

Feared and Hated but Admired and Respected -The Status and Plight of the African Lion (*Panthera Leo*) in Sub Saharan Africa: A Pest facing extinction or a favourite Tourist Attraction?





(Daily Nation, Kenya, 27 August 2013)

by

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Abstract

In recent weeks the plight of the African Lion has been in discussion about its fast dwindling numbers, its contribution to tourism, its place as a trophy and whether it should be conserved or not. The African lion (*Panthera Leo Leo*) is one of the four big cats in Africa. It is renowned for its majesty and is nicknamed "the king of the jungle". The lion possesses beauty and strength and is a cunning hunter. Lions vary in colour but typically sport light yellow-brown coats. A few have white coats. Mature male lions are unique among big cats due to the thick brown or black manes that encircle their necks and protect them while fighting. However, lions, as a species, are endangered and are close to extinction in many countries. The lions are admired for their beauty, majesty, hunting skills, and strength. As such, they are a major tourist attraction to the Game Reserves. They are, also, favourite characters in folklore and are widely used in symbolisms. Lions and other large carnivores in Sub-Saharan Africa have showed a marked reduction in numbers and distribution during the past five decades. This decline can be attributed to an increased conflict with human development. The Zambian

Government has lifted the hunting of the big cats after a ban of two years Zambia has lifted a ban on safari hunting after it caused financial problems for the country. The reasons were not given but the motive appears to be based on revenue collection (Kachingwe on line 20 May 2025). Lions are of great aesthetic appeal and financial value. Tourism is a growing industry in southern Africa and predators are arguably a great attraction to national parks in Sub Saharan Africa. It is therefore important to provide baseline data on ecological and population characteristics to guide long term conservation of the species

Although we have no reliable data on Africa-wide lion populations prior to the late 20th century, there is agreement that numbers have been in steady decline. Over the past 50 years, wild lion numbers in Africa have decreased from over 200,000 to less than 20,000 today. Estimates based on experts' best guesses and estimates vary from one to another and are no doubt at an all-time low; range between 16,500 and 47,000. Lions have been totally eliminated in North Africa, and only relict populations remain in West and Central Africa. Half of the remaining population is in Tanzania, and smaller viable populations remain in Kenya, South Africa, Mozambique, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Namibia. As with the worlds other large carnivores, the reduction in lion populations has been largely due to conflict with humans over livestock. Large carnivores kill livestock and are in turn killed by livestock owners or herders. Lions also attack people, and even in the 21st Century man-eating is a serious problem in Ethiopia, Tanzania and Mozambique.

The lion is a contradictory animal that is loved and hated at the same time. It is hated and feared because of its man-eating activities. They are also regarded as vermin to be exterminated on sight because of their attacks on livestock. There are many stories of revenge lion hunts found in oral traditions of many societies. Lions are a pest that is hated, hunted and has to be killed by those who want to eliminate it. There are many stories of lion hunting by European travellers, big game hunters, traders, missionaries and administrative officials. Many of these were embellished to entertain the reader and to build up the egos of the writers. Lions are seen in different ways. On one hand, they are seen as a valuable tourist attraction and a source of valuable foreign exchange and employment. The lion is one to some people and another to others. Lion populations are untenable outside designated reserves and national parks. Although the cause of the decline is not fully understood, habitat loss and conflicts with humans are currently the greatest causes of concern. Within Africa, the population is particularly endangered. This paper discusses the status and plight of the

lions in Sub Saharan Africa. It looks at the status of the lions which, in one case, is highly valued as tourist attraction and on the other hand, seen as vermin which has to be exterminated on sight..

Introduction

"Tourists come to Zambia to see the lion and if we lose the lion we will be killing our tourism industry, . . .The estimated \$3 -million that Zambia earned from safari hunting of all its wild animals annually was too little to merit the continued depletion of Zambia's wildlife",

Silvia Masebo, Minister of Tourism and Culture in Zambia, Sunday Times of South Africa on Line, dated 9 January 2013.

