

Informing the debate on trophy hunting

**Presentation to the APPG
for Shooting and
Conservation
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The UK public hates trophy hunting & wants a ban



End this horror
As two trophy hunters 'celebrate' the senseless slaughter of a magnificent animal with their kiss of death, we launch our fight to ban this sick 'sport'



A simple and compelling narrative



“You can’t conserve animals by killing them. Hunters kill because they enjoy killing”
(PETA)

Reality is more complex (and not as media friendly...)

During this talk we discuss:

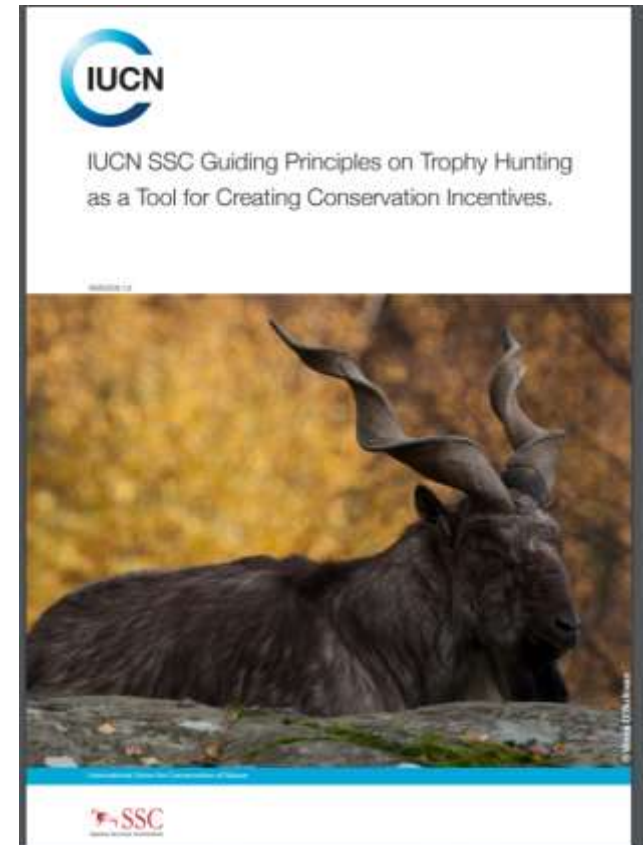
- What the UK govt can and can not ban
- What trophy hunting is and isn't
- The impact it has on species conservation and extinction risk
- The wider conservation impacts
- The contribution to local livelihoods
- The myth of photo-tourism as the saviour of conservation
- The wider implications (for the UK) of a ban on trophy imports

“We’re just banning imports not banning hunting”

- ❖ The UK Government is not able to ban trophy hunting (it can’t dictate how other countries manage their own wildlife).
- ❖ It can however control what is imported to this country and is currently seeking to ban imports from trophy hunting of endangered animals (manifesto pledge).
- ❖ The UK is not a big importer of hunting trophies, but an import ban in the UK could trigger a domino effect in other countries that are big importers
- ❖ An import ban won’t ban hunting but it will affect the viability of hunting - and hence have implications for conservation and livelihoods and wildlife-based economies

What is trophy hunting?

- ❖ Trophy hunting = **legal**, regulated, selective hunting of specific individual animals with “desirable” characteristics.
- ❖ Also called sport hunting, recreational hunting
- ❖ Some trophy hunting occurs in enclosures and targets captive animals – known as “canned hunting”
- ❖ IUCN does not support canned hunting and nor do most professional hunting associations
- ❖ Our preference: **conservation hunting** - reflects important IUCN principles



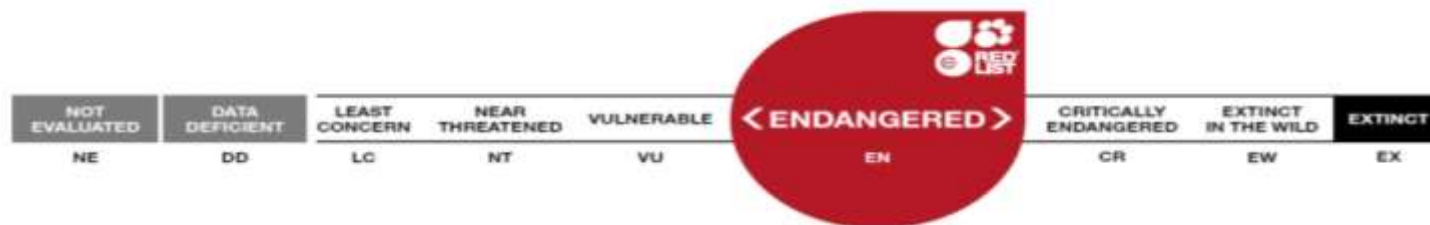
More than an African issue

- ❖ Conservation trophy hunting takes place in North America, East, Central and Southern Asia, Central and South America, Australia and New Zealand, as well as Africa, and many European countries including the UK.
- ❖ Conservation trophy hunting involves charismatic, iconic species – elephants, rhinos, lions, bears.
- ❖ But also less charismatic and less worried about wild goat and sheep species, wild pigs, antelope and deer.

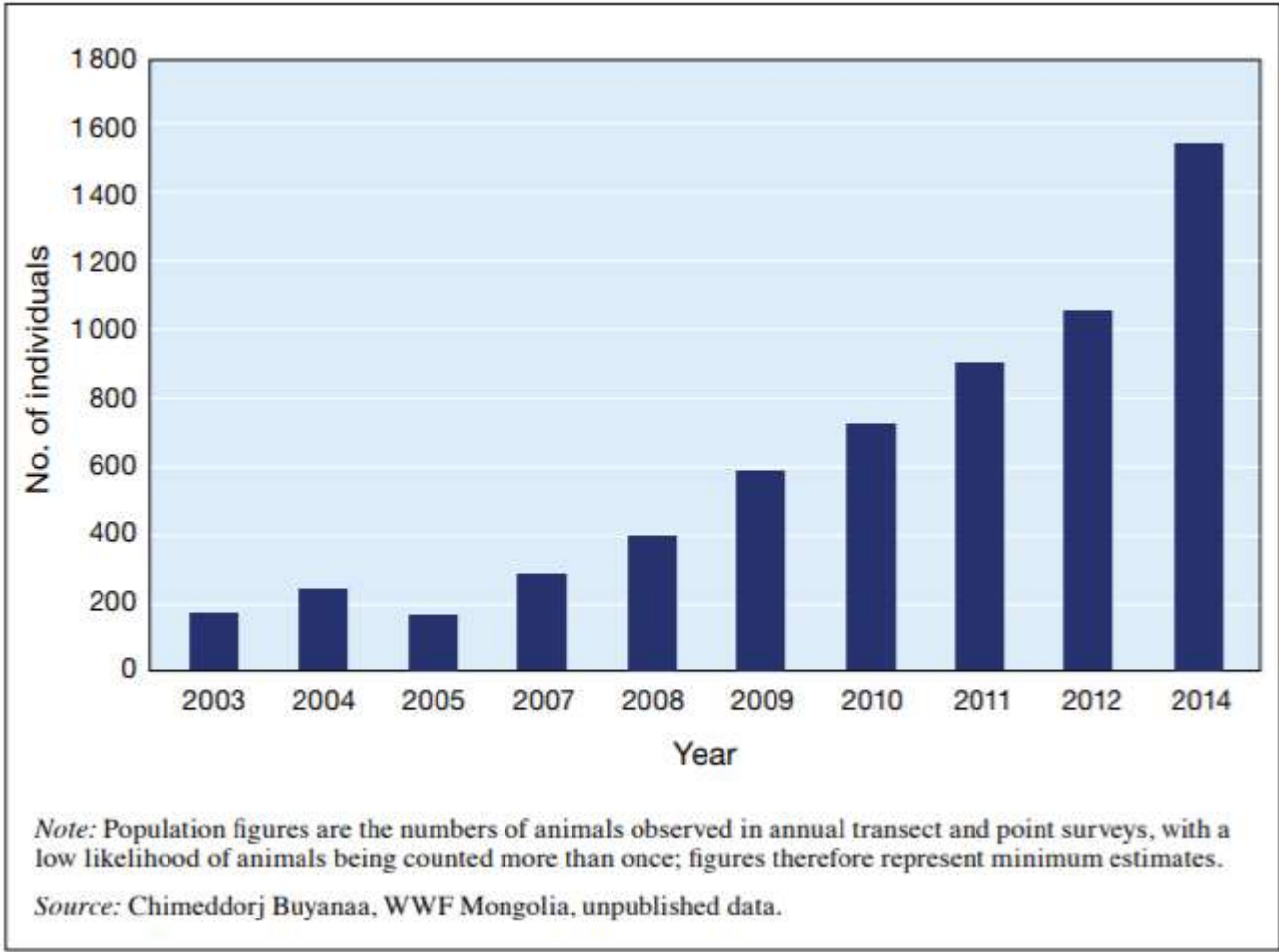
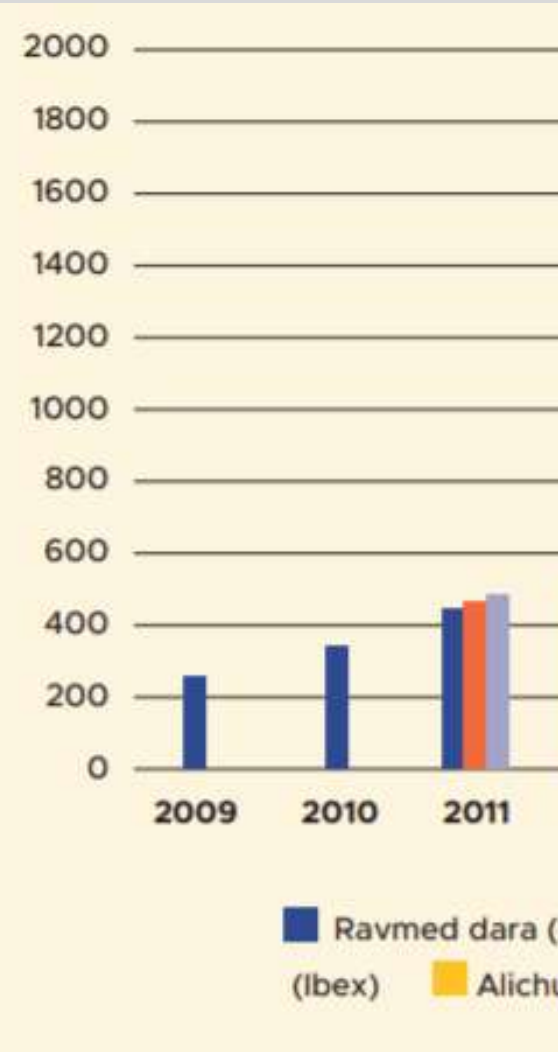


