

by Gerhard Damm

Encore: Canned Lion Breeding And Shooting

The advocates of captive lion breeding and canned lion shooting often claim that these practices have broader conservation outcomes, such as a demand reduction in the hunting of wild lion and positive conservation outcomes as the reintroduction of captive bred lion into the wild. Hunter et al. (2012 in *Oryx*, 47(1), 19-24) already stated that the captive breeding and shooting industry lacks any capacity to contribute to in situ lion conservation, with the dubious exception that the industry has been trying to bribe its way towards recognition by offering rather substantial financial “conservation contributions” for each killed (or ‘hunted’ as they say) captive bred lion!

In this issue of African Indaba the article “Why Men Trophy Hunt” highlights at least one of the reasons why there is still a market for South African lion breeders and the associated hunting operators. Fortunately, the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service closed this loophole last year. The lion breeders responded with lobbying the SA government to establish a quota for lion bones to be exported to Asia. If this is legal and sustainable, I have no reasonable argument against it, although a decidedly negative opinion. After all we also ‘produce’ beef, pork, lamb and chicken this way; but just as these latter activities—it has nothing to do with conservation, let alone hunting! It is worthwhile re-reading the IUCN resolution WCC-2016-Res-013-EN “Terminating the hunting of captive-bred lions (*Panthera leo*) and other predators and captive breeding for commercial, nonconservation purposes” (pages 40-41), overwhelmingly passed at the IUCN World Conservation Congress Hawai’i in September 2016. This resolution was accepted as official position of the CIC International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation by the CIC Executive Committee. In any case, all professional hunting associations in Africa and most national and international hunting associations have distanced themselves from shooting captive bred lions!