"If we continue hunting, we will end up with a situation where there will be no lions in Zambia, and we said let us stop and carry out a census first. We said let us do a survey for us as Government to understand so that we make an informed policy directive,"

Sylvia Masebo told Daily Mail, 24 July 2013

"The lions are creatures of fascination, strength and power, beauty, respect, symbolism, fear and intrigue".

Chief Mununga Kabole, 12 August 1972.

We, lions of the past. Today's ghosts roamed endless plain(s) and wide mountain ranges .

Patterson, 1995:165.

The African lion is Africa's largest terrestrial carnivore. In recent months, the lion has featured prominently in the press. The latest is the banning of the hunting of lions and the other big cats in Zambia by Mrs. Silvia Masebo, the Minister of Tourism and Arts, to save their dwindling numbers which are around 3,500, from total extinction. Her action has been welcomed by conservationists but not by big game hunters because it affects their lucrative businesses (Zambia Daily Mail editorial, 12 January 2013; Sunday Times of South Africa on Line, dated 9 January 2013; South African Broadcasting Corporation, 6 April, 2013, News Cast 18.00).

Once in a while, there are reports on marauding lions attacking human beings and livestock, provoking a counter or revenge attacks from the relatives of the victims, using guns, spears, hoes, wire baits or poisons. On Tuesday, 19 February 2013, the Zambia Broadcasting Services (ZNBC) carried a news bulletin informing the nation that a lion which was terrorizing people and livestock in Nangoma, western Mumbwa, in Central Province had been had killed. The local people removed the tail, tongue, heart and other parts of the carcass to be used in witchcraft and herbal medicines (22 February, 2013; ZNBC, 19 February, 2013)).

On Monday, 29 November, 2004, The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) reported that a single lion attacked livestock in Muzarabani, 200 km (125 miles) north of the capital, Harare. Game wardens killed the lion after a six-month rampage against goats and cattle. Local villagers then asked the parks authorities for the "huge" carcass of the male lion. A group of Zimbabwean villagers wanted to exact sweet revenge on a lion which had wreaked havoc on their livestock by eating it. One man said after enjoying the barbecued meat is reported to have argued that "[the lions] ate our animals so it is only fair we eat it, too". Others said they wanted to eat the lion to inherit its bravery and strength. . A senior official at Zimbabwe's Parks and Wildlife Management Authority said that people are not encouraged to eat the meat of animals eat humans. "Our policy is that we offer only the carcasses of herbivores such as elephants".(BBC, 29 November, 2004; Baldus,2006: 59–62).

On 20 June 2012, the *Daily Nation of Kenya* reported that six lions strayed from the Nairobi National Park into the Elkeek-Lemedungi village in Kitengela- Kajiado County on the outskirts of Nairobi. They entered a pen where the sheep and goats were locked for the night and mauled 28 of them. The lions the agitated and angry herders speared them to death in a span of several minutes. No arrests were made in connection with the killings but Kenya Wildlife Service was "looking for the suspects" (*.Daily Nation of Kenya*; See also Patterson et al, 2004: 507-516; Chomba et al, 2012: 306-313; South African Broadcasting Corporation, 6 April, 2013, News Cast 18.00)