Is trophy hunting driving species to extinction?

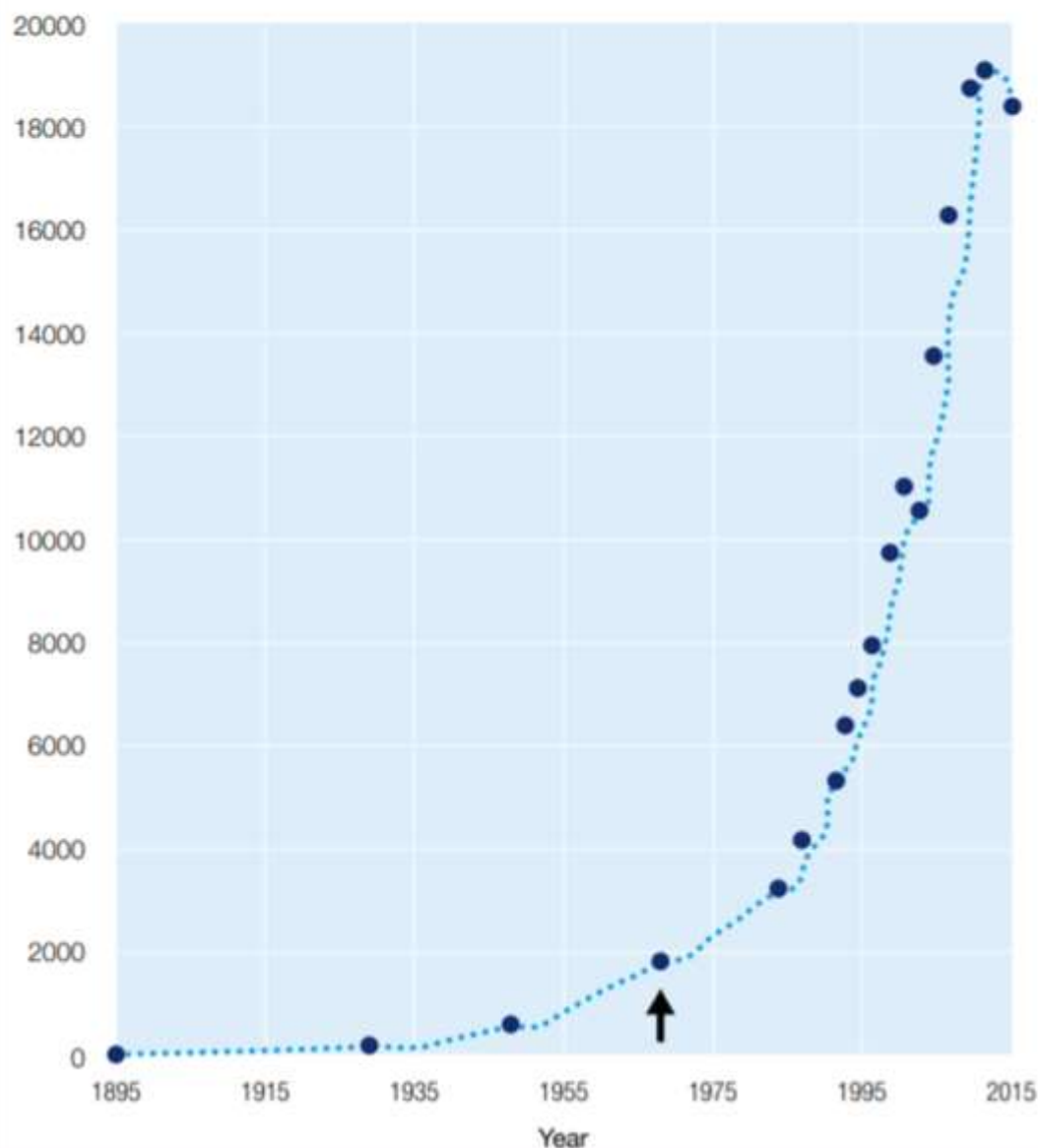
Hunted Species	Conservation Status	Key Threats
Lion	Vulnerable, decreasing	Habitat loss, human-wildlife conflict, prey base declines
Leopard	Vulnerable, decreasing	Habitat loss, human-wildlife conflict, prey base declines
African elephant	Vulnerable, increasing	Habitat loss, human-wildlife conflict, poaching
White rhino	Near threatened, decreasing	Poaching
Black rhino	Critically endangered, Increasing	Poaching
Giraffe	Vulnerable, decreasing	Habitat loss, poaching
African Buffalo	Near threatened, decreasing	Habitat loss, poaching, drought, disease



