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Title: Ecology of the Ethiopian wolf (*Canis simensis* Rüppell 1835) in a changing landscape: Human carnivore interactions in Afroalpine ecosystems of Ethiopia

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STELLINGEN (Propositions)

Behorende bij het proefschrift:

Ecology of the Ethiopian Wolf (*Canis simensis* Rüppell, 1835) in a Changing Landscape: Human carnivore interactions in Afroalpine ecosystem of Ethiopia

- 1 Livestock grazing and unsustainable human resource use in the Afroalpine ecosystem has a potential cascading effect on the existing ecological food chain, linking Afroalpine vegetation, rodent prey base and a top predator the Ethiopian wolf (this thesis).
- 2 In the Afroalpine ecosystem the Ethiopian wolf, differently from other wolf species, predated predominantly on small mammals rather than medium and large mammals, because small mammals are relatively abundant and require less searching and capturing effort. This feeding strategy can be considered an evolutionary adaptation (this thesis).
- 3 As long as the Afroalpine range remains intact it is unlikely for the Ethiopian wolf to shift its rodent diet meal to domestic livestock. However, if the degradation of the Afroalpine habitat continues and results in a decline of rodent populations while the availability of domestic livestock increases, the Ethiopian wolf may switch to livestock as an alternative prey for survival (this thesis)
- 4 Any intervention detrimental to the Afroalpine rodent communities in particular would have repercussions for the Ethiopian wolf's survival. The ultimate extinction of the wolf would probably destabilize the dynamics of the rodent communities and their habitat (this thesis).
- 5 Most people in rural Ethiopia have a positive attitude towards the protection of ecosystem biodiversity because their livelihood is depending on the long-term persistence of ecosystem services (Ashenafi and Leader-Williams, 2005).

- 6 Discrepancies between alleged and real livestock losses to wild carnivores are not uncommon in human-carnivore conflict situations, as generally conflicts tends to stem from perceived rather than real threats to property (Treves & Karanth, 2003).
- 7 Human-wildlife conflict and the perceived economic benefits which are influenced by certain socio-economic factors, have implications for the conservation of African ecosystems and their flagship species the large carnivores (Woodroffe et al, 2005)
- 8 To ensure the survival of large carnivores in African ecosystem future conservation strategies will require assessing the connection between prey and vegetation to evaluate their suitability. The structure and population dynamics of the prey community in the area should play an essential part in this assessment. (Hayward and Kerley, 2005)
- 9 Education is seen as essential for the full accomplishment of individuals as human beings, their survival and lifelong development. As such, it is represented as a fundamental human right.
- 10 Our perception of the “fragile mother earth” has not changed and with current levels of habitat destruction and climate change, we have reached a point where “mother earth” will not be able to support our demands for certain natural resources in a few decades.
- 11 System change alone cannot guarantee organisational change. It is critical to work to change the person. When you change the person, there is a high probability for the system to change automatically. If you don't change the person, it is highly possible that your system may not change. (Derived from lectures by Dr Badeg Bekele.)