



# TROPHY HUNTING:

## Key arguments

**A: DEVASTATING IMPACT:** **1.7 million** trophies were taken by hunters over the past decade - **200,000** were from endangered species. **10,000** lion trophies have been taken in the last 10 years... there are now just **20,000** lions left in the wild. Britain imports trophies of critically endangered animals.

**B: GOOD FOR CONSERVATION?** Wildlife numbers are declining in trophy hunting areas. Poaching remains rife there too. **97%** of hunting revenues stay within the industry. Trophy hunting generates at most **0.03%** of GDP in African nations. Photographic safaris generate **40** times more.

**C: BRITAIN'S ROLE:** Britain is one of the world's **Top 12** countries both for elephant trophy hunting & hunting of 'canned lions' (lions that are factory-farmed for 'cut-price, guaranteed and untarnished' trophies - they're bred in enclosures and don't have scars typical of wild lions from fights etc).

### Key Issues

1. **ETHICS:** Killing animals for amusement is not acceptable in modern society. Killing a cat for 'fun' is illegal, so why should killing a wild cat for fun be acceptable? Trophy hunters kill huge numbers of harmless, defenceless animals such as zebras and giraffes.
2. **SPORT:** It's not a fair, equal contest when a trophy hunter is using a high velocity rifle from 200 yards. British hunters go to South African canned hunting farms to kill lions bred for the bullet and for the bone trade: it's like shooting a zoo animal or fish in a barrel.
3. **SUFFERING:** Up to 50% of animals are wounded not killed. Some animals take hours or even days to die: Cecil's death took at least 11 hours. Trophy hunting associations hand out special awards to hunters who kill animals with handguns, bow & arrow or muzzle-loaders.
4. **TARGETS:** The species preferred by trophy hunters – eg lions, elephants, leopards etc – are all vanishing. There were 1.3 million elephants in the 1980s; there are 400,000 today. If trophy hunting is good for conservation (as the industry claims) then why are hunters' favourite species disappearing?
5. **THREATS:** The world's wildlife is already disappearing thanks to habitat loss, persecution, poaching, and hunting. Climate change is a new threat. Trophy hunting is an utterly unnecessary – and devastating - additional pressure.

6. **SELECTION:** trophy hunters crave the 'biggest and best' eg manes, tusks. Removing these animals from the gene pool weakens the species. Elephants are evolving to grow shorter tusks. But long tusks are needed to find water in dry river-beds during droughts.
7. **PLUNDERING:** Hunting groups encourage the taking of huge numbers of rare animals. Safari Club International alone has 80 different prizes. They include awards for killing all 'Africa Big Five'. Some awards require hunters to kill 100 or even 200 or more different animals.
8. **FUNDING:** a US Congressional study found little evidence to support claims that hunting revenues support conservation. It found trophy hunting was directly responsible for the decline of big cats, and that hunting and poaching was outstripping elephant birth rates.
9. **POACHING:** Trophy hunters claim the industry deters poachers. In fact poachers have used hunting permits as a cover to trade in illegal rhino horns. For an elephant killed for its tusks, it makes little difference if it's been killed by a poacher or trophy hunter.
10. **LOBBYING:** The industry lobbies CITES and national governments to remove protections on rare animals. Right now they are fighting to stop moves to protect giraffes, which are freely hunted without restriction and increasingly endangered as a result.
11. **PRIORITIES:** The trophy hunting industry isn't interested in conservation or helping African communities. Their priority is to protect what they call "hunters' rights" and what Safari Club International President (and NRA Board member) Paul Babaz calls the "freedom to hunt whatever we choose".
12. **LAWS:** CITES prohibits trade in the most vulnerable species unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'. However trophy hunters are exempted. Trophy hunters are permitted to shoot even species listed as 'critically endangered' on the IUCN Red List.
13. **REGULATIONS:** CITES monitoring is shambolic. Two-thirds of import/export records for hunting trophies last year show discrepancies. Many records are unable to identify the country of origin, even of trophies from the world's most endangered species.
14. **THE UK:** in 1995, the government pledged to ban lion trophy imports after Cecil, then went back on the promise. France, Holland and Australia have banned them. Cheetah trophies are banned in the US, but are allowed into the UK.



# FACT SHEET: UK Hunting Trophy Imports

UK hunters have taken growing numbers of trophies since CITES began collecting data in 1981. At least **5,000** trophies have been taken by British big game hunters. (Assuming an average of 12.5kg per tusk, the 1,241.1kg of ivory represents approximately 100 trophies to add to the total of 4961).