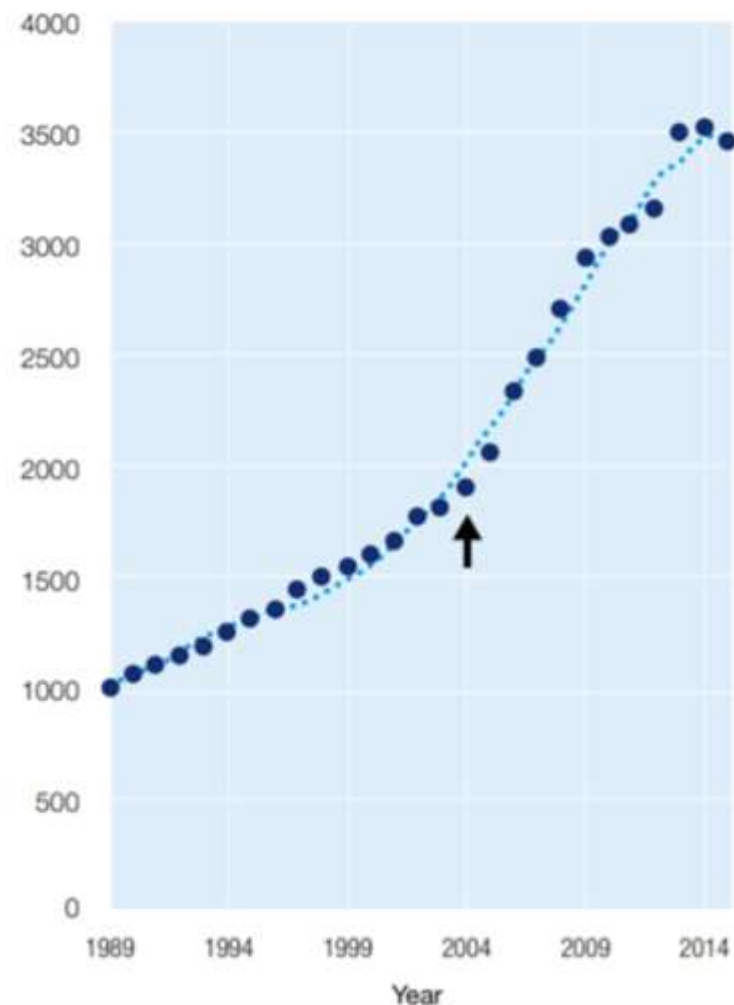
Hunting can be a positive force for species



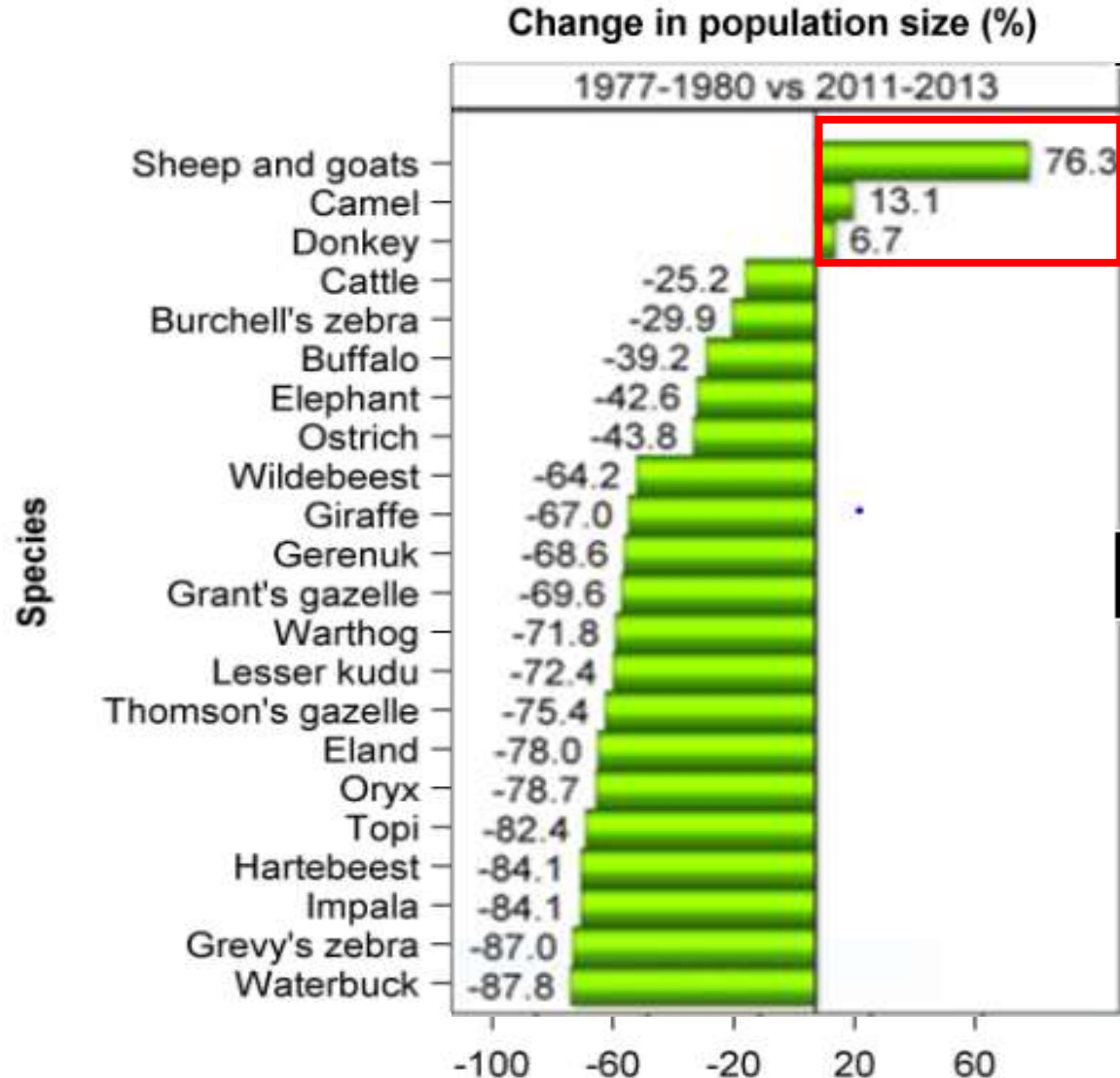
Changes in estimated numbers of White Rhino in South Africa before and after start of limited trophy hunting in 1968 (↑)



Growth in estimated total numbers of Black Rhino in South Africa and Namibia before and after CITES approval of limited hunting quotas in 2004 (↑)