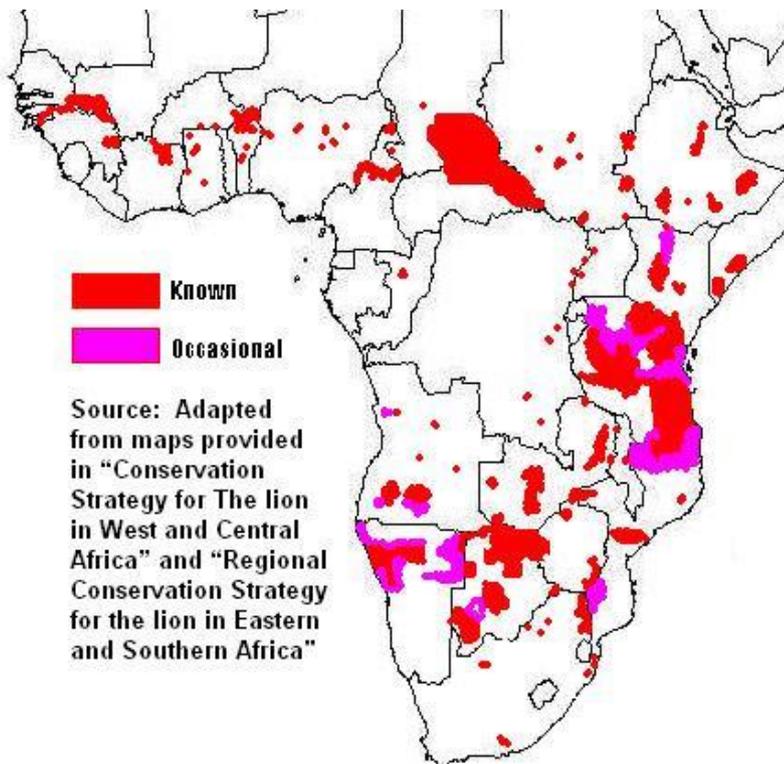


A man shows off the carcass of the one of the six lions killed in Elkeek-Lemedungi village in Kitengela, Kajiado County, west of Nairobi, Kenya, 20,June 2012. The cats had mauled 28 livestock in one homestead.

Source : Daily Nation, Kenya, 20,June 2012 .

The Zambia Sunday Mail of 15 December 2012, carried an article in which it reported that a very brave village woman in Nabwalya, in the Luangwa Valley, in Mpika District, ,armed only with a garden hoe, killed a ferocious lioness to save her four -year old daughter (*Zambia Sunday Mail*, 8 and 15 December 20012). And there are reports on marauding lions attacking cattle and other livestock resulting in the killing of them with spears, bows and arrows and firearms (*Zambia Daily Mail*, 19 and 20 October 2012). .

In recent years, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (ICUN), supported by many governments, Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) such as The Lion Conservation Fund (LCF; South African Broadcasting Corporation, 6 April, 2013, News Cast 18.00), and myriads of other organizations, chiefs and ordinary people, has drawn the attention of the world on the rapidity with which wild life was experiencing rapid decimation and decline. In Africa, it is generally agreed that many species of game are endangered. This is due to human encroachment in their territory through new settlement areas, farms and ranches, rampant killings by human beings because some species are regarded as vermin which have to be eliminated in order to protect their livestock in the villages, farms and ranches; shortage of the lions' prey among wild life because of overhunting by human hunters; to provide food, trophies or security (*Zambia Daily Mail* editorial, 12 January 2013) . One of the species which is vulnerable and facing rapid extinction is the iconic African Lion (*Panthera Leo Leo*), which the ICUN has now listed as being a “vulnerable” and endangered species . The population and range of the African lion are both in alarming decline. Over the past two decades, the number of African lions has declined by at least 48.5 percent as a result of retaliatory killings, loss of habitat, hunting of prey species as vermin, over-exploitation by recreational trophy hunters and commercial trade, disease, and other human-caused and natural factors. In South Africa, there are reports of about 168 farms raising around 5000 lions (three thousand more than those in the wild) for sport shooting by hunters hunting for trophies.(Barkham, 2013):.



2008 distribution of lions in Africa. Courtesy of ALERT, The African Lion & Environmental Research Trust.

