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Hunting Lions: Unpalatable But Necessary For Conservation?

Which is why I'm not happy about the ESA petition. If American hunters, by far the largest market for big game safaris in Africa, can no longer hunt, lions and other wildlife will probably lose out. As unpalatable as it may be, until we find alternative mechanisms to generate the hard cash required to protect wilderness in Africa, hunting remains the most convincing model for many wild areas.

Let me state it again; I think sport hunting big cats is repellent and I would welcome its demise. But my personal distaste for hunting won't help lions if shutting it down removes protection from African wilderness. Whatever one's personal feeling, hunting should be regarded as yet another tool in the arsenal of options we must consider if we are to conserve the lion. Without doubt, the entire process that allows hunting big cats in Africa needs a complete overhaul to purge its widespread excesses and enforce far stricter limits on which lions can be hunted and how many. That would force hunters to produce the conservation benefits of which they constantly boast but only rarely produce. That -- rather than the nuclear option of eliminating hunting -- should be our goal.

Read the Guardian's "[African lions under threat from a growing predator: the American hunter](#)" with quotes from Dr. Luke Hunter.

Learn what *Panthera* is doing to conserve Africa's lions through "[Project Leonardo](#)".

[Dr. Luke Hunter](#) is the Executive Vice President at *Panthera*, where he oversees the direction and strategy of all of *Panthera*'s wild cat conservation programs. Hunter has conducted fieldwork on large cats in Africa since 1992. His current projects include assessing the effects of sport hunting and illegal persecution on leopards outside protected areas, developing a conservation strategy for lions across their African range, and the first intensive study of Persian leopards and the last surviving Asiatic cheetahs in Iran. Dr. Hunter has contributed to over 100 scientific papers and popular articles, and has just completed his 6th book -- A Field Guide to Carnivores of the World, to be released September 2011.

[Panthera](#), founded in 2006, is the world's leading organization devoted exclusively to the conservation of wild cats and their ecosystems. Utilizing the expertise of the world's premier cat biologists, *Panthera* develops and implements global conservation strategies for the largest, most imperiled cats - tigers, lions, jaguars and snow leopards. Representing the most comprehensive effort of its kind, *Panthera* works in partnership with local and international NGOs, scientific institutions, local communities and governments. Visit us at www.panthera.org

Save The Rhino Part 2

John Hume, Owner of Mauricedale Game Ranch, South Africa
Presentation to the CIC General Assembly, St. Petersburg

Our rhino are in a terrible crisis .We have to find a way to protect rhino or they will become extinct very shortly. Rhino are vulnerable and totally dependent on wise men for their survival.

It is estimated that 50 years ago there were a 100,000 rhino in Africa with probably 2,000 – 3,000 in South Africa and 97,000 or 98,000 in the rest of Africa. This figure has now inverted with a total of about 26,000 rhino of which approximately 22,000 are in South Africa and 4,000 in the rest of Africa. So 98,000 in the rest of Africa have become 4,000 while 2,000 in South Africa have become 22,000. South Africa kept the poachers at bay while rhino were wiped out in most of Africa.

Now in South Africa we are facing the scourge and we are having one rhino poached every day. Clearly we have done too little to help the rhino - or rather what we have done has been the wrong thing. To make things worse the consumers or Pseudo hunters, as I call them, are demanding probably 98% of the legally hunted rhino and killing them in such a way as to blacken the reputation of genuine trophy hunters.

In order to sustainably produce rhino, we have to encourage private owners to breed them as they are simply better at protecting their rhino than the Governments of Africa have been. Unfortunately the opposite has occurred in the last 10 years where the private owners in South Africa have been dramatically discouraged from breeding rhino by onerous and punitive legislation. Rhino horn re-grows so, if it could be farmed sustainably and the farmers were allowed to make a profit from horn production, they would never need to sell an animal to be killed by a horn consumer and that is also happening every day in South Africa.

The one thing that we should be doing for our rhino is breeding as many as possible and killing as few as possible but everything that we are doing is aiming at the opposite. Why can't we wake up and realize that the rhino could produce an income for communities, emergent black farmers and commercial farmers and that the owners of rhino would never want to kill them if they were making a sustainable income from them. In other words they would not kill the goose that was laying golden eggs.

When the poachable rhino in the rest of Africa had diminished dramatically the Eastern demand found that they could legally pseudo sport hunt rhino in South Africa. Then about 3 years ago when the South African government became aware of this they drastically reduced the permits and visas issued to Eastern hunters and poaching dramatically escalated.

