



# SCIL Social Compassion in Legislation

## SB 1487 (Stern) Iconic African Species Protection Act

### Arguments Against Trophy Hunting

In fact, trophy hunting contributes significantly less to the eight study economies, job markets, and African conservation. Reviewing the study behind The Conservation Equation, this analysis finds that:

- Economic benefits have been heavily overstated, with Southwick (2015) claiming that trophy hunting contributes \$426 million; a more realistic estimate is less than \$132 million per year.
- Marginal contribution from trophy hunting to employment is not 53,000 jobs, as claimed by Southwick (2015), but more likely in the range of 7,500 - 15,500 jobs.
- While overall tourism is between 2.8% and 5.1% of GDP in the eight study countries, the total economic contribution of trophy hunters is at most about 0.03% of GDP.
- Foreign trophy hunters make up less than 0.1% of tourists on average.
- The adjusted value of Southwick's economic contribution of trophy hunting (\$132 million or less) amounts to only 0.78% or less of the \$17 billion in overall tourism spending in the studied countries.
- Trophy hunting tourism employment is only 0.76% or less of average direct tourism employment in study countries.

Research published by the pro-hunting International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, supported by other authors, finds that hunting companies contribute only 3% of their revenue to communities living in hunting areas. The vast majority of their expenditure does not accrue to local people and businesses, but to firms, government agencies and individuals located internationally or in national capitals. As the quote above demonstrates, expenditure accruing to government agencies rarely reaches local communities due to corruption and other spending requirements.

Wildlife-based eco-tourism is a big industry in Africa and dwarfs trophy hunting in its economic impact. According to a [report by the World Tourism Organization](#), wildlife-based eco-tourism generated an estimated \$34.2 billion in tourist spending in 2013. In Zimbabwe, tourism provides 6.4 percent of the Gross Domestic Product of the country, dwarfing the meager 0.2 percent that trophy hunters provide.

#### Elephants:

Savanna elephant populations declined by 30 percent (equal to 144,000 elephants) between 2007 and 2014. The current rate of decline is 8 percent per year, primarily due to poaching. The rate of decline accelerated from 2007 to 2014. 352,271 elephants were counted in the 18 countries surveyed. This figure represents at least 93 percent of savanna elephants in these countries. Eighty-four percent of the population surveyed was sighted in legally protected areas while 16 percent were in unprotected areas.



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However, high numbers of elephant carcasses were discovered in many protected areas, indicating that elephants are struggling both inside and outside parks.

### LIONS

The African lion (*Panthera leo leo*) is classified as 'Vulnerable' meaning it 'faces a high risk of extinction', and the West African subpopulation as 'Critically Endangered'. The African population is estimated to have declined by 43% between 1993-2014, and is now thought to consist of as few as 20,000 individuals. West, Central and East Africa have experienced a 60% or greater decline, and only around 400 lions persist across the whole of West Africa.

### Leopard

Evidence suggests that Leopard populations have been dramatically reduced due to continued persecution with increased human populations (Thorn *et al.* 2013, Selvan *et al.* 2014), habitat fragmentation (UN 2014), increased illegal wildlife trade (Datta *et al.* 2008), excessive harvesting for ceremonial use of skins (G. Balme pers. comm. 2015), prey base declines (Hatton *et al.* 2001, du Toit 2004, Fusari and Carpaneto 2006, Datta *et al.* 2008, Lindsey *et al.* 2014, Selvan *et al.* 2014) and poorly managed trophy hunting (Balme *et al.* 2009). Throughout North, East and West Africa, Middle East, East and South-east Asia, Leopards have suffered marked reductions and regional extirpations due to poaching for illegal wildlife trade, habitat loss and fragmentation, and prey loss. Human populations have increased by 2.57 percent annually from 1994 to 2014 (UN 2014) driving a 57% increase in the conversion of potential Leopard habitat to agricultural areas from 1975 to 2000 (Brink and Eva 2009).

### Rhinos

The Southern white rhino (*Ceratotherium simum simum*) was rescued from the brink of extinction and now numbers between 19,666 and 21,085 individuals, however sadly there are only three remaining Northern white rhinos (*Ceratotherium simum cottoni*) in the entire world.

Listed as Critically Endangered as the population of Black Rhino has declined by an estimated 97.6% since 1960 with numbers bottoming out at 2,410 in 1995, mainly as a result of poaching. Since then, numbers have been steadily increasing at a continental level with numbers doubling to 4,880 by the end of 2010. Current numbers are however still 90% lower than three generations ago.