**Twelve times** as many trophies were taken between 2010-2017 as were taken in the decade from 1981-1990. (2017 is the most recent year for which full figures are available).

YEARS	NO. OF HUNTING TROPHIES
1981-1990	<b>171</b> + 192KG IVORY
1991-2000	<b>677</b> + 20KG IVORY
2001-2010	<b>1963</b>
2011-2017	<b>2075</b> + 1029.1KG IVORY
2018	<b>75</b> (PROVISIONAL FIGURES)
TOTAL	<b>4961</b> + 1,241.1KG OF IVORY

**Elephants** are by far the most popular trophy species for British big game hunters. Over **1000** trophies of elephants have been taken by hunters as well as over **1 tonne of ivory**.

Hundreds of trophies have also been taken of **hippopotamus, bears, leopards, zebras, and lions**. Large numbers of primates – including various species of **baboon and monkey** – have been killed, as have other big and medium-sized cats including **cheetahs, lynxes and wild cats**.

**Wild sheep, goats and pigs** also appear on the list. The figures do not include species that are not CITES-listed but which are popular among trophy hunters, such as **giraffe**.

TOP 10 UK TROPHY IMPORTS (1981-2017)	NUMBER OF TROPHIES
1. African Elephant	<b>1083</b> + 1357.1kg ivory
2. Hippopotamus	<b>622</b>
3. Black Bear	<b>532</b>
4. Leopard	<b>323</b>
5. Zebra (Hartmann)	<b>278</b>
6. Lion	<b>256</b>
7. Chacma baboon	<b>247</b>
8. Lechwe	<b>204</b>
9. Nile crocodile	<b>161</b>
10. Caracal cat	<b>157</b>

Other species taken by British trophy hunters include wolf (132), brown bear (126), Hamadrayas baboon (82), Tsessebe (59), Grivet Monkey (55), Vervet Monkey (54), White rhino (43), wild cat (42), Bontebok (40), Yellow baboon (36), Blue Duiker (34), and Cougar (31).

The CITES database reveals that – since the 1980s - permits have been issued allowing the import into the UK of hunting trophies from a number of the world’s most endangered species, including animals that have gone extinct in the wild.

TROPHY IMPORTED INTO UK	RED LIST STATUS
Tiger (panthera tigris) & Amur tiger (panthera tigris altaica)	ENDANGERED. DECREASING. 2154-3159 INDIVIDUALS
Pygmy hippopotamus (hexaprotodon liberiensis or choeropsis liberiensis)	ENDANGERED. DECREASING. 2000-2499 INDIVIDUALS
Black rhinoceros (dicerus bicornis)	CRITICALLY ENDANGERED. 4880 INDIVIDUALS
Dama gazelle (nanger dama)	CRITICALLY ENDANGERED. DECREASING. 100-200 INDIVIDUALS
Arabian oryx (oryx leucoryx)	VULNERABLE. WENT EXTINCT IN WILD IN 1972. 1000 INDIVIDUALS
Addax (addax nasomaculatus)	CRITICALLY ENANGERED. DECREASING. 30-90 INDIVIDUALS.
Markhor (Capra falconeri)	NEAR THREATENED. 5,754 INDIVIDUALS
Scimitar-horned (Oryx dammah)	EXTINCT IN THE WILD

British hunters have taken **705** trophies from some of the world’s most endangered animals since CITES came into force. Among the trophies of CITES Appendix I species imported by British hunters are **black rhinos, cheetahs, leopards, a rare sea turtle, and tigers**. The list of imported species is below.

- Addax
- Arabian oryx
- Black rhino
- Cape mountain zebra
- Caracals in South Africa
- Cheetah
- Dama gazelle
- Elephants in Mozambique, Zambia, Tanzania, Cameroon, Zimbabwe and South Africa
- Hawksbill sea turtle
- Leopard
- Markhor
- Nile crocodiles in Mozambique, Tanzania and South Africa
- Scimitar oryx
- Tiger
- White rhino



# BRIEFING: “Trophy Hunting & Conservation”

“Big game hunting, in terms of conservation, does not work”- IUCN

The ‘if it pays it stays’ model of using hunting revenues to pay for supposed conservation is a failed one. IUCN describes it as **“a largely exhausted management system”**<sup>1</sup>. While it **“serves individual interests”** it does not serve **“those of conservation, governments or local communities”**.