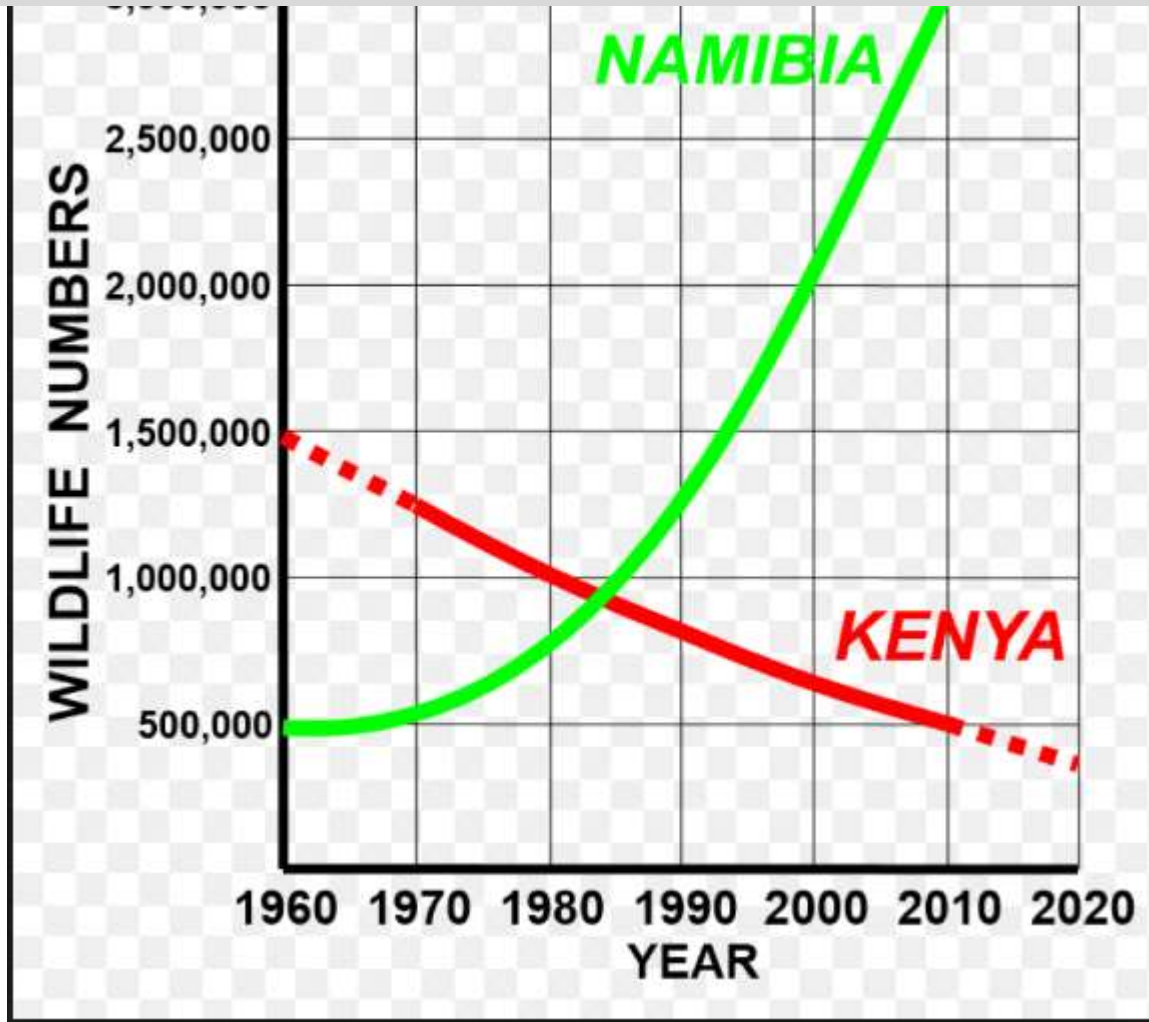


An inconvenient truth? Wildlife trends in Kenya



Ogutu JO, Piepho HP, Said MY, Ojwang GO, Njino LW, et al. (2016) Extreme Wildlife Declines and Concurrent Increase in Livestock Numbers in Kenya: What Are the Causes?. PLOS ONE 11(9): e0163249. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0163249>
<http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0163249>

Wildlife trends in a hunting country and a non-hunting country



Species protection part of a wider conservation benefit

Size of Hunting Areas (km ²)	~304,000	>88,000	~180,000	134,425
Size of National Parks (km ²)	~58,000	~28,000	~64,000	87,806
Ratio of Hunting to National Park Areas	5:1	3.14:1	2.81:1	1.48:1



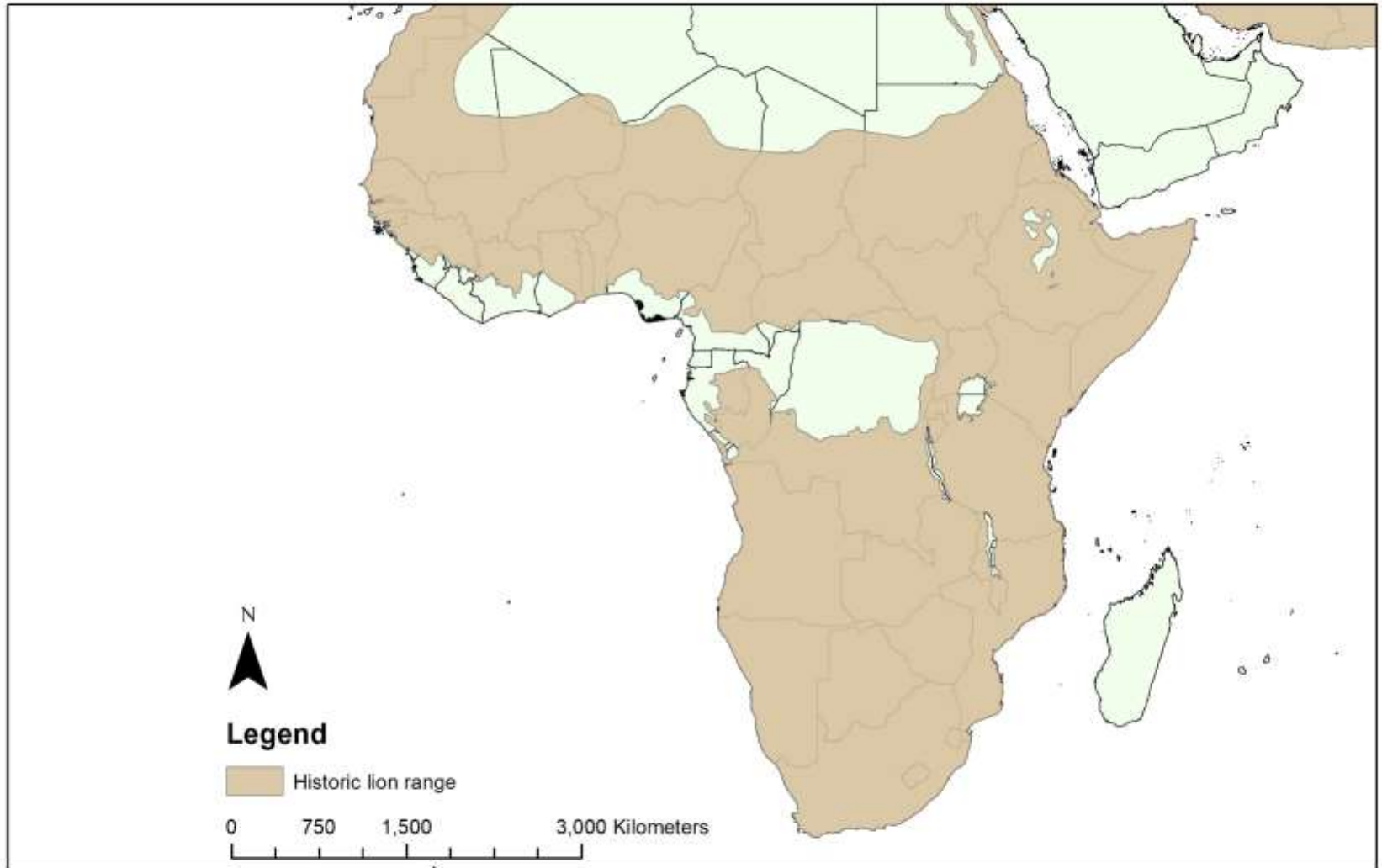
Local livelihoods benefits

Money: Direct jobs aside, much made of the fact that very little hunting revenue goes to local communities – the 3% myth. Actually the figure varies from country to country and is up to 100% in Namibia

