

Third, management for hunting places emphasis on maintaining large wildlife populations for offtake, as opposed to other tourism, where the presence of only a few individual animals is sufficient to maximize profits. Hunting tourism thus conserves wild landscapes and biodiversity.

Nevertheless, the authors are of the opinion that the contributions that trophy hunting make to conservation can be enhanced, and propose respective improvements in order to increase biodiversity benefits, stakeholder returns and animal welfare.

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SOUTH AFRICA

Canned Shooting of Lion Continues Despite Criticism

SIXTY-FIVE PERCENT OF ALL LION in South Africa are captive-bred and live in enclosures and breeding facilities. Their number has steadily increased from about 2,500 animals in 2005 to more than 6,000 in 2013. Half of these live on seventy lion farms in the Free State, and another 2,200 live on sixty-four farms in the North West Province. In 2015, the number of shooting facilities was estimated at around twenty. The breeding and the killing do not always happen at the same place, as for example in the Free State this is not allowed.

The economic use of lion behind fences is manifold. Tourists visit the 'cub-petting' farms, and young volunteers from around the world come for paid holidays where they 'care for' young lion. Many are of the opinion that they are supporting animal welfare. Later, a great number of maned lion and females are killed by visiting tourists. In 2011 about 600 lion skeletons were exported, mainly to the Far East, where they feed the lion bone trade and end up in traditional Asian medicine.

The lion industry is big business and 'canned shooting' earns the operators high profits. The relationship between the Professional Hunters' Association of South Africa (PHASA) and the lion industry has therefore been complex and undergone many a twist. At its last annual general meeting in November 2015, the majority of PHASA members voted to change the existing policy and take a stand against the practice. Individual members like the PH-legend Ronnie Rowland had actively fought for this for a long time. The decision reads: PHASA distances itself from all captive-bred lion breeding and hunting until such time as the South African Predator Association can convince PHASA and the International Union for Conservation of Nature that captive-bred lion hunting is beneficial to lion conservation.

The World Conservation Congress of the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources) held in September 2016 in Hawaii, however, adopted a resolution which

demands an end to the killing of captive bred lion in enclosures. The IUCN does not attach any conservation value to it. The South African government was asked to prohibit the practice by law. The resolution simultaneously underscores the conservation value of sustainable, legal, and ethical hunting.

It is noteworthy that the IUCN does not speak about this in the context of hunting anymore. During the review process for the resolution, the term 'canned hunting' was officially replaced in the text by 'canned shooting'. The resolution also notes that the vast majority of hunters view this practice as unethical.

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▼ TAJIKISTAN - GERMANY

German CIC Delegation Donates Optics

THE GERMAN DELEGATION of the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC) has called on its members to donate spotting scopes and binoculars for community-based conservancies in Tajikistan. The optics are especially needed for game surveys and anti-poaching efforts. A few years ago, the villages decided to discontinue unsustainable, illegal, meat-hunting for ibex, Marco Polo sheep, and markhor. In return, they receive a few hunting licenses, which they can sell to foreign



While traveling through the Pamirs, CIC member Dr. Rolf D. Baldus handed over spotting scopes and binoculars to the traditional hunters of Alichur village. Photo: Rolf D. Baldus

hunters in order to earn revenue. As a result, the ungulate populations have increased considerably, and so have the numbers of snow leopards, wolves, and bears. Therefore the conservancies received the prestigious Markhor Prize from the CIC for their contribution to the conservation of biodiversity through sustainable use.

While traveling through the Pamirs, CIC member Dr. Rolf D. Baldus handed over the first batch of spotting scopes and binoculars to the traditional hunters of Alichur village. The head of the German CIC delegation, Wilhelm von Trott zu Solz, thanks Optolyth-Sport Optics and all other donors. More information: <http://www.wildlife-tajikistan.org/>

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GERMANY – SOUTH AFRICA

World’s Largest Ivory Database

SIGNATORIES TO CITES WILL SOON be able to freely access the world’s largest ivory database, which has been compiled using state-of-the-art forensic techniques developed by Germany. German Minister for the Environment Barbara Hendricks symbolically handed over the IvoryID database to CITES Secretary-General John E. Scanlon at CITES CoPI7 in Johannesburg in September 2016.

Scanlon said: “The use of modern forensics is a game-changer in the fight against the illegal wildlife trade. We are deeply grateful to Germany for developing a forensic technique that can determine the age and origin of ivory. Criminals illegally trading in ivory can no longer hide behind false claims of where and when they got their ivory.” The database, which can be accessed through a website, contains more than seven hundred reference samples from thirty African countries, using data obtained from elephant ivory with proven origin, and provided by countries of origin, museums, hunters, and others.

Hendricks said: “I am pleased to add today this forensic element to the existing toolkit of CITES in the fight against ivory trafficking, and I would like to invite everyone involved in elephant conservation to use it effectively. I also have to express my sincere thanks towards the African nations, who made this project possible by providing qualified samples.”

Germany has developed a forensic technique based on an analysis of isotopes that can determine the age and origin of ivory. This provides critical information about poaching hotspots and trade routes used by traffickers. The composition of specific isotopes used to determine origin differs significantly

between geographical regions and ecosystems across Africa. This chemical fingerprint is imbedded in the ivory during the growth of the elephant. Proof of age can provide crucial evidence in court cases to determine if material has been recently poached or is antique.