The primary reason for this assessment is that **“the poor socio-economic returns on big game hunting”** - **“its lower performance levels in terms of conservation do not make it a priority solution for land use or conservation in the future.”**

It describes the theory of trophy hunting as a contributor to conservation as one **“developed around thirty years ago, according to which wildlife had an economic value which would convince local communities to preserve it”**. However **“all the figures, maps and data consulted show that this theory is in fact untenable and that the economic value is not sufficient to generate the expected behaviour change.”**

A review conducted by US Congressional researchers supports the IUCN report’s conclusions: **“Claiming that trophy hunting benefits imperilled species is significantly easier than finding evidence to substantiate it.”**<sup>2</sup> The US study concluded that **“the evidence shows that trophy hunting is having negative impacts across sub Saharan Africa.”**

The US report goes on to dismiss two of the key premises put forward by proponents of trophy hunting as a conservation tool: **“Our analysis shows that trophy hunting cannot be assumed to have a conservation benefit on the strength of a guarantee that hunters’ fees will flow to communities or wildlife agencies”**. It adds: **“It is difficult to consistently conclude that any particular trophy import would enhance the survival of a species.”**

A number of research papers identified by the US report highlight some of the causes behind trophy hunting’s negative impact on wildlife and habitat conservation. Palazy et al (2011), for instance, found that **“because humans value rarity, targeted species that are threatened are likely to be disproportionately hunted, thereby becoming even more vulnerable, which could eventually push them to extinction.”**

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<sup>1</sup> “Big game hunting in west Africa – what is its contribution to conservation?” IUCN, PAPACO STUDIES no.2, 2009

<sup>2</sup> “Missing the Mark – African trophy hunting fails to show consistent conservation benefits”, a report by the Democratic Staff of the House Committee on Natural Resources

Andrew Loveridge, the UK lion scientist who famously radio-collared and monitored Cecil the lion until the animal's death in 2015, criticises the approach of promoting hunting to support conservation: **"If the commoditisation of wild animals by the hunting industry doesn't pay for conservation, the refrain of 'if it pays it stays' starts to sound worryingly hollow and not dissimilar to a protection racket."**<sup>3</sup>

As a result of his experience monitoring lions in Hwange, Zimbabwe, he points an accusing finger at the trophy hunting industry: **"In our study of lion population biology in Hwange National Park, trophy hunting had the single most significant effect, with levels of hunting mortality exceeding deaths of lions in conflict with people or killed in wire snares set by poachers. It far outstrips natural levels of mortality."**

US Congressman Raul M Grijalva, Chairman of the US House of Representatives Natural Resources Committee, believes that the balance of evidence clearly shows that the impacts of trophy hunting are negative for conservation:

**"While trophy hunting has benefited at-risk species in rare circumstances, most hunts cannot be considered good for a species' survival. Taking that claim at face value is no longer a serious option. Anyone who wants to see these animals survive needs to look at the evidence in front of us."**<sup>4</sup>

An editorial in Africa Geographic entitled "Trophy Hunting in Africa is in decline and no longer pays its way", echoes the various assessments made by IUCN, Andrew Loveridge and Rep Grijalva among others:

**"Hunting used to be a conservation tool, but in the great majority of cases it no longer plays this role and will not do so in the future. The absence of the economic profitability of big game/trophy hunting confirm that consumptive management cannot generate sufficient income to conserve nature."**<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> "Lion Hearted – the life and death of Cecil and the future of Africa's iconic cats", Andrew Loveridge

<sup>4</sup> "New analysis: trophy hunting fails to show consistent conservation benefits", Annamiticus.com, Rhishja Cota, June 20 2016

<sup>5</sup> "Trophy Hunting in Africa is in decline and no longer pays its way", Africa Geographic, March 8, 2019, editorial