According to the IUCN, current estimates for Africa's lion population vary from around 20,000 to 30,000, and are falling in the face of numerous threats including conflict with livestock farmers and loss of prey and habitat (Sunday Times of South Africa, 10 January 2013). Others argue that there are fewer than 40,000 African lions remaining—most of them in just a handful of countries. Of the remaining populations, two-thirds are neither protected nor viable over the long run. Most of the lion populations are found in Eastern and Southern Africa, but their numbers are decreasing rapidly with a thirty to fifty percent decline over the past two or three decades. Between 2002 and 2004, the estimated numbers lost ranged between 16,500 and 47,000. The IUCN has put its estimates at 30,000 found in twenty-eight African countries. Only seven countries—Botswana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe—have populations of over 1,000. Primary reasons for the decline are attributed to disease, habitat loss and degradation of the habitat due to the increasing frontiers of agriculture and urbanization confining the lions to isolated "islands" of habitats which has increased the risk of extinction; scarcity of wild prey due to overhunting by human hunters; danger to livestock kept by humans in the villages and farms; human interference and conflict between humans and wild life. The African lion is facing an uncertain future at best.

There is a real possibility that more African countries will lose their wild lions altogether if the current situation is not reversed (BBC, 20 February 2010; Chardonnet, 2002; Sunday Times of South Africa (on Line, 10 January 2013).

The lion is one of Africa's iconic animals. Its decline has created a great concern to the tourist industry, governments, Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) concerned with conservation of wild life, Members of Parliament, Chiefs and ordinary citizens . On 20 February 2010, the BBC published an article on the rapid depletion of lions in Kenya in particular and Africa in general indicating that one of Africa's big tourist attractions could all be extinct in the next fifty years- 2050 to be exact, unless urgent action was taken to protect the species. Fifty years ago, Kenya had more than 35,000 lions. These have now been reduced to around 2000. And there were many thousands in other parts of Africa but their numbers have declined considerably. The then Minister of Wildlife, Noah Wekesa called for action to save the lions and other forms of wildlife which were disappearing at a fast rate.(BBC, 20 February,2010). The plight of lions in Kenya is also evident in many countries in Sub Saharan Africa. The numbers are dwindling fast. Surviving lions are now confined to game reserves and to zoos where they are intended to be tourist attractions the purpose of this article is to discuss the status of the African lion in various parts of Sub Sahara Africa and later look at the declining abilities for its survival. Where these exist, the lion is seen to be more as a tourist attraction in the zoos or game reserves(IUCN,.

Fredrick Selous (1888:45), the famous big game hunter in Central Africa of the late Nineteenth Century, reminisced about the lion in the following words:

Of all the multifarious forms of life with which the Great African Continent has been so beautifully stocked, none . . . has been responsible for such a wealth of anecdote and story, or has stirred the hearty and imagination of mankind to such a degree as the lion- the great and terrible man-eating cat, monarch of the African wilderness . . . Whose life means constant death to all his fellow brutes, from the ponderous buffalo, to the light-footed gazelle, and to the human inhabitants of the countries through which he roams?

In recent years, concern has been raised on the survival of the African lions. Several studies show that lions are threatened with extinction in large parts of Africa due loss of habitat to commercial agriculture, plantations and ranching, industrialization and

urbanization In 1996, the *African Lion Working Group* reported of the rapidly declining lion populations which they estimated were between 30,000 and 100,000 lions throughout all of Africa (Sunday Times of South Africa on Line 10 January 2013). It also reported that Tanzania had the largest population of lions. It went on to report that in some areas, lion populations were in decline are too small to be viable. According to the ICUN on Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) list, African lions are now listed as “Endangered” for West African subspecies, and “Vulnerable” for East and Southern African subspecies by the World Conservation Union. However, some governments have taken steps to correct the situation. Many have not. The issues raised in this paper are focused on the survival of the lion as a species for its own sake, to promote tourism or to driven into extinction.

