank of Sala River;
- Then by a demarcated line on a bearing of 124° for an air distance of 2.2 kilometres in the westerly direction to a marked point number 2 (W2) apparent on rocky boulder, at coordinates of 37N0195010 and 0662449;
- Then on a bearing of 7° in a northerly direction for an air distance of 6.1 kilometres to a marked point number 3 (W3) perceptible on the rim of a hill locally known as Nipisi, at coordinates of 37N0195725 and 0668470;
- Then by a demarcated line on a bearing of 39° in a north-westerly direction for an air distance of 11.0 kilometres to a marked point number 4 (W4) referenced on the summit a mountain locally known as Mt. Belcor, at coordinates of 37N0202110 and 067765;
- Then passing over the rims of the mountain chains to the westerly direction on a bearing of 66° for an air distance of 6.6 kilometres to a marked point number 5 (W5) which is located on the summit of a mountain locally known as Mt Beskini, at coordinates of 37N0208150 and 0679380;
- Then by a demarcated line on a bearing of 105° for an air distance of 11.0 kilometres to a marked point number 6 (W6) located on the tip of a hill locally known as Chumalich, at coordinates of 37N0218750 and 0677700;

- Then by a demarcated line on a bearing of 192° for an air distance of 7.2 kilometres in southerly direction to a marked point number 7 (W7) located on top of a mountain locally known as Koleshu, at coordinates of 37N0217310 and 0670670;
- Then by a demarcated line on a bearing of 209° for an air distance of 3.0 kilometres in southerly direction to a marked point number 8 (W8) referenced on top of a hill locally known as Elbognawign, at coordinates of 37N0215930 and 0668000;
- Then by a demarcated line on a bearing of 227° for an air distance of 7.3 kilometres in southerly direction to a marked number 9 (W9) on a *Balanitus aegyptica* tree which is on top of a hill locally known as Churach, at coordinates of 37N0210384 and 0663285;
- Then on a bearing of 215° for an air distance of 2.3 kilometres in the southerly direction to a marked point number 10 (W10) located on the top of a hill locally known as Madadarich, at coordinates of 37N0209110 and 0661420;
- Then by a demarcated line on a bearing of 266° for an air distance of 7.0 kilometres in westerly direction to a marked point number 11 (W11) located at the foot of a mountain locally known as Mt. Gobo, at coordinates of 37N0202150 and 0661000;
- Then for an air distance of 12.6 kilometres in westerly direction to a marked point number 1(W1) which is on the bank of Sala River, at coordinates of 37N0196810 and 0661143;

6. Discussion

With a concerted effort of a number of stakeholders, the CHA has been demarcated for effective development, management and sustainable utilization of its wildlife resource. It is a small and manageable area with a variety of wildlife species. But so far no managerial and development activities have been undertaken in the CHA either by a concerned government body or the hunting company. As a result, it is not at present free from human interferences and unfavourable environmental conditions. Poaching of wild animals is the most pronounced phenomenon observed during the survey, and it is thought to be a potential danger to the survival of wildlife species if the operation continues at the existing rate.

During the field assessment, it was perceived that the local communities living in and around the CHA lack awareness of the importance of the wildlife resource and why the tourist hunting is being exercised in the area. As a consequence, community members were found to be antagonistic for the legal tourist hunting being carried out, and in response to it they were found demonstrating their oppositions by claiming the resource is theirs. They also claim that it is their right to kill their favoured wild animals. Hence, in conjunction with the development of the protected area, in this regard, much work is required to launch conservation awareness outreach program in order to change and build up the attitude of the local communities living in the vicinity. Hence, the demarcation work being undertaken is thought to be a good start in providing impetus for successive and considerable engagements to be undertaken for the future development and proper management of the protected area.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

A total area of 341 square kilometres of land has been demarcated for sustainable consumptive utilization of the wildlife resource of the area. With a varying level of abundance, it supports a variety of wildlife population. However, it is evident that, these wild animals are at present under heavy human pressure. Poaching is the most pronounced and a day to day activity exercised by the local communities, particularly by the Mursi and Bodi tribes. If this negative activity persists at the current rate, the controlled hunting area will lose its significance soon and be converted to a livestock grazing ground. It is, therefore, recommended that:

- Extensive and unremitting conservation awareness program should be launched as soon as possible so as to change the attitude of the local community and have their support in the conservation endeavour,
- The value of wildlife in terms of revenue and what this means to the local development should be renowned by developing a community development project model in order to broaden the community's perception towards wildlife conservation,
- Outposts should be developed at all strategic points of the controlled hunting area to facilitate proper management,
- Sufficient number of community game guards should be carefully recruited from each tribe neighbouring the CHA and well trained to effectively patrol and render appropriate protection to the wildlife resource of the area,
- All possible and sound management systems for the CHA should be devised and implemented in order to make the utilization of the wildlife resource sustainable, and

- Regular ecological monitoring should be employed to make a note of negative changes to the health and survival of wildlife species in the CHA and take remedial actions.

8. Bibliography

Kumera, W. Yeneneh, T. and Gemedo, O. (2006). Wildlife Census Report of Welshet-Sala Controlled Hunting Area

Sutherland, W.J. (1996). Ecological Census Techniques, pp.54-58, Cambridge University Press.

Annex 1. List of Demarcation Expert Team

No	Name	Representation
1	Ato Tadesse Hailu	Federal Wildlife Conservation Department, MoARD
2	Ato Kahssay G/Tinsae	Federal Wildlife Conservation Department, MoARD
3	Ato Alemayehu Matewos	SNNPR Tourism, Hotels & Parks Agency
4	Ato Messeret Admassu	SNNPR Tourism, Hotels & Parks Agency

Annex 2. Zonal and Woreda Officials met.

No	Name	Position
1	Ato Negatu Dinssa	So. Omo Zone Chief Administrator
2	Ato Daniel Dagne	Head, Trade and Industry Department
3	Ato Samuel Garsho	Hammer Woreda Chief Administrator
4	Ato Melkamu Engida	Sala-Mago Woreda Chief Administrator

Annex 3. List of Members participated in the demarcation of Welshet-Sala Controlled Hunting Area.

No	Name	Representation
1	Ato Mamo Malla	So Omo Zone Administration Representative
2	Ato Amelu Sheltu	Sala-Mago Woreda Administration Representative
3	Lieutenant Yohannes Mekonen	Police chief, Sala-Mago Woreda Police
4	Ato Agu Deban	Head, Sala-Mago Woreda Rural Development Office
5	Ato Mula Archaye	Mursi Kebele Representative, Sala-Mago Woreda
6	Ato Zenabu Bicha	Mursi Kebele Representative, Sala-Mago Woreda
7	Ato Algolagn Banne	Mursi Kebele Representative, Sala-Mago Woreda
8	Ato Morkalle Artika	Gura-Bodi Kebele Representative " "
9	Ato Aykawo Boreda	Gura-Bodi Kebele Representative " "
10	Ato Gunalimo Sebasil	Gura-Bodi Kebele Representative " "
11	Ato Bigo Chama	Gura-Unso Kebele Representative " "
12	Ato Ognanga Malignanga	Gura-Unso Kebele Representative " "

Annex 4.

