

CAMPAIGN TO

B A N

**TROPHY
HUNTING**

ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM: TROPHY HUNTING & THE UK



Briefing note—November 2018

Introduction: "Trophy hunting is not brave".

Some of the world's most extraordinary wildlife has been decimated by persecution and habitat loss. Elephants, lions, leopards, cheetahs and rhinos are all fighting for their lives. We could see all of them go extinct within a generation. When you've got a scattered, dwindling population, the loss of a handful of animals doesn't just cause a ripple effect - it can be like a tsunami wave.

Trophy hunting has always been senseless cruelty. Letting people kill them because they think it's entertaining is just insane, especially when you're talking about wildlife with such a vulnerable status.

Bill Oddie OBE

A) Global Overview

From 2006 to 2015, approximately **350,000** hunting trophies from over **300** wildlife species were 'traded' around the world.

The largest numbers of animal trophies and body parts came from African **elephants** (76,000); black **bears** (59,000); Nile **crocodiles** (53,000); **hippopotamus** (28,000) and African **lions** (14,500).

CITES, the international agreement that oversees wildlife trade in order to protect vulnerable species, allows trophy hunting of endangered animals with permits. It classifies trophy hunting and scientific research as non-commercial activities.

Global figures for 2016 show that **1203** trophies were taken from the most endangered category of species ("Appendix I") as defined by CITES, including 798 **leopards**, 137 **cheetahs**, 118 **elephants** (out of a total of 2256 elephants, the rest from countries where they are in the second most threatened category, "Appendix II"), 8 **lions** (out of a total of 908 lions), as well as 9 **white rhinos**, 6 **black rhinos**, 2 **polar bears**, and 1 **tiger**.

There has been a boom in the 'canned hunting' industry, where trophy hunters kill their chosen game in fixed enclosures. There are approximately **200** 'lion farms' in South Africa with an estimated population of over **8,000** animals - **three times** the country's wild lion population.

The canned hunting industry is often linked to 'sanctuaries' for cubs who in many cases have been removed from their mothers. Animals in cub-petting and lion walking holiday centres often end up in canned hunting facilities once they get older.

Scientists have found unsustainable trophy hunting is directly leading to declines in lion populations. Hunting and poaching is currently outstripping the reproductive rate of elephants. Trophy hunting was behind the dramatic decline of the dorcas gazelle in the 1980s, and the extermination of the Nubian bustard from Sahelian Africa.

Trophy hunters prize animals with the biggest tusks or manes. Elephant tusk sizes are now reducing in some areas and there have been more frequent sightings of tuskless animals, indicating a weakening of the gene pool.

Investigators have uncovered instances of criminal gangs using trophy hunting as a 'front' through which to procure wildlife parts for illegal commercial trading. Around **300** rhino horns were exported by "pretend" trophy hunters between 2009-2014. There is currently a fast-growing trade in lion bones for use in Chinese 'traditional medicines'.

Hunting groups such as Safari Club International promote 'award' schemes that actively encourage hunting of the "**Big 5**" (lions, leopards, elephants, buffalos, and rhinos). Its Global Hunting Award requires hunters to kill a minimum of **12** native species in Africa, while its "**Cats of the World**" prize targets lions, leopards, cheetahs, jaguars, and cougars among others. Other awards include the "Africa29", requiring kills of no fewer than **29** different African wildlife species.

Schemes that reward hunters for killing animals with bows and arrows are adding to concerns about the welfare impact of trophy hunting. High wounding rates of up to **50%** have been reported. Many trophy hunters are poor shots, and there are recorded instances of animals taking several days to die. Trophy hunters avoid head shots that may result in a speedier kill as this may 'spoil' the trophy.

The total number of jobs in Africa created by trophy hunting is no more than **15,500**, despite 150 million people living in the main game hunting countries and that hunting estates take up 16.5% of those countries' areas. The contribution to individual African countries' GDP is at most **0.03%** of the total. According to UN figures, wildlife tourism generates over **40 times** as much revenue as trophy hunting.

Elephant numbers have fallen from around 20 million in the 1800s, 10 million at the start of the 20th century, to around 415,000 today. One third of all African Elephants are now in one country, Botswana, which has been a trophy hunting-free zone for several years. There are concerns the new President may lift the trophy hunting ban there. Lions numbered around 450,000 in the 1940s - there are just 20,000 today. Less than 2 centuries ago, there were 1 million rhinos: today there are 20,000 white rhinos left and only 5,000 black rhinos.

B) U.K. & Trophy Hunting

Britain has played a noticeable role in the trade in endangered species. Between 2007-2016, UK hunters brought home **2638** trophies, of which **389 (15%)** were from the most endangered 'Appendix I' species. UK hunters also brought home **923.1kg of elephant tusk ivory**.

The most popular trophies for UK hunters were **elephants (729)**, **hippopotamus (337)**, **black bears (298)**, **species of baboon (193)**, **leopards (159)**, **zebras (142)**, **lions (91)** and **caracals (85)**. On average, British hunters brought home **242** trophies a year.

The UK government promised to ban lion trophy imports in 2015 in the wake of 'Cecil-gate' unless there were significant improvements in the industry. Despite few changes, the promise has so far gone unfulfilled. Countries including Australia, France and the Netherlands have introduced hunting trophy import bans.

C) Action required

The **Campaign to Ban Trophy Hunting (CBTH)** believes that trophy hunting undermines genuine conservation and brings no real benefits to local communities.

CBTH wants to see an immediate halt to the trade in trophies of vulnerable or threatened species; calls on Governments to ban trophy hunting and imports/exports of hunting trophies; a closing of trophy hunting 'loopholes' within international conservation conventions and agreements; and a comprehensive global agreement ending trophy hunting.

We also wish to see greater support for wildlife tourism and other humane and sustainable activities that protect wildlife and benefit local communities; and effective enforcement of laws against trophy hunting, with meaningful penalties for offenders.

We strongly urge Members of Parliament to support EDM 1829 (“Trophy Hunting”):

“That this House notes with concern that hundreds of hunting trophies have been imported into the UK in recent years, including from species threatened with extinction such as elephants, lions, hippopotamus, leopards, and rhinoceros; Notes that trophy hunting is having a negative impact on wildlife through the loss of significant numbers of healthy individuals that are key to the survival of rapidly declining populations; that unsustainable rates of trophy hunting have caused some populations of Africa’s big cats to decline, and that hunting and poaching is outpacing their rate of reproduction; Believes that trophy hunting is cruel, immoral, archaic and unjustifiable, and can act as a cover of illegal poaching; Further believes that a global end to trophy hunting is desirable, and that nature tourism is a humane and more effective means of conserving wildlife and supporting local communities; Calls on the government to commit to halting imports of hunting trophies as a matter of urgency.”

CAMPAIGN TO BAN TROPHY HUNTING

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