The IvoryID-website, which will be available at www.ivoryid.org also contains information about certified laboratories in the world that are able to apply these methods.

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▼ KENYA

Drastic Decline in Wildlife Numbers

KENYA BANNED ALL HUNTING nearly forty years ago. The country is hailed for this by the worldwide animal welfare movement. However, Kenya is one of the best examples in Africa of a country whose wildlife population is declining. This is confirmed by recent research that was published by Joseph O. Ogute et al. in *PLOS ONE*.

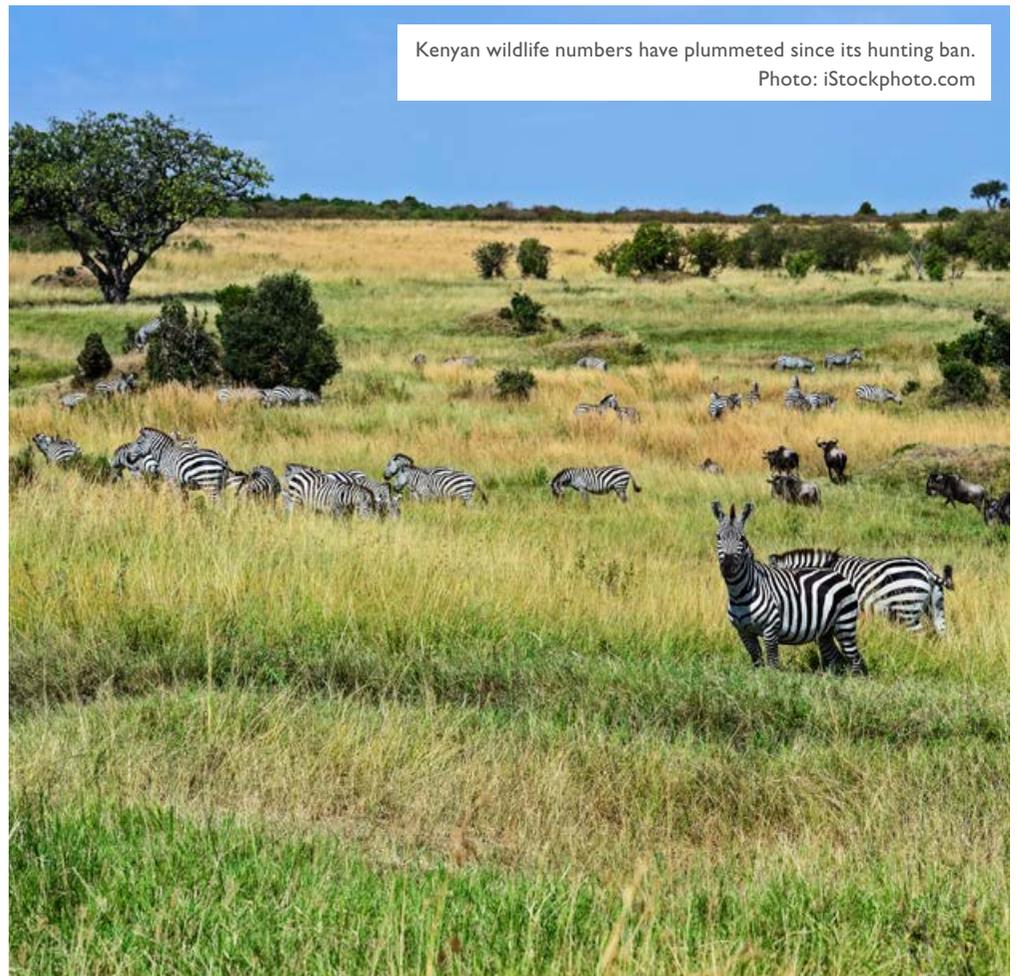
The team of authors for this research used systematic aerial monitoring data collected in rangelands that collectively cover 88% of Kenya’s land surface. The results show that wildlife numbers declined

on average by 68% between 1977 and 2016. The magnitude of decline varied among species, but was most extreme (-72% - -88%), and now severely threatens the viability and future of warthog, lesser kudu, Thomson’s gazelle, eland, oryx, topi, hartebeest, impala, Grevy’s zebra and waterbuck. The declines were widespread and occurred in most of the twenty-one rangeland counties.

Similar to wildlife, cattle numbers decreased (-25.2%), but numbers of sheep and goats (76.3%), camels (13.1%) and donkeys (6.7%) evidently increased in the same period. As a result, livestock biomass was 8.1 times greater than that of wildlife in 2011–2013 compared to 3.5 times in 1977–1980. The declines raise grave concerns about the future of wildlife, and the effectiveness of the wildlife conservation policies, strategies, and practices in Kenya. Causes of the declines include exponential human population growth, increasing livestock numbers, declining rainfall, and a striking rise in temperatures, but the fundamental cause seems to be policy, and institutional and market failures.

The authors suggest policy, institutional, and management interventions that would be likely to succeed in reducing the declines and restoring rangeland health. Most notably they recommend strengthening and investing in community and private wildlife conservancies.

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Kenyan wildlife numbers have plummeted since its hunting ban. Photo: iStockphoto.com