# Reasons to Ban Trophy Hunting!

1. An IUCN Red Data analysis on lions says trophy hunting is one of the main contributors to what it calls an “astonishing” decline of 42% of the continent’s total lion population.
2. A report from the US House of Representatives says the combined rate of trophy hunting and poaching is out-stripping the fertility rate of African elephants.
3. The giraffe population of sub-Saharan Africa has experienced a 40% drop in the previous decade, largely caused by trophy hunting largely. The trophy hunting industry is fighting proposals to protect giraffes from hunting.
4. Tuskless elephants, reduced tusk sizes and the virtual disappearance of ‘big tuskers’ are just some of the indicators of hunting’s impact. Trophy hunters are taking animals that are the most evolutionary fit and possess the genes a population needs to adapt and survive.
5. The genetic diversity of lions has reduced by 15% in the last 100 years. Removing just 5% of healthy male lions could now be enough to tip lions irretrievably towards extinction.
6. Unlike the US Administration, the UK government permits the import of trophies of cheetahs. The cheetah population is estimated at approximately 6,700 adults. It has experienced a decline of 89% from its historic range.
7. Canned hunting is fuelling the trade in animal bones and encouraging poaching. Lions are being taken from the wild in order to ‘refresh’ bloodlines in lion ‘factory farms’ and counter problems of disease and in-breeding.
8. Wildlife trafficking ‘kingpins’ involved in the illegal rhino horn trade are also involved in the fast—growing lion canned hunting industry and bone trade.
9. Captive game farms also breed cheetahs, leopards, jaguars, caracals and even tigers to be shot for ‘sport’.
10. Studies throughout Africa show significant declines in key species in areas where trophy hunting occurs. Populations had declined in more than half the areas studied by IUCN.
11. In a major report on the conservation impacts of trophy hunting, IUCN concludes: “big game hunting, in terms of conservation, does not work.”
12. Hunting companies contribute only 3% of their revenue to communities living in hunting areas.
13. The trophy hunting industry creates very few jobs in local communities. In the whole of West Africa, the number of jobs created has been estimated at 400 permanent staff and 400 temporary staff.
14. The contribution of hunting to the national budget is highest in Tanzania – but it is still only 0.3% despite using 26% of the national land area.
15. An investigation by the US Congress found what it called many troubling examples of hunting fees supposedly destined for conservation or local communities being diverted.
16. In 2017, a Rural District Council in Zimbabwe sold permits to a safari hunting company to shoot 50 elephants in order to fund the construction of a football stadium.
17. Scientists who have dared to expose corruption or mismanagement have been expelled.

18. Trophy hunting permits have been used for illegal poaching operations, including killing rhinos for horns worth hundreds of millions of dollars.
19. Allowing rich foreign hunters to kill wildlife for 'sport' that Africans are not permitted to kill even for food heightens feelings of injustice and sends mixed messages which increase poaching problems.
20. Many countries which have a thriving trophy hunting industry also have devastating levels of poaching. They include Tanzania, Mozambique and Zimbabwe.
21. The sums invested in anti-poaching operations by the trophy hunting industry are insignificant. The average spend in Tanzania by trophy hunting operators was US\$0.18 per hectare.
22. By contrast the figure for Kenya's Wildlife Service – where trophy hunting has been banned since 1977 - is US\$14 per hectare.
23. The trial of a major wildlife trafficking kingpin revealed that almost a quarter of the 222 rhinos killed in South Africa in 2011 had been taken on hunts authorised by the authorities.
24. The Environment Minister of Tanzania has openly accused trophy hunting operators of being directly involved in poaching and illegal exports of ivory.
25. The government of Botswana banned trophy hunting in 2014 because of declining elephant numbers. Elephant populations have stabilised and recovered. The new President is considering reintroducing trophy hunting and turning elephant meat into pet food.
26. In Kenya, elephant hunting was made illegal in 1973, followed by a ban on all animal hunting in 1977. Since then the country's elephant population has been growing steadily.
27. Kenya's nature tourism industry is booming. This has allowed the government to invest far more in anti-poaching programmes than countries where trophy hunting continues.
28. Some of the countries with the world's greatest biodiversity have implemented bans on trophy hunting. They include Brazil, Costa Rica, India, and now Columbia.
29. A number of countries have introduced trophy import bans. In March 2015, Australia implemented a ban on all African lion trophies. In November, France did likewise.
30. The Netherlands has gone even further. In April 2016, the government introduced a ban on imports of all CITES Appendix I species and six Appendix II species (white rhinoceros, hippopotamus, African elephant, Argali wild sheep, the African lion, and the polar bear). In all, Holland has banned the import of 200 hunted trophy species.
31. Many conservationists believe that the decline in iconic species such as lions can only be reversed by measures which include halting trophy hunting. A complete cessation of all lion hunting would allow populations to stabilise, buying time for other coordinated measures.
32. A moratorium on lion hunting in Hwange National Park (Cecil's former home) led to the survival rate of males increasing to more than 80%.
33. Lions are currently prospering in a number of protected areas that have generated significant revenue for conservation and local communities through wildlife tourism which encourage people to help protect them.
34. The IUCN believes that sub-Saharan Africa has considerable potential for developing nature tourism.
35. Lion populations have increased in the Serengeti, which experiences less trophy hunting and greater wildlife watching and photographic tourist activities.
36. While the cost of a lion trophy may be as low as USD\$15,000, the lifetime value of a lion through nature tourism could be as high as USD\$2 million.