Dear Dr Vincent Devictor, dear editors,  
On behalf of my co-authors, I submit a research article entitled “The long-term fitness costs of wire snare injuries in a keystone terrestrial by-catch species” for publication in Biological Conservation.  
Although wire snares set by bushmeat hunters have been identified as a major cause of mortality and conservation threat to many target and non-target terrestrial species, surprisingly little is known about the fate of animals that are caught and wounded but manage to escape. This is not trivial, as any negative consequences of snare injuries on longevity or reproductive success may add to the demographic costs of immediate mortality.  
Spotted hyenas are regular by-catch of illegal bushmeat hunting of herbivores by wire snares in the Serengeti National Park and associated protected areas. Hyenas may free themselves from snares, but this often results in various degrees of injury. We demonstrate for the first time to our knowledge a long-term fitness cost of severe injuries caused by wire snares on reproductive success in a terrestrial by-catch species.  
Using three decades of detailed field data from a long-term individual-based project on spotted hyenas, we show that snaring events occur predominantly in adult females and during the dry season, when the hunting areas used by both bushmeat hunters and hyenas converge. We also show that snares that inflicted debilitating injuries on females do not reduce their own longevity but reduce their reproductive success by delaying their age at first reproduction, decreasing the size of their litters and reducing their offspring survival. We believe that these results will be of interest to conservation biologists and ecologists focusing on life history trade-offs in free-ranging wildlife populations.  
The work is all original research carried out by the authors. All authors agree with the contents of the manuscript and its submission to the journal and all authors listed on the title page have fully participated in the planning, analysis and writing of this study. Our manuscript has not been submitted for publication nor published in whole or in part elsewhere. All sources of funding are acknowledged in the title page. All appropriate ethics and other approvals were obtained for the research. We also stated that our research protocols have been approved by an authorized animal care or ethics committee, and included in the title page a reference to the code of practice adopted for the reported experimentation or methodology.  
Thank you for your consideration.