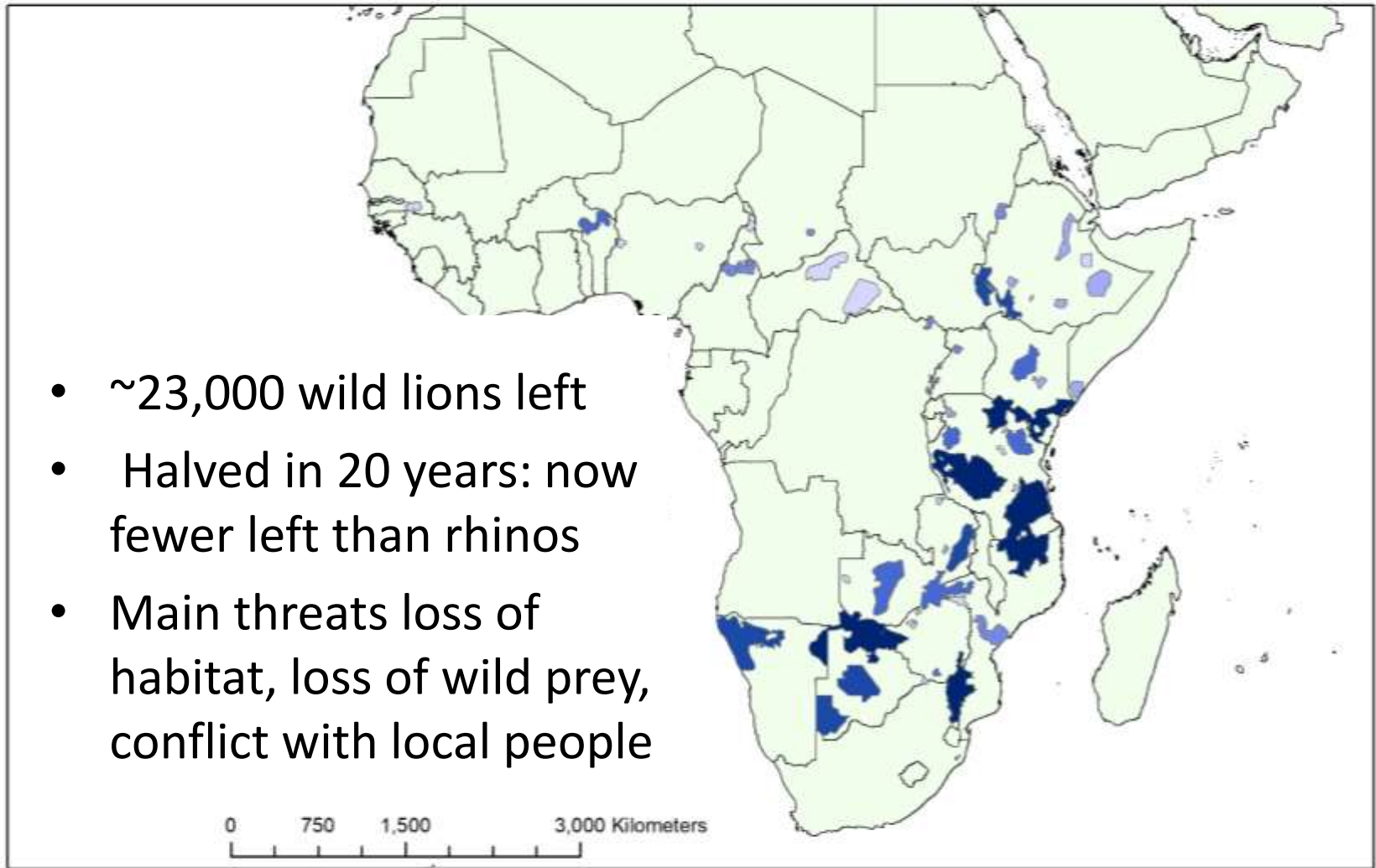


Source: Nat Geo 2017 [/](#)

Lions: high-profile case study, under threat

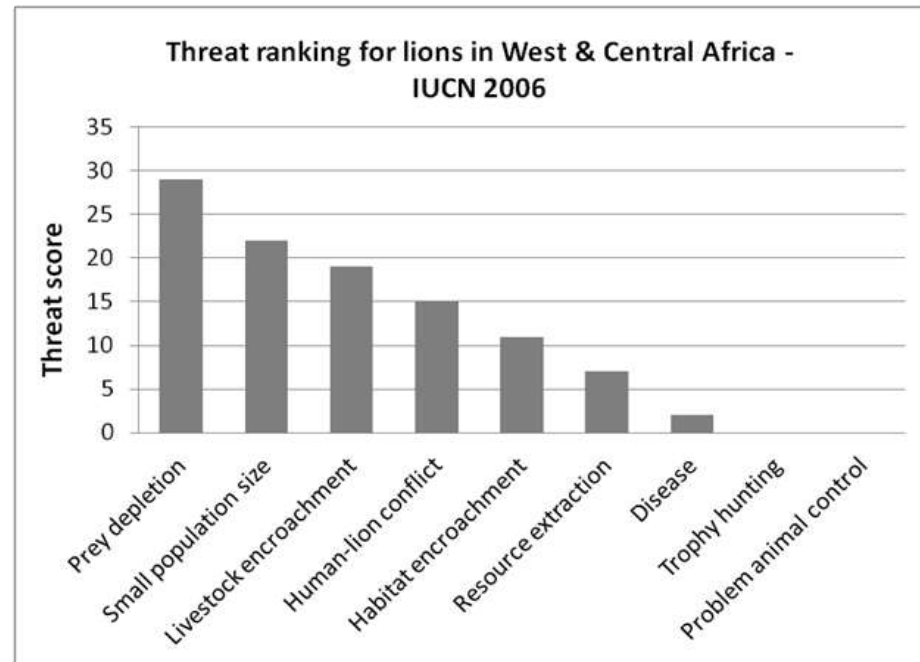
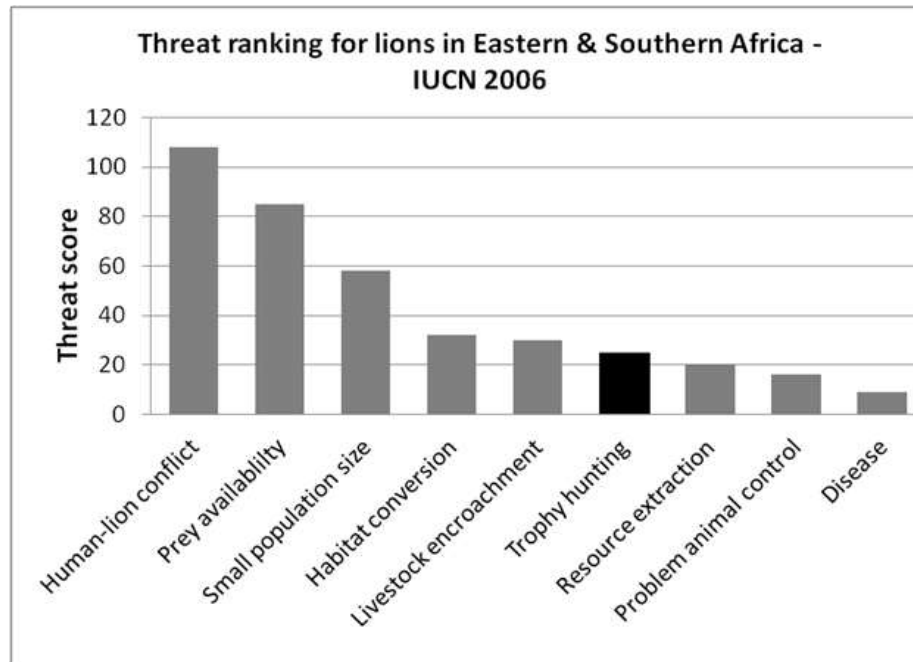


