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Mr Stephen Alan Wiggins
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Dear Mr Wiggins,

Thank you for your letter of 3 May to Rory Stewart about trophy hunting. I have been asked to reply.

The information contained in your letter has been shared with the relevant officials in Defra for their information. There have though been some further developments on trophy hunting since my previous reply of 21 January that you may find encouraging.

As part of our commitment to evaluate the available evidence rigorously, the Minister has invited Professor David MacDonald of Oxford's Wildlife Conservation Unit to review existing lion trophy hunting practice with a view to providing recommendations for best practice criteria and recommendations for what the UK, working with our EU and international partners, can do to assist with implementation of best practice.

We have also been liaising with our partners in the EU to raise this issue. You may be aware that the European Commission has published a proposal for an EU Action Plan against Wildlife Trafficking. The intention of the Plan is to provide a coherent and enhanced EU response to the challenge of wildlife trafficking and seek a collective political commitment from Member States to enhance enforcement efforts within the EU and to provide strategic co-operation with key source, transit and market countries. It includes a commitment to ensure that hunting trophy imports are legal and sustainable. To this end the EU and its Member States have submitted a proposal to the CITES 17th Conference of Parties (CoP17) which will convene in September this year. This proposal contains specific reference to lions that we hope the work of Professor MacDonald will be able to feed into. If adopted this should help ensure the sustainability of lion populations subject to hunting.

You have mentioned the specific issue of lion hunting trophies from Zambia. As you know, CITES decisions on trophy hunting are made collectively in the EU by the CITES Scientific Review Group (SRG), comprising the scientific authorities of all 28 Member States. This body had raised questions about Zambia's trophy hunting practices and Zambia had voluntarily suspended lion trophy hunting since 2013. Ahead of the last SRG meeting Zambia provided information to address the questions that had been raised and with a view to setting a quota for 2016 onwards. Having studied the latest information provided by the Zambian CITES Authorities and taken into account other relevant information available, the



SRG determined that Zambia has put forward strong proposals to mitigate over hunting. It was on this basis that the SRG collectively chose to reach a positive opinion to permit lion hunting trophies from Zambia into the EU.

The situation in Zambia is effectively under constant review and where new information about the trade or conservation status of a species in a particular country of origin becomes available, SRG positions can change. You may be interested to hear that the European External Action Service delegation in Zambia, working with the UK and other Member State delegations based in the country, has offered support in carrying out new surveys of both lion and elephant populations in Zambia.

Finally, you have referred to the proposal going to CoP17 to up-list the African lion Appendix I. I can assure you that the UK will be giving this proposal all due consideration.

Yours sincerely,



Kevin Woodhouse
Defra - Customer Contact Unit