The lion is a portent symbol of the animal kingdom distinguished by its size, strength, mane and stature in the animal world.. Its image has suffered from distortion and even exploitation. Whether romanticized or trivialized, the lion is rarely presented in its complete reality. But in Africa where lions and humans have coexisted for millions of years, the lion is known in fuller dimensions. It has been a source of food, riches, and a fearsome rival for resources, a highly visible and provocative neighbour. Inevitably, it has had an impact upon the artistic imaginations. Even where the lion has vanished, it persists as a symbol in expressive culture as interpreted in African sculpture, dances, song, folklore, and its image undergoes a startling range of transformations. But no matter how it is represented, its size and power are features most likely to be dramatized, for they not only inspire respect but stand for better or worse, as important emblems for human values (The African Lion Working Group , 1966).

The lion, is, of course, one creature with the vast drama of intricate relationships that link the animal world with that of the humans. It should not be isolated from folklore and the hierarchy of fauna that gives context in actuality but also in its symbolic life. In its symbolic functions, it is at times projected and presented with valour and beauty. Hunting of lions was a prized activity. Successful hunters were celebrated in story, song and dance. The killing of a lion was an occasion of feasting and dance (Smuts, 1982:274; Kat, The Pride 1987: 11;Chisanga).

The African Lion variously called *Simba* in Ki-Swahili spoken in East Africa and Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC);, *Kalamo* in Ki-Luba of DRC; *Nkalamo* in Chibemba, spoken in the large part of North –East, Southern , Central and North West Zambia, *Mkango* in Chi-Chewa spoken in Eastern Zambia, Malawi and Central Mozambique, *Ovakwanime* in Oshiwambo, spoken in Northern Namibia and Southern Angola, *Taung* in Sesotho, *Tau* in SeTswana, and Lozi of Western Zambia), and *Shumba* among the Shona of Zimbabwe, is Africa’s largest carnivores. It is an awesome creature, revered by some, feared and dreaded by others. It is creature of mystery, intrigue, wonder, fascination, respect and fear which has attracted considerable interest for many centuries among various societies. Its roar is the most terrifying voice of the grasslands and forests. It is an extraordinary being steeped in mythology, folklore, symbolisms and beliefs. It a subject for the average carver in stone and wood, and a favourite subject for those working in paint, clay and plastics. It is a target of trophy hunters, livestock herders and stock farmers who treat it as “vermin”. It is a huge tourist attraction around which individual travel, tailor-made, incentive travel, group travel or eco-tourism safaris are organized Lions is extraordinary beings.

Throughout the centuries, the lions have raised and evoked a variety of reactions among people who saw, watched or hunted them; heard them roar or read about them and their exploits in eyewitness accounts or in folklore. Lions are “majestic” predators, which are living symbols of power, strength, courage, pride noble appearance and beauty, grace, intelligence, magnanimity and chivalry, which have earned it the respectable title of “King of Beasts”. Lions are also dreaded, feared, vulcanized and despised because they were dangerous marauders and vermin that attacked and killed live stocked human beings from time to time.. (Smuts, 1982:274; Kat, 1987: 11).

In 1975, Guggisberg (1975: 138) observed that from time immemorial, the lion has “made deeper and more lasting impact on human imagination”. At an early time in history, it attained a prominent place in African mythology, fable, religions, folklore and beliefs” and was a subject of varied symbolic interpretations. The lion was a subject of prehistoric cave paintings in various parts of Africa and has continued to be a subject of interest for the average African painter, artist, stone and wood carver. To Anthony Dyer (1973: 68) “the lion has always been a symbol of many things to man - especially courage, fierceness and

strength". And to Cynthia Moss. 1978: 234), "the lion has been a symbol of power and nobility"), throughout history. It has pride, a noble appearance and beauty, grace, intelligence, magnanimity and chivalry, which have earned it the respectable title of "King of Beasts". These comments reflect the reverence and respect that was and is still given to the lion. It is admired for its agility, courage, strength and dignity and feared for its ferocity as a stock and man-eater. Lions are a huge tourist attraction around which individual, tailor-made, incentive, group travel or eco-tourism safaris are organized. At the same time, they are a target of trophy hunters, livestock herders and stock farmers. On the other hand, lions are dreaded, feared, villainized and despised because they are a dangerous marauders and vermin which from time to time attack and kill livestock and sometimes, attack human beings (Betram (1978:1).

