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Civil society organisations welcome new Parliamentary report that calls for a ban on captive lion breeding

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The [Centre for Environmental Rights](#) (CER) and the [Endangered Wildlife Trust](#) (EWT) have come out strongly in favour of a new Parliamentary report that calls for a ban on captive lion breeding in the country. Entitled [Captive Lion Breeding for Hunting and Bone Trade in South Africa](#), the new report finds:

1. Captive lion breeding holds no conservation value;
2. There is no evidence to support the flawed, minority-held, argument that the captive-bred lion industry is “a well-regulated, manageable industry that contributes way more positively to South Africa than negatively”;
3. The South African government should rethink its policy stance on the captive lion breeding industry, which runs the risk of making the country an “international pariah”;
4. The increase in the lion bone export quote from 800 in 2017 to 1500 in 2018 is “highly problematic”;
5. There are ethical, welfare* and brand concerns relating to the captive lion breeding and hunting industries;
6. The use of lion parts in commercial trade is one of the major emerging threats to wild lions and could facilitate illegal trade;
7. It is concerning that the current export quotas were not based on scientific evidence and that the 2017 quota was not been adequately managed, resulting in more than 800 skeletons being exported.

The 24-page report – adopted by the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Environmental Affairs (PCEA) during a special meeting on 8 November – followed a PCEA colloquium held on 21 and 22 August 2018. It was, reportedly, the longest and best-attended Parliamentary colloquium held in recent years. During the special meeting last week, the PCEA resolved that:

1. The Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) should urgently initiate a legislative and policy review of the captive lion breeding industry with a view to putting an end to this practice, and the Minister of Environmental Affairs should report quarterly to the PECA on progress in this regard.

2. DEA should conduct an audit of captive lion and cheetah breeding facilities to assess legislative compliance.
3. DEA and the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) should present a clear programme and timeframes to deal with welfare* and health issues relating to captive-bred lions.

“We hope that this is the beginning of a just and equitable system for the management of captive lions and other wild animals bred for commercial use in South Africa, and we look forward to participating in the policy and legislative review of the industry,” said CER attorney, Aadila Agjee.

EWT CEO, Yolán Friedman, concluded: “We welcome the PCEA’s resolutions and commend the Honourable Chair and Members for their close consideration of this important issue, and the hard work that went into the colloquium and its outcome. The EWT has actively fought against the torrid industry of captive lion breeding, shooting, and bone trade for over a decade. We welcome this report that acknowledges the widely held stance by most South Africans, and all lion biologists and experts, that this industry is nothing but a blight on the conservation pedigree that South Africa should otherwise be able to claim.”

*See the CER and EWT report [Fair Game](#) for a comprehensive set of recommendations on improving the legal and practical regulation of the well-being of wild animals. This report was funded by the [Lewis Foundation](#).

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