

African Lion Range State Meeting

Delegates of 28 African lion Range States, met in Entebbe, Uganda from 30 to 31 May 2016 to discuss the conservation, management and restoration of the lion (*Panthera leo*) and its habitat in Africa. The press release and communiqué from the meeting highlights the importance of CBNRM, incentives, benefit-sharing, HWC mitigation measures and well managed hunting programs for the conservation of African lion, and the potential negative impacts of import bans on hunting trophies.

The range states also recognized that the main threats (listed in no particular order) for lions in Africa are: (1) unfavorable policies, practices and political factors (in some countries); (2) Ineffective lion population management; (3) habitat degradation and reduction of prey base; (4) human-lion conflict, (5) adverse socio-economic factors; (6) institutional weakness; and (7) increasing trade in lion bones.

The Official Communiqué highlights inter alia

- the need for the development of national action plans and adaptive management practices to conserve lions at the national level;
- that community-based natural resource management, the creation of incentives for local communities to engage in lion conservation, the sharing of conservation benefits and the establishment of mitigation measures can increase the lion range and are essential to the conservation success of lions.
- a call for the establishment of viable ecosystem and wildlife-based land-use practices, ensuring that agricultural activities and mining operations do not impede lion conservation, including restoration programs;
- and points out the benefits that trophy hunting, where it is based on scientifically established quotas, taking into account the social position, age and sex of an animal, have, in some countries, contributed to the conservation of lion populations and highlight the potentially hampering effects that import bans on trophies could have for currently stable lion populations.