



SA WINGSHOOTERS STATEMENT OF POLICY

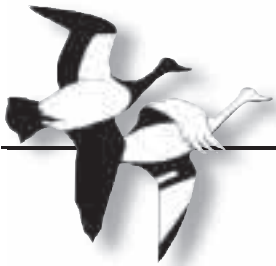
Use of Lead in Shotgun and other Ammunition



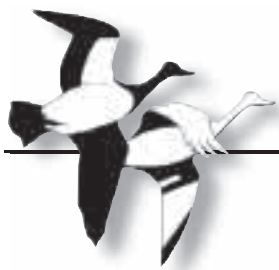
Following extensive field investigations and the evaluation of numerous scientific reports, SA Wingshooters noted with extreme concern the malicious poisoning of wildlife by pesticides, which has become widespread, the increasing pollution of drinking water systems by Endocrine Disruptive Chemicals (EDCs) and the dramatic pollution of waterways and wetlands by heavy metals including uranium, arsenic, cyanide, cadmium and radio-active polodium. SA Wingshooters concludes that poisoning by pesticides and pollution by EDCs and radioactive heavy metals constitute an environmental crisis of national disaster proportions and that lead-shot concerns constitute a distraction in the addressing of these crises.

Nevertheless, in view of the concern of certain overseas environmental and anti-hunting groups regarding the use of lead-shot in shotgun ammunition and of lead in rifle ammunition, SA Wingshooters have formulated the following policy on lead shot:

1. In view of the dearth or lack of peer-reviewed scientific evidence of lead poisoning of wildlife from ammunition, and noting that the lead in vehicle exhaust fumes and other forms of lead pollution of the air constitute a far greater health risk to man and animals alike, SA Wingshooters conclude that available scientific evidence does not justify restrictions on the use of lead-containing ammunition.
 2. It is SA Wingshooters policy to liaise with authorities regarding the use of lead shot in South Africa and that any applicable legislation be observed.
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3. SA Wingshooters will promote awareness and understanding of the recommendations on the safe and effective use of lead and non-lead shotgun ammunition among shooting people as well as those with responsibility for the management of shooting territories. SA Wingshooters will incorporate the principles into all appropriate SA Wingshooters codes of practice and publications.
 4. SA Wingshooters will continue to collaborate with the authorities, research institutions, cartridge and gun makers, as well as gun shops and retail outlets, to develop safe, effective, environmentally-acceptable and affordable non-lead ammunition and once, it becomes available, enable its users to meet SA Wingshooters's Respect for Quarry objectives.
 5. SA Wingshooters will work with statutory, non-government and land-owning organisations to ensure that all regulations and other legal provisions, such as leases and bylaws, are science-driven, proportionate and practical.
 6. SA Wingshooters will promote the policy set down in the Code of Good Shooting Practice: namely that "In order to avoid lead shot contamination of wetlands important for feeding waterfowl, non-lead shot should be used for game and pest shooting over such wetlands."
 7. SA Wingshooters is also aware that ingestion of spent lead shot does occur in some game and other birds, and that secondary lead poisoning may occur in some birds of prey feeding on birds and animals themselves carrying ingested or embedded lead shot. SA Wingshooters will continue to note their frequency, scale and potential impacts. SA Wingshooters does not consider that the current evidence of risk justifies restrictions on the use of lead shot.
 8. SA Wingshooters is aware of claims that human consumption of lead-shot game meat can result in human ingestion of some trace lead, and will take note of any adverse health or other implications, should they occur. SA Wingshooters does not consider that the anecdotal evidence of health risk currently justifies regulations on the use of lead shot in game shooting but will provide appropriate advice to consumers to minimise any ingestion of lead.
 9. Currently, most of the available alternatives to lead shot have been approved for use in American waterfowl shooting by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. In the absence of any UK or European assurance scheme, this remains the best available
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assurance that such alternatives are acceptable for similar uses in South Africa. SA Wingshooters, however, is aware that the US system does not comprehensively assess the wider environmental (including human) implications of their use. As and when new information questions any general environmental acceptability of non-lead shot types, SA Wingshooters will review its advice on their use.

10. With respect to clay target shooting, SA Wingshooters is aware of possible contamination of soil, waters, and the wider environment by spent shot. SA Wingshooters will offer advice on managing shooting ranges to control any potential contamination accordingly, and liaise with target-shooting interests to address any problems that may occur. SA Wingshooters will continue assessing technological developments which might contribute to the management of spent lead shot from such activities.
11. SA Wingshooters will continue to oppose any unwarranted restrictions on lead shot use. Restrictions must be science-based and proportionate. Debates about possible restrictions must fully involve shooting interests.
12. SA Wingshooters is aware of some concerns about the use of lead rifle ammunition, in the context of both secondary poisoning in some birds of prey feeding on animals themselves carrying fragmented lead ammunition, and possible human health hazards arising from contamination of game meat. SA Wingshooters will continue monitoring the evidence for such concerns and provide advice accordingly. SA Wingshooters is aware that currently there are no peer-reviewed scientific evidence on the negative environmental effects of rifle ammunition and that consequently there is no need for restrictions on the use of lead rifle ammunition.
13. SA Wingshooters will continue to inform and advise its members and others on matters related to the use of lead shot and lead rifle ammunition, and the responsible and effective use of realistic and practical alternatives. SA Wingshooters will liaise with relevant bodies both nationally and internationally as appropriate, and engage with governmental and non-governmental bodies in any debates over the future of all ammunition, with a view to ensuring that all types of such ammunition will continue to be available unless a substantive environmental or other problem is shown to exist which cannot be effectively managed.