Lions: high-profile case study, under threat



Trophy hunting is NOT a major threat to lions overall

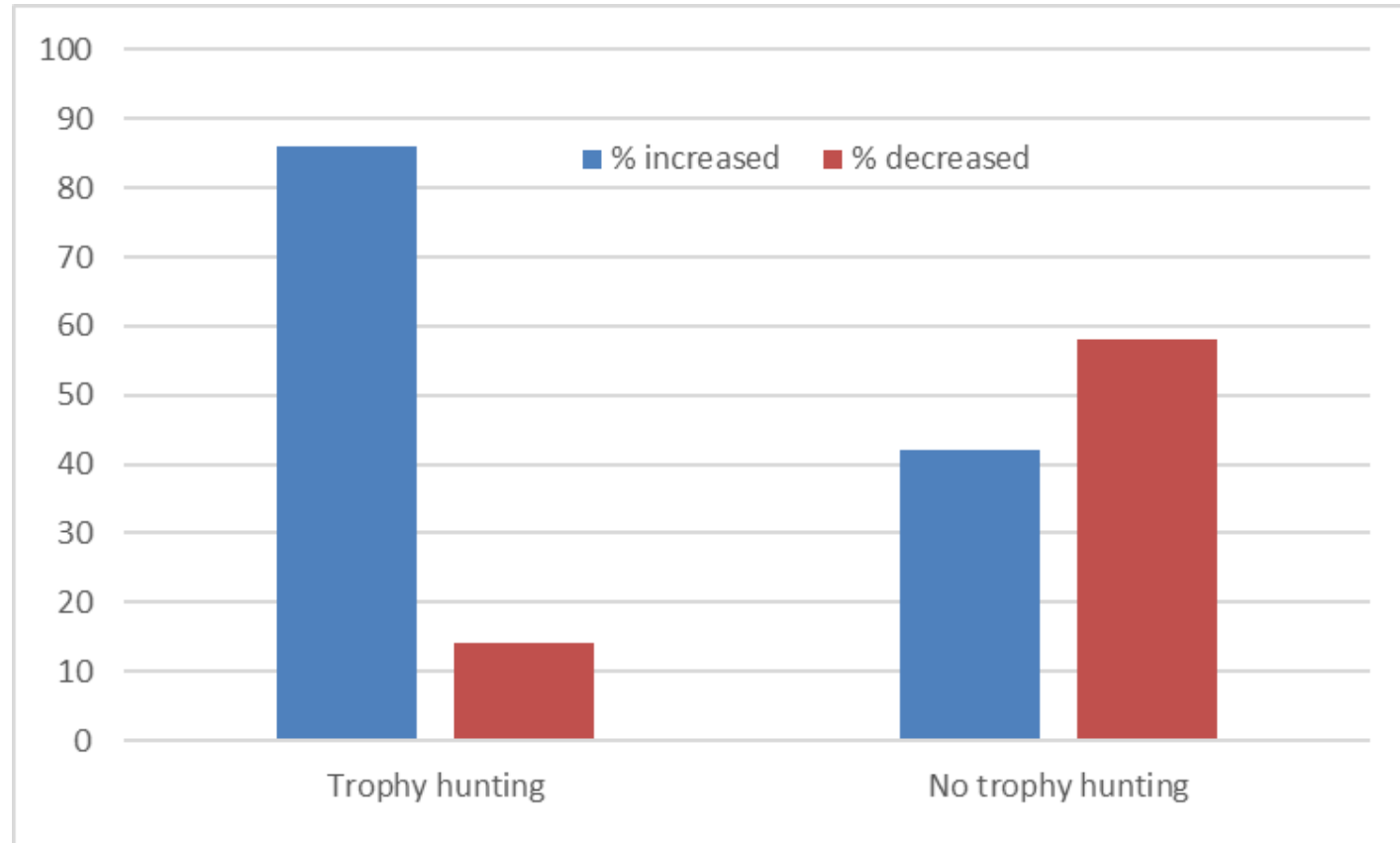
Poorly regulated trophy hunting CAN have a negative impact on some lion populations, but not a major regional threat according to experts



Important to reduce any threat, but **ONLY** if reducing it does not increase the larger threats of conflict, loss of prey & suitable habitat.

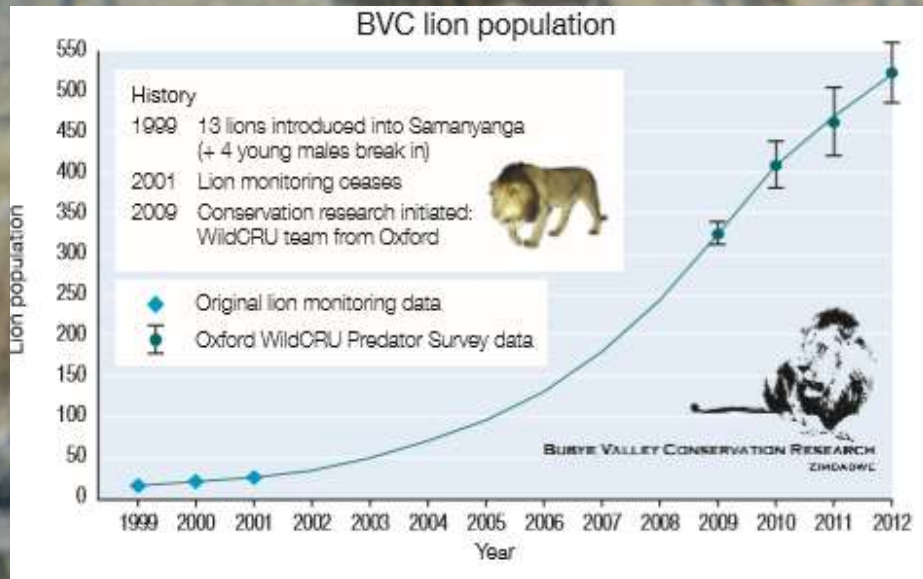
Not true that TH = decline, no TH = secure lions

Changes in 43 African lion pops, 1993 – 2014, IUCN Red List data



Many other factors complicating the issue, but highlights that it is not as simple as wildlife automatically being threatened if trophy hunting occurs, and safe without it

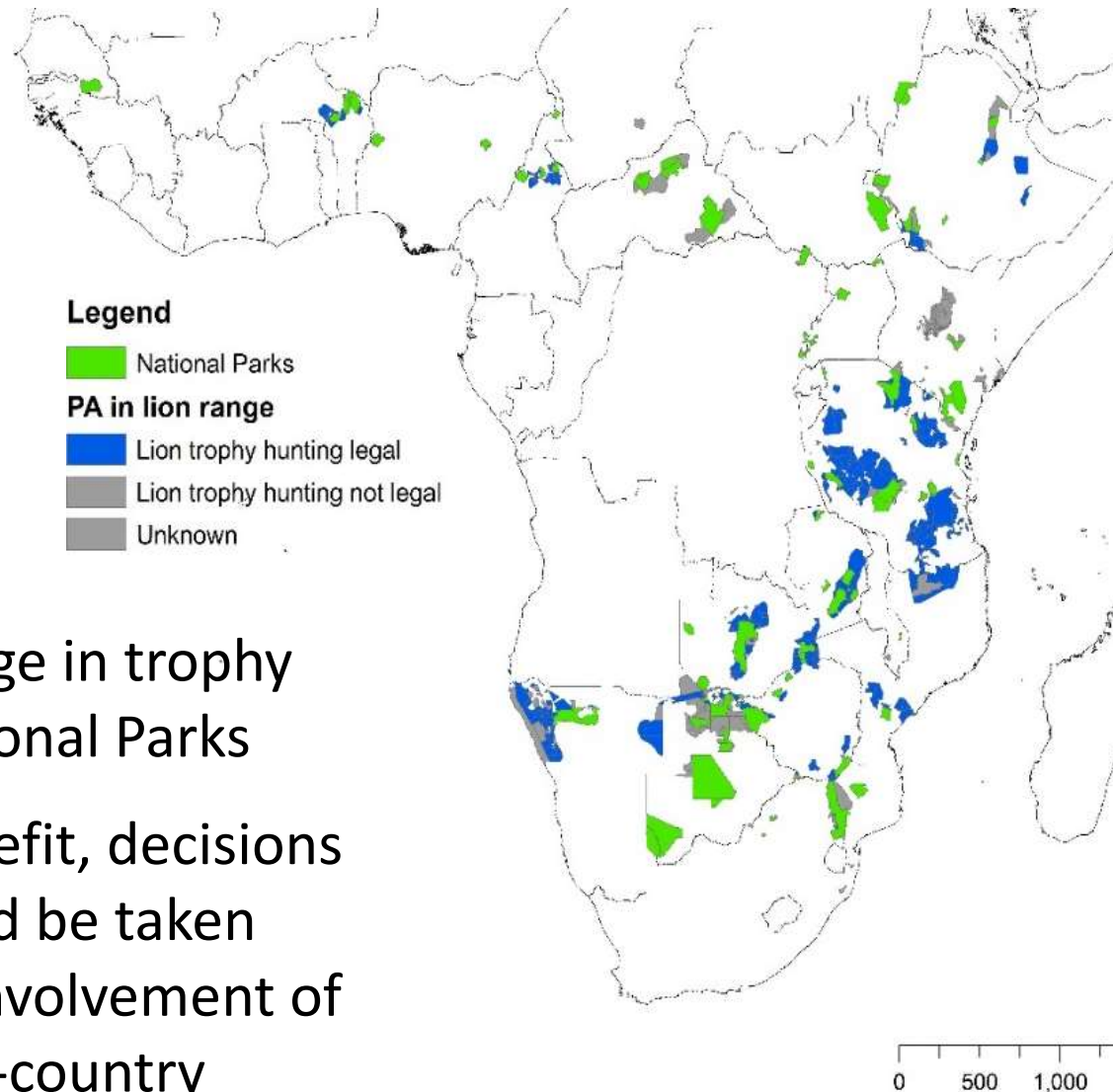
Wild lions only increasing in 2 countries: both use TH



