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Ecology and conservation of spotted hyena (*Crocuta crocuta* Erxleben 1777) in human dominated landscapes in Northern Ethiopia

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STELLINGEN

(Propositions)

Behorende bij het proefschrift:

Ecology and conservation of spotted hyena (*Crocuta crocuta* Erxleben 1777) in human dominated landscapes in northern Ethiopia

- 1 Spotted hyenas in Tigray survive in a human dominated landscape because of a unique combination of adaptation to anthropogenic food and cultural-religious tolerance towards hyenas, which is not found elsewhere in Africa (this thesis).
- 2 Spotted hyenas are highly adaptable and opportunistic; they show a fast time bound reaction to a change in human behavior, which has not been reported for other large predators (this thesis).
- 3 Spotted hyenas in northern Ethiopia depend on livestock and anthropogenic food for their survival, even in protected areas, as a result of low densities of natural prey (this thesis).
- 4 Spotted hyenas in northern Ethiopia survive mainly by scavenging on human waste; predation on livestock is of secondary importance to bridge periods of food scarcity (this thesis).
- 5 Scavenging of hyenas on human waste is mutually beneficial; hyenas benefit from the waste humans dispose off, while human communities are provided with a waste-cleaning service by hyenas.
- 6 Spotted hyenas can apparently switch between scavenging and hunting as the opportunity arises (Susan et al., 1999).
- 7 Spotted hyenas can survive in environments from which other large predators such as cheetahs, lions, and African wild dogs have been extirpated (Mills & Hofer, 1998).

- 8 Large carnivores are forced to prey on livestock throughout Africa due to depletion of their natural prey choice and as a result are threatened by persecution and extirpation in most of their range (Mizutani, 1993).
- 9 Pleistocene man had similar survival strategies as spotted hyenas by including meat in their diet in an opportunistic way via hunting, searching for carcasses, scavenging leftovers and displacing other carnivores and stealing their prey (Bunn & Kroll, 1986).
- 10 Persecution often represents a leading source of mortality (Woodroffe & Ginsberg, 2000) and is often associated with human–carnivore conflicts (Ogutu et al., 2005; Johnson et al., 2006).
- 11 The introduction of mobile phones in Africa is the innovation with the largest impact since the invention of the wheel (Aker & Mbit, 2010).
- 12 Human population growth and poverty are the root causes of deforestation and land degradation across Ethiopia.