The reason for rating this species as Near Threatened and not Least Concern is due to the continued and increased poaching threat and increasing illegal demand for horn, increased involvement of organised international criminal syndicates in rhino poaching (as determined from increased poaching levels, intelligence gathering by wildlife investigators, increased black market prices and apparently new non-traditional medicinal uses of rhino horn). Current successful protection efforts have depended on significant range state expenditure and effort and if these were to decline (especially in South Africa)



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rampant poaching could seriously threaten numbers (well in excess of 30% over three generations). Declining state budgets for conservation in real terms, declining capacity in some areas and increasing involvement of Southeast Asians in African range states are all of concern. In recent years poaching levels have increased in major range states South Africa, Zimbabwe, Kenya. Swaziland also recently lost its first rhino to poaching since December 1992. In the absence of conservation measures, within five years the species would quickly meet the threshold for C1 under Vulnerable, and potentially also criterion A3 if poaching rates were to further increase.

### **Giraffes**

Giraffe (*Giraffa camelopardalis*) is assessed as Vulnerable under criterion A2 due to an observed, past (and ongoing) population decline of 36-40% over three generations (30 years, 1985-2015). The factors causing this decline (levels of exploitation and decline in area of occupancy and habitat quality) have not ceased and may not be reversible throughout the species' range. The best available estimates indicate a total population in 1985 of 151,702-163,452 Giraffes (106,191-114,416 mature individuals), and in 2015 a total population of 97,562 Giraffes (68,293 mature individuals). Historically the species has been overlooked in terms of research and conservation, but in the past five years, considerable progress has been made in compiling and producing a species-wide assessment of population size and distribution by the members of the IUCN SSC Giraffe and Okapi Specialist Group. Some Giraffe populations are stable or increasing, while others are declining, and each population is subject to pressure by threats specific to their local country or region. The populations of Giraffes are scattered and fragmented with different growth trajectories and threats, but the species trend reveals an overall large decline in numbers across their range in Africa.

### **Jentink's duiker**

Listed as Endangered as there are estimated to be fewer than 2,500 mature individuals (total population may be <2,000) and a 20% decline over two generations (12.6 years) is estimated due to loss of primary forest cover and intensive poaching and snaring in many parts of the range.

### **Plains and Mountain Zebras**

Plains Zebra is listed as Near Threatened as it is close to qualifying for Vulnerable under A2a+3c+4ac. Total population across the species' range is estimated at over 500,000 animals; if 30% to 50% of animals are mature (based on maturity rates in other zebra species) this gives a population of 150,000 to 250,000 mature individuals. However there has been a population reduction of 24% since 2002, and a 25% decline since 1992 (about 2.5 generations, as generation length is about 10 years). Total numbers were estimated at about 660,000 in 2002 (Hack *et al.* 2002), roughly the same as they were in 1992 (671,000 animals; Duncan and Gakahu 1992). It is very likely that 3 generations ago (in 1985) that the



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population was similar in size, so it is a fair assumption that the population reduction has occurred within the last 3 generations.

Listed as Vulnerable as the total population is currently estimated at ca. 9,000 mature individuals, and could be subject to a decline exceeding 10% over the course of the coming 27 years, largely driven by annual harvesting of the Hartmann's Mountain Zebra population. At present, there is limited information available on the population trend of Hartmann's Mountain Zebras, but there is some evidence to suggest that they may well be declining. With the availability of further information on trends from parks and private lands, the species may need reassessment.

### **Hippopotamus**

The 2008 Red List Assessment described the Common Hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*) populations as Vulnerable, as the population experienced considerable declines in the mid-1990s and early 2000s. The most recent population estimates suggest that, over the 8 years since the last assessment, Common Hippo populations have largely remained stable. The 2008 Red List Assessment estimated Hippo populations to be approximately 125,000 and 148,000, with half of the 29 countries in which Common Hippos were found reporting declines. Our current assessment yields a lower population estimate, on the order of 115,000-130,000 Hippos.

### **Striped Hyena**

Listed as Near Threatened as the global population size is estimated to be below 10,000 mature individuals, and experiences ongoing deliberate and incidental persecution coupled with a decrease in its prey base such that it may come close to meeting a continuing decline of 10% over the next three generations. It almost qualifies as threatened under criterion C1.