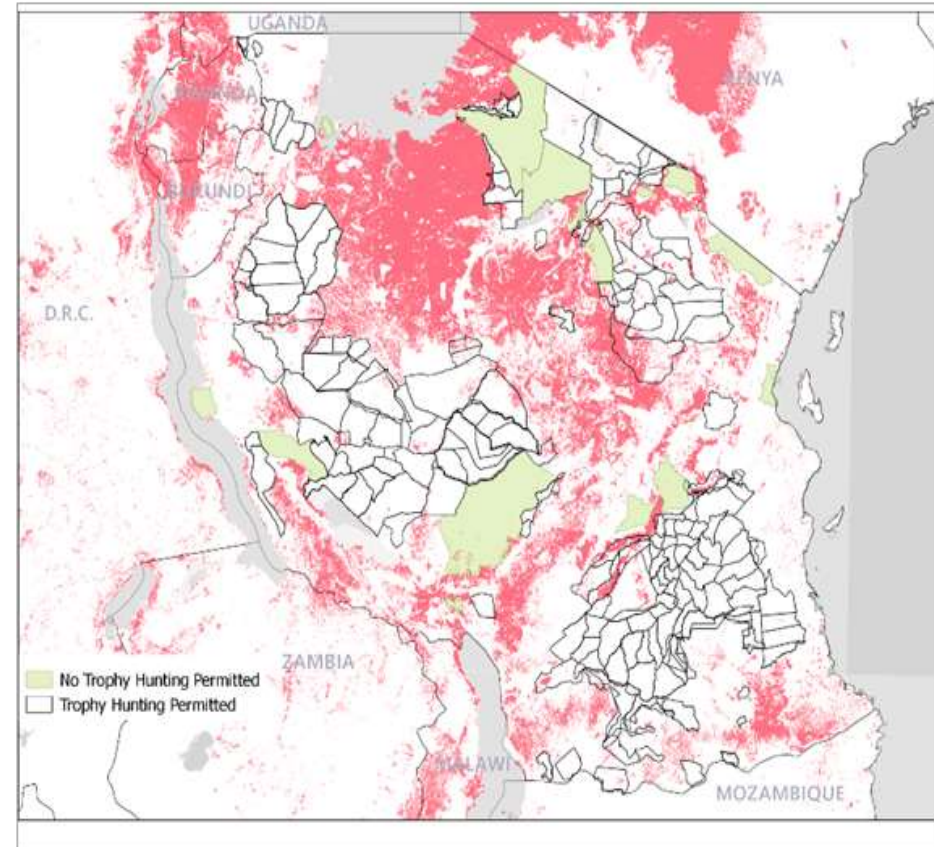
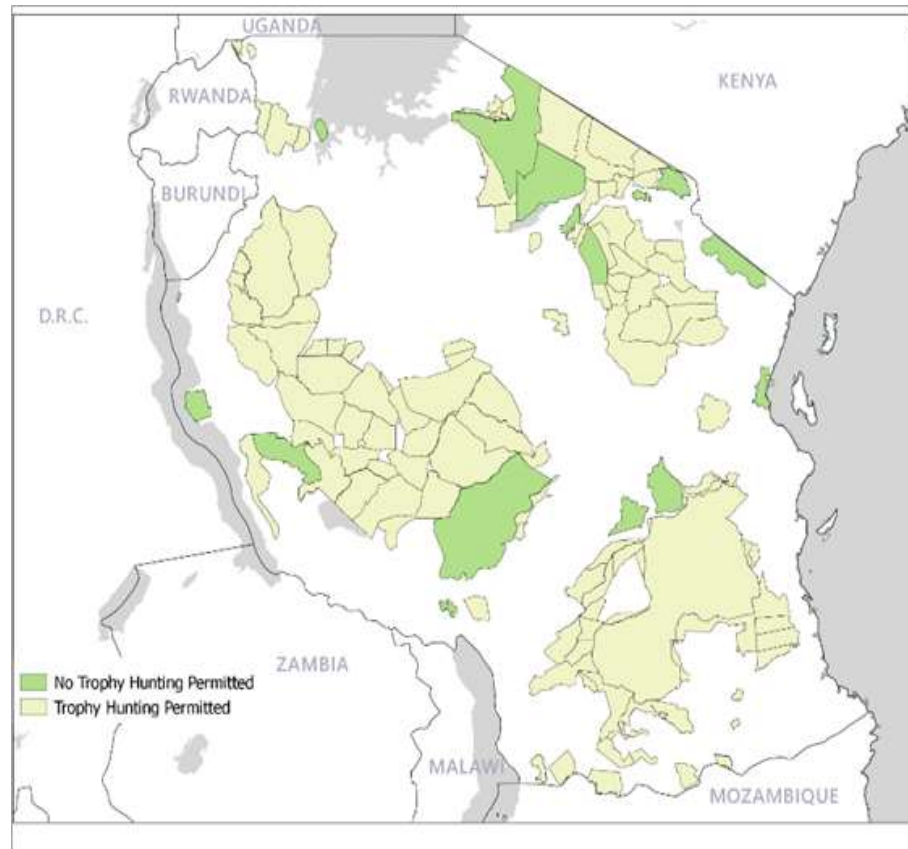
Poorly managed trophy hunting can negatively impact individual populations, but elsewhere can help improve the long-term outlook for lion populations

Major benefit of trophy hunting is habitat protection

- Loss of wild habitat major threat to lions, and many other species
- Trophy hunting zones have same key benefit as National Parks: they protect wild habitat
- Currently, more lion range in trophy hunting zones than National Parks
- Major conservation benefit, decisions affecting this land should be taken carefully, and with full involvement of relevant stakeholders in-country