Many European travellers, big game hunters, naturalists and travellers, missionaries, traders and administrators have left graphic accounts of their encounters with lions. Some have dwelt on its man-eating activities, which are described in glowing, lurid and horrid terms. Some of these were true, but many were obviously exaggerated to add an element of adventure or stir hate and dislike of lions in general. Some dwelt on the hunt for lions and came out with pictures of a "victorious" and successful hunter sitting on or standing by his trophy which was often embalmed and went to decorate the seating room or the bar. In spite of this attitude, Betram is of the opinion that "until recently almost nothing was known about [lions] in their natural environments"(Betram, 1978:1)). Like the Wolf in North America, the Tiger in India and the Crocodile in African waterways, the lion, is deemed by some to be better dead than alive.

Big game hunters and game wardens did not agree in their perception of the lion. Fredrick C, Selous (1881:144), a big game hunter in pre-colonial Zimbabwe observed that no other animal "has been responsible for such wave of anecdote and story or has stirred the heart and imaginations of mankind of such a degree as the lion". David Well argued that from his own observation, there was "no African animal that [has] inspired writers on sport or interest of those who have never seen Africa [or indeed even those who have] to the same extent as the lion". Steven-Hamilton (1917:10), the first Game Warden of Kruger National Park in South Africa agreed with the two observations and noted that there was no wild animal in creation on which so much has been written as a lion". And Eric Wells (1933:4)

who raised lions as domestic pets in Kenya observed that “Of all wild animals, none has been more misjudged or maligned; the extreme prejudices that exists doubtlessly springs from traditional ignorance fostered by hunters whose experiences have been gained through the constantly hunted animal, [but also], the hunters' point of view resembles that of a general considering his enemy on the other side of the fighting line”. The ability to inspire such sharp reactions and varied attitudes to it is probably, the lion's single asset as a charismatic animal. The equal but opposite ability to inspire fear, hate and insecurity is conversely its greatest liability.

Towards the end of the Nineteenth Century, at the beginning of colonial rule in Africa, and the early part of the twentieth century, missionaries, administrators, traders and settler farmers reported the presence of large populations of lions in many parts of Africa. Carruthers (1995: 43) informs us that after the Boer War of 1899 – 1902, the general feeling among the white populations in various parts of South Africa, was that lions were too many and “getting out of hand altogether”. Many were eliminated. According to Hearne (1999) , in the early part of colonial rule in Eastern and Southern Africa, most white ranchers and farmers believed that “lions were so numerous and destructive [that] they should be destroyed entirely or at least be thinned out”. Durban-Brunton (1912:263), a big game hunter in North East Rhodesia, reported that the population of lions was “exceedingly plentiful . . . for the comfort and safety of [the Africans]”. Preponderance and concentrations varied from country to country. Some areas had more lions than others - especially where game was abundant. Lions competed with humans for the same territory and game for food. The humans condemned the lion as “a positive danger to human life”, a “vermin” and other loathsome terms. To protect themselves and their livestock or out of fear, they targeted and killed lions mercilessly with extinction in mind (Carruthers, 1995: 42; 2001:107-118). A century later, the picture completely changed. Today the lion is in danger of extinction. It is only safe from man only within the bounds of protected areas and in wildlife parks that have been created in various parts of Africa to boost tourism and hunting for sport and trophies (Bothma and Walker (1999: 10-21).

