



For the Attention of:
c/o

The Director-General Department of Environmental Affairs
Mr. Khorommbi Matte
Chief Director: Biodiversity Economy and Sustainable Use

Per email:
Cc:

kmahamba@environment.gov.za
kmatibe@environment.gov.za

26th March 2019

Dear Mr. Khorommbi Matte,

RE: WILDLIFE ANIMAL PROTECTION FORUM SOUTH AFRICA NOMINATIONS FOR APPOINTMENT TO HIGH-LEVEL PANEL

We refer to Government Gazette No 42247, No 243 dated 25 February 2019 relating to the Appointment of a High-Level Panel of Experts for the review of policies, legislation and practises on matters related to the management, breeding, hunting, trade and handling of elephant, lion, leopard and rhinoceros (the “**Panel**”). We further refer to our letter to the Department of Environmental Affairs dated 25th January 2019 in respect of the Panel.

Animal Law Reform South Africa (“**ALRSA**”) is a non-profit organisation composed of legal professionals, passionate about animals, humans, the environment and the law. We are committed to connecting issues of the law; animal wellbeing and social justice in South Africa. Further information on our organisation can be found in **Schedule A** hereto.

We are the only non-profit in South Africa focused on Animal Law issues and collectively have decades of experience in matters pertaining to the law, animals, humans and the environment. We thus believe it is critical that a member of our organisation is represented on the Panel. Accordingly, we wish to nominate one of our Founders and Co-Directors, **Professor David Bilchitz**.

Professor David Bilchitz has vast experience and numerous qualifications in areas that overlap with animal protection; ethical conservation management; biodiversity policies; wildlife trade; legislation, and welfare species specific expertise. He had direct input into the current Norms and Standards relating to the Management of Elephants and various other legislative and policy efforts. He is committed to ensuring the relevant objectives and principles are adhered to, in terms of existing legislation as well as the interpretation thereof by our courts.

Professor Bilchitz’s CV is attached to the email accompanying this letter which sets out his relevant qualifications and experience and which we believe illustrates his unquestionable suitability to sit as a member on the Panel.



We look forward to receiving your acknowledgment of receipt and information in respect of the ultimate decision.

We are happy to answer any queries you may have or provide you with any further information (Kindly contact us on amywilson@animallawreform.org.)

Yours sincerely,

Amy P. Wilson

Animal Law Reform South Africa

Director | Co-Founder | Attorney (Non-practising)

B.COM, LLB (University of Johannesburg)

LLM – Animal Law (Lewis & Clark Law School, Portland, OR.)

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Schedule A – Profile

Animal Law Reform South Africa Organisation Profile

A. WHO WE ARE

Animal Law Reform South Africa (“**ALRSA**”) is a non-profit company registered in terms of the South African Companies Act (71 of 2008) with the Companies and Intellectual Property Commission of South Africa (“**CIPC**”). We are also a registered NPO with the Department of Social Services, Number 238-234 NPO. We are in the process of registering as a Public Benefit Organisation with the South African Revenue Services.

ALRSA was informally established in in 2014 by a group of lawyers interested in animal protection. In 2017, Animal Law Reform South Africa was formally registered by lawyers from academia, practice and civil society. Attorney Amy P. Wilson and Professors David Bilchitz and Bonita Meyersfeld, are co-founders and directors of the board of ALRSA. They have a broad range of expertise and many years of experience in both human and animal legal issues.

More information on our Organisation can be found [here](#).

B. OUR VISION

ALRSA envisages a society and legal system that adequately protects both humans and nonhuman animals. We do this by to connecting issues of the law; animal wellbeing and social justice in South Africa.

C. OUR MISSION

Our mission is to:

1. achieve meaningful change and social justice by seeking the highest level of protection for both human and nonhuman animals and achieving social justice utilising the law;
2. strengthening and developing the law relating to animal and human wellbeing in South Africa and Africa (through legislative; policy; litigious and other means);



3. providing access to legal services, advice and assistance to groups aimed at the protection of animals, humans and the environment, particularly when these interests intersect;
4. educating relevant stakeholders on animal law and protection; social justice and human protection; and environmental issues - including but not limited to lawyers, learners, students, professors, veterinarians, law enforcement agencies, NGOs; government and government officials and other individuals and organisations;
5. undertaking research and academic output in the field of animal law; social justice; human and environmental protection;
6. promoting the intersectionality between animal; human; social and environmental justice;
7. engaging with all relevant stakeholders in order to achieve our Vision.

D. THE CONTEXT IN WHICH WE WORK

The South African post-apartheid legal system has focused on the advancement of human rights. Lawyers, politicians and law makers have used the Constitution's Bill of Rights as a medium to achieve social, political and economic justice. In light of the horrors and ongoing trauma of apartheid, it is not surprising that the wellbeing of animals has not featured in this national pursuit of justice.

ALRSA was founded on the principle that justice is enhanced where legal protection is available to all sentient beings. Its founding value is that human rights are enriched – not impoverished – by including animals in the notion of justice.

There is a ripe moment in South Africa's increasingly sophisticated democracy for the creation of a legal organisation, which focuses on animal law and the intersection between animal wellbeing and protection, human rights and social justice. However, the animal protection movement in South Africa consists largely of activists and no organisation exists in the country dedicated to the legal protection of animals. ALRSA fills this gap.

ALRSA intends to operate as an organisation that can be approached by all relevant stakeholders ranging from animal rights, welfare and protection organisations to the government. We are willing to engage with those involved in the utilisation of animals to better their conditions, while holding industry accountable. We therefore take a collaborative and not isolative approach and will work together, provided it falls within our mission and goals.

We believe that all animals have intrinsic worth and should have that worth protected. There are a range of things which we are not entitled to do to animals and they also have claims on us. We recognise that animal suffering and exploitation does not only affect animals, but affects people too. Animal issues are fundamentally linked with human issues.



We encourage a society where the law ensures that the vulnerable are protected and their interests accounted for. We seek to encourage and include individuals from a wide range of racial, gender and cultural backgrounds to take part in ALRSA.

E. OUR WORK

ALRSA focuses on a few key areas that we believe will bring about the most change. These focus areas include:

1. Legislative and Policy Reform
2. Litigation and Legal Services
3. Education
4. Research

F. CONCLUSION

Utilising the law as our tool, we work on intersectional issues to ensure justice for all that require it. Through education, collaboration, research and access, we believe we can achieve incremental change for vulnerable beings and ensure that their interests are accounted for in the legal system.