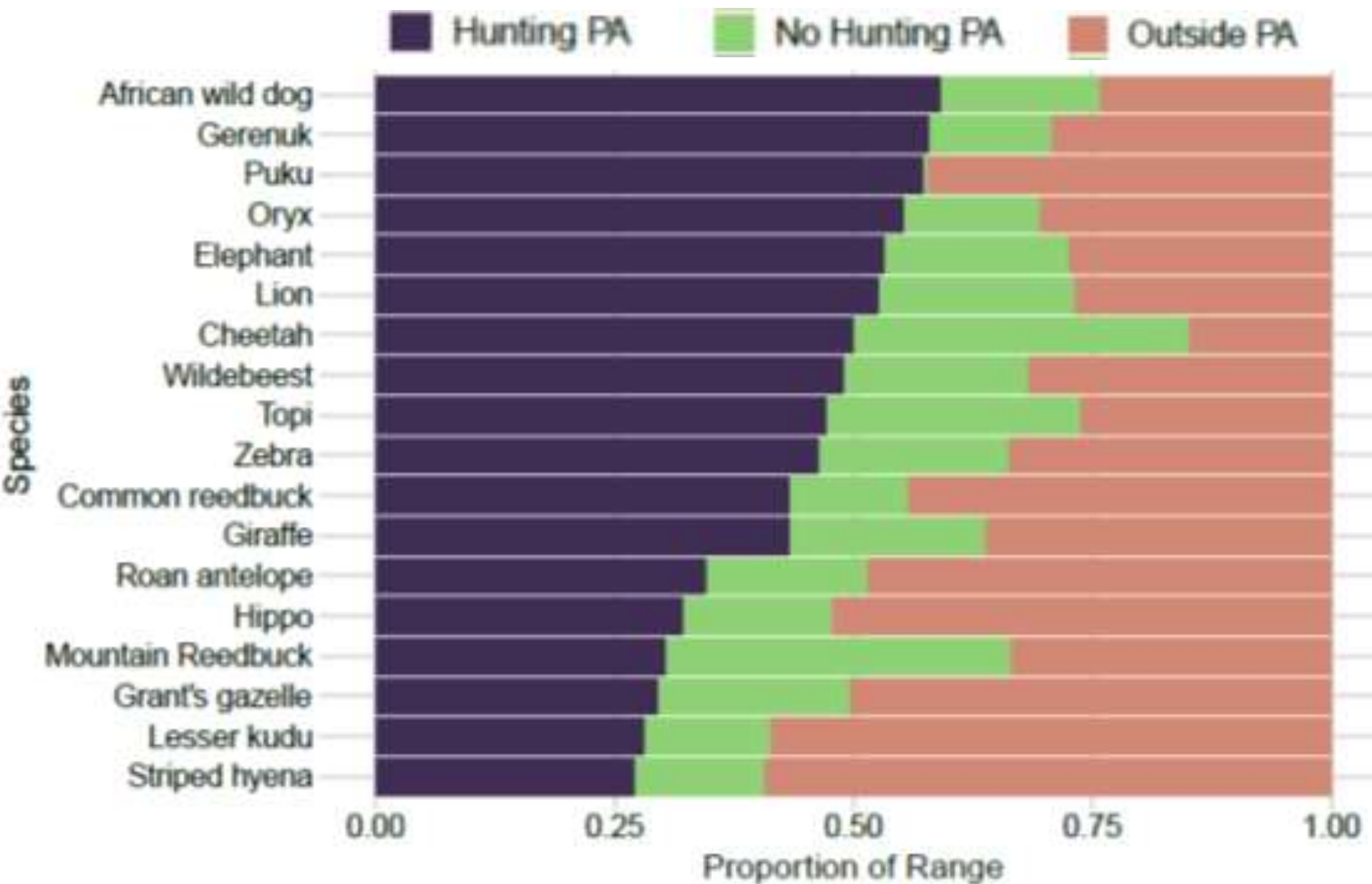


Major benefit of trophy hunting is habitat protection



Tanzania: 40% world's lions, trophy hunting areas cover more land than National Parks, and play a huge role in preventing major threat of land conversion, as well as funding wider conservation

Hunting zones protect more than hunted species



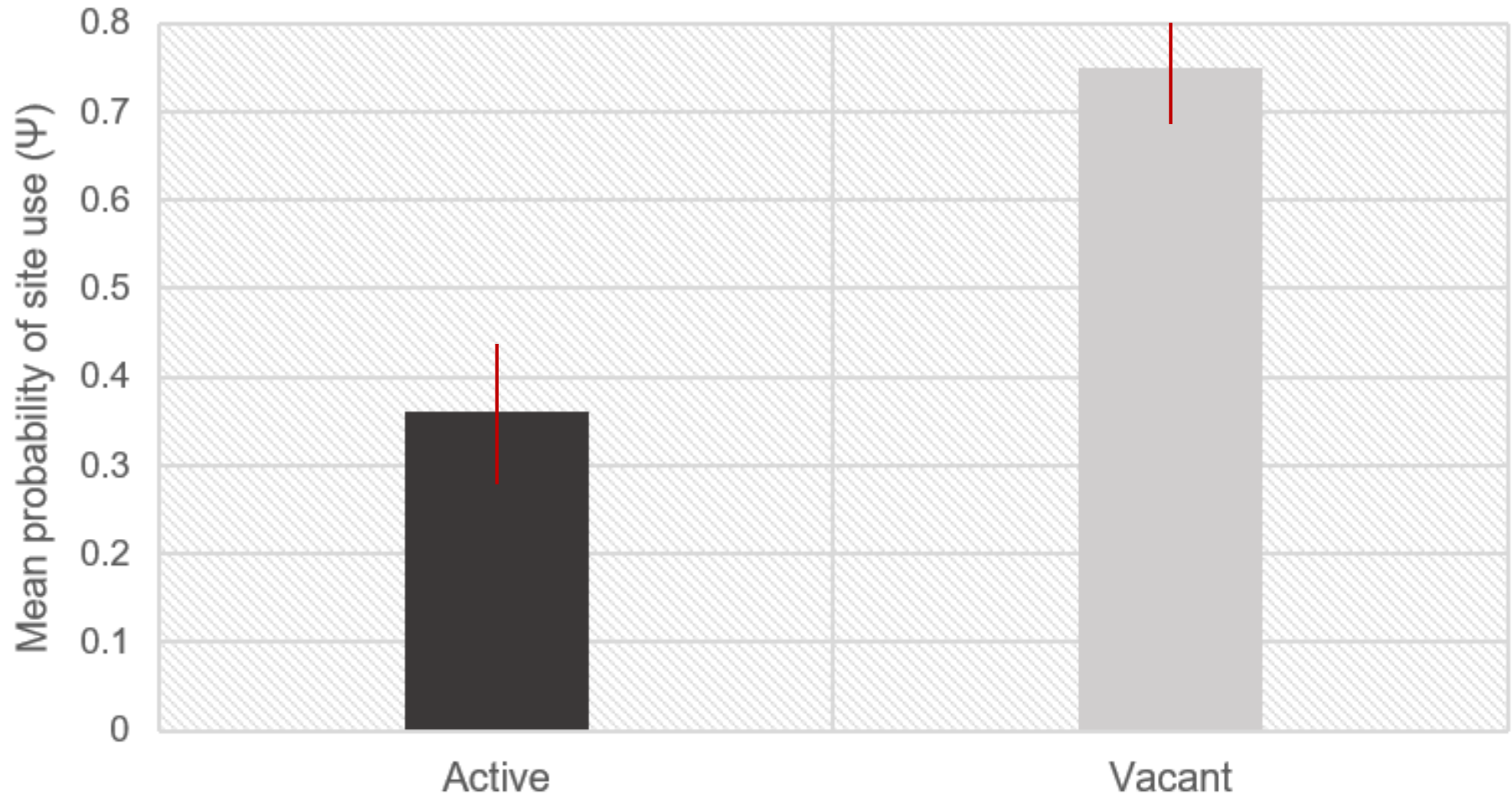
Why not just replace hunting with photo-tourism?

- Photo-tourism already *not* covering costs of existing protected areas: removing hunting as an additional revenue stream will make this much worse
- Most hunting areas too remote or unattractive for photo tourists
- Photo-tourism also not a panacea – high resource use, Timbavati in South Africa: hunters comprised 0.1% visitors, 20% revenue
- Luc Hoffman study – no ‘silver bullet’ replacement
- Ultimately, at present there are no viable alternatives ready for most hunted areas



Removing TH without alternative increases threats

Probability of Illegal Human Use in Game Reserves



Ruaha data suggests that vacant hunting blocks have more illegal human use than actively managed hunting blocks, probably due to less anti-poaching activities

If wildlife has no economic value, it will be removed



Those killings far higher than TH, indiscriminate



Often comes down to (ill-informed) moral argument



Whose morals & rights matter?



Same arguments about hunting will be relevant in UK



Our key recommendations to UK Government

- 1. Rather than an outright ban, revise trophy import criteria to enhance conservation, which would be welcomed by responsible professional hunters and others. Imports should be permitted if they meet strict ethical & sustainability criteria, including demonstrating meaningful conservation benefits, with habitat conservation as a key criterion. The process should follow guidelines set out by IUCN;*
- 2. Invest long-term, significant funding to help develop and implement viable alternatives for trophy hunting areas, particularly in light of COVID-19 impacts;*
- 3. Provide long-term, significant funding to address the real threats facing lions and other species – particularly habitat loss, which also affects human and planetary health.*

MPs and others have a responsibility to educate themselves about this topic and the impacts of import bans, and take informed actions to protect people and wildlife, addressing genuine concerns of the UK public.