



Key conservation organisations secure global support to end canned hunting

2 September 2016

Start

The Endangered Wildlife Trust is pleased to announce another small victory for the fight against canned lion hunting. The EWT, in association with Wildlands, the South African Wildlife College (SAWC), and a range of other organisations, has supported the initiative spearheaded by Blood Lions™ to secure global conservation support to stop the canned hunting and non-conservation based captive breeding of lion and other predators.

This support will be formally announced at the IUCN World Conservation Congress, which is taking place in Hawaii from the 1st to 10th September. The IUCN – the International Union for the Conservation of Nature - is the world's largest and most diverse environmental network, with over 1,300 member organisations and support from over 16,000 environmental experts.

The IUCN support flows from a formal motion submitted by the Blood Lions™ team and partners, to the IUCN membership. This motion has been approved by an overwhelming majority (Category A IUCN members-governments and government agencies: 78% Yes, 22% no; Category B IUCN members-NGOs: 83% yes, 17% no) and will be adopted during the congress.

The motion recognises:

- That the continued breeding of lions for the specific purpose of 'canned lion hunting' or 'canned lion shooting', by sectors of the wildlife industry in South Africa has escalated. 'Canned hunting' is regarded as a situation where an animal is physically unable to escape from a restricted enclosure and/or is captive bred and mentally disinclined to escape due to humanisation as a result of hand-rearing, petting of young animals and close human contact in captive facilities;
- That professional hunting associations within South Africa and internationally oppose the hunting of animals under 'canned' conditions;
- The limited scope of legal options currently available to the South African Government to terminate 'canned lion hunting';
- That most South African captive lion breeding facilities do not conform to or comply with the animal welfare standards published by the International Organisation for Animal health;
- That welfare matters associated with the captive breeding of lion are currently not regulated through appropriate legislative provisions;



- That enhanced compliance monitoring and enforcement is required to ensure compliance with existing legislative provisions relating to captive breeding facilities;
- That there is a need to undertake research to determine whether the captive breeding of lion has a conservation role and the impact of hunting of captive populations on wild lion populations;
- That the IUCN Species Survival Commission's Cat Specialist Group has not identified captive breeding as a conservation action; and
- That captive breeding of lions has not been identified as a conservation action in any African Lion Conservation Planning Programme.

The motion requests the IUCN Director General, relevant Commissions and the South African National IUCN Members Committee to encourage the South African Government, as well as all other southern African Governments, to support this initiative by reviewing existing legislative provisions regulating this activity and drafting, enacting and implementing legislation by 2020 and giving reasonable time frames to:

- a) develop and implement norms and standards, supported by the South African Scientific Authority, that define the conditions under which the hunting of Lions is regarded as "canned hunting" and to legally prohibit the hunting of lions under these conditions';
- b) restrict captive breeding of lions to registered zoos or registered facilities that demonstrate a clear conservation benefit;
- c) develop norms and standards for the management of captive-bred lions in South Africa that address welfare, biodiversity and utilisation aspects (including new emerging uses such as harvesting of lion for the bone and meat trade), taking into account Threatened or Protected Species (ToPS) regulations, legislation and IUCN guidelines governing this activity; and
- d) ensure compliance with, and enforcement of, all relevant legislation.

After the motion has been formally approved at the Congress, the IUCN Director General and IUCN Commissions will be requested to take the necessary actions to provide the guidance, leadership, support and international lobbying that may be required by the South African Government to enable the motion; and encourage and provide support for other Member States in southern Africa to follow this initiative.



The EWT has been fighting canned Lion hunting over the years through a number of initiatives, including:

- Running awareness campaigns around the link between cub petting and canned hunting through [position statements](#), public presentations and media campaigns.
- Working with Fair Trade Tourism to develop criteria for sustainable wildlife volunteer tourism that does not provide for hands on interactions with large carnivores.
- Lobbying government to amend legislation to end the practice.
- Investigating the legalities of Lion captive breeding facilities through permit analysis.
- Working with the Centre for Environmental Rights to investigate novel legal avenues that can be used to end the practice.

End.

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