I think the government and the conservationist in South Africa towards the end of last year considered that the better of the two evils would be to issue more permits for hunting in an attempt to stop the poaching because at least the hunting permits would

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For hunter-conservationists and all people who are interested in the conservation, management and the sustainable use of Africa's wild natural resources. The publication and distribution of African Indaba is supported by the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation CIC www.cic-wildlife.org



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Save The Rhino – Part 2*

be utilized predominantly for male rhino whereas poaching is indiscriminate often targeting pregnant cows as well as cows with small calves. Now I have become aware of the most bizarre and terrible situation involving the rhino. It turns out that it has become more attractive to a pseudo hunter to kill a young six or eight year old bull with a horn of 16 – 20 in. rather than a trophy bull of 28 – 30 in. This is because the hunter pays by the kilo of horn on the dead rhino and the horn of a young animal apparently is cheaper by the kilo. Thus we are killing the very rhino which are capable of saving their species from extinction as they can produce one kilo of rhino horn per year for the next 30 – 35 years if it was harvested regularly from the live rhino. It has been proven that it is possible to safely and painlessly dehorn rhino without much stress.

We could thus face the situation where we had the capability of sustainably producing enough horn to keep the poachers at bay and increase the numbers of our rhino population, but where we allowed this to slip through our fingers by killing the very animals that could sustainably produce the horn that could save our rhino from extinction. When the white rhino was taken off CITES Appendix 1, South Africa was allowed to trophy hunt white rhino and get a CITES permit to export the trophy and it was this that gave the Eastern pseudo hunter the gap to kill rhino and export the trophy. If we put white rhino back to Appendix 1, it would also be the death knell for our rhino population because our poaching would merely escalate to higher levels as no rhino horn could be legally acquired.

There is only one hope for the rhino in Africa and that is to continue our efforts to increase our anti-poaching coupled with the legalizing of the trade in rhino horn. This would enable farmers to sustainably produce and harvest rhino horn without killing the rhino when it is destined for consumer use rather than trophies. When a genuine trophy hunter requires a trophy it will not impact on the production of horn because the large trophy animals are all near the end of their productive life; unlike the young animals that are currently being slaughtered for the consumer trade rather than for the trophy hunter.

I feel incredibly helpless in the face of what I consider is the impending extinction of the rhino in Africa and I feel that the people who could do something about it are either standing by with folded arms or are completely unaware or uncaring that the rhino will become extinct.

Please consider the following: The existing wildlife conservation agencies have failed, failed spectacularly, to conserve rhino over the past 50 years, and they show no signs of changing the strategy. To continue the same failed strategy and hope for different results is insanity. A regulated trade in horn has the best chance of solving the problem and a few good brains that understand how markets work could produce a much better strategy.

I repeat - rhino are vulnerable and totally dependent on wise men for their survival. I plead with you to go back to your

home country and persuade your delegate to CITES not to rely on the continuation of the trade ban, as being the solution. Southern Africa has the capacity to supply, on a sustainable basis, all the horn the medicine market demands, horn sourced from natural death, existing legal stock piles, and sustainable, legal farmed horn. There is no need to kill one animal for the consumers of horn as they do not need a trophy. It is an absurd situation! We could without poaching have 50,000 rhino in 12 years. That should be our target and our measurable bottom line.

Dynamics And Underlying Causes Of Illegal Bushmeat Trade In Zimbabwe

P. A. Lindsey, S. S. Romanach, S. Matema, C. Matema, I. Mupamhadzi and J. Muvengwi

Abstract

The prevalence and impacts of the illegal trade in bushmeat are under appreciated in Southern Africa, despite indications that it constitutes a serious conservation threat in parts of the region. Bushmeat trade has emerged as a severe threat to wildlife conservation and the viability of wildlife-based land uses in Zimbabwe during a period of political instability and severe economic decline. We conducted a study around Save' Valley Conservancy in the South-East Lowveld of Zimbabwe to investigate the dynamics and underlying causes of the bushmeat trade, with the objective of developing solutions. We found that bushmeat hunting is conducted mainly by unemployed young men to generate cash income, used mostly to purchase food. Bushmeat is mainly sold to people with cash incomes in adjacent communal lands and population centers and is popular by virtue of its affordability and availability. Key drivers of the bushmeat trade in the South-East Lowveld include: poverty, unemployment and food shortages, settlement of wildlife areas by impoverished communities that provided open access to wildlife resources, failure to provide stakes for communities in wildlife-based land uses, absence of affordable protein sources other than illegally sourced bushmeat, inadequate investment in anti-poaching in areas remaining under wildlife management, and weak penal systems that do not provide sufficient deterrents to illegal bushmeat hunters. Each of these underlying causes needs to be addressed for the bushmeat trade to be tackled effectively. However, in the absence of political and economic stability, controlling illegal bushmeat hunting will remain extremely difficult and the future of wildlife-based land uses will remain bleak.

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