Study of Lions

In the 1940s, C. R.S. Pitman (1942), former the Chief Game Warden of Uganda was concerned that there was “far too little attention” that has been paid to lions. 25 The desire to know more about the lions began in earnest with C.J. Steven Hamilton (a former Game Warden in the Kruger National Park). He was the first to publish a “scientific” study of lions in their natural environment in 1947 when he devoted three chapters to the study of lions which appeared in Pitman’s book entitled *Wildlife in Southern Africa*. Modern studies started in 1960 when Joy Adams (1961) published a book entitled *Born Free* based on her pet lion named Elsa. The emphasis of the book was on the lion's intelligence, its happy family life in the wild, and of course, the kindness and affection in the relationship between the lion and her owners. It became a focus of many films, which circulated in Europe and the Americas. The recognition of the importance of ecotourism, followed by aggressive advertising to attract European and American tourists, increased the awareness of the importance of the lion. Many tourists wanted to see lions in their natural state and habitat more than any other game. The 1960s saw the beginning of the appearance of scholarly works on the study of the lion. For several years, Guggisberg, a well-known naturalist, studied lions. In 1961, he published a comprehensive study on lions called *Simba: the Life of the Lion*. This still remains the best source of information on the history, myths, legends and man-eating habits of lions. In 1969, Schaller, a highly respected naturalist and field scientist, followed him. He published a number of studies that added a new understanding to the life of lions (1972). In 1975, he published another study on wild cats that included a section on lions followed by another in 1979. Later in the year, Judith Rudnai, an American of Hungarian birth, produced a Master's thesis that she submitted to the University of Nairobi under the title "Social behaviour and feeding habits of lion (*Panther Leo maissaica*). She later published a book and a number of studies. Brian Bertram (1975, 1978), made an extensive study of lions in the Serengeti National Park to continue the work of Schaller and Rudnai. There were also other highly regarded studies by Bowie (1966), Aloof, Adamson, Bertram, Krupuk and Turner and Schenkel that have contributed handsomely to our understanding and knowledge of lions (Bowie (1961, 1966; Aloof, 1964, 1978; Adamson (1968; Bertram (1978; Krupuk and Turner, 1967; Schenkel (1966)). There are also studies by Boddington, Patterson Lake, Bothma and Walker and many others have advanced the knowledge on lions further. Research on the lions is now a branch of field biology and is

taking place in Eastern, Central and Southern Africa(Kat, 1987:15 –20).34; Boddington (1997), Patterson (1989), Lake (2001), Bothma and Walker (1999).

Characteristics of Lions

The African lion is a very large cat, with males weighing between 330 and 550 pounds and females weighing between 260 and 400 pounds. It is 8 to 10 feet long, not including the tail. (Kat, 1987:15 –20, .34). Its most famous feature is its mane, which only male lions have. The mane has a yellow color when the lion is young but this darkens with age to become dark brown. The body of the African lion is well suited for hunting. It is very muscular, with back legs are designed for pouncing and front legs are for grabbing and knocking down prey. It also has very strong jaws that enable it to kill cleanly and efficiently, and to eat its prey-small and large- that it hunts (Kat, 1987:15 –20).34),.

From South Africa to the Sahara, the African lion continues to thrive on the plains, in woodlands, forests, game reserves and sanctuaries continue to thrive. They do their best hunting on the plateaus of eastern Africa and in the vast grasslands of the south. They live in rocky dens, in thorn-tree thickets, or in tall grasses at the edges of streams and in the open semi desert areas. Since the days of the Roman Empire, lions have been caged for circuses and zoos. Outside Africa, most of the lions that are exhibited today have been born in captivity.

Although the lion is now specifically associated with Africa, in terms of history, it was until in recent times, distributed over a much broader range. It was found throughout central and Southern Europe, the Middle East and Western parts of Asia until man exterminated it(, Skinner and Smithers (1990:241; Stevenson-Hamilton 1947:125) . Before the arrival and settlement of the White man, the lion was a common in various parts of Africa from Morocco to the Cape. Rock art and engravings of lions in Namibia, South Africa and in the Sahara show that lions were part of the wildlife for centuries (Rosevear, 1974:460).

Its presence features prominently in folklore, proverbs and oral traditions of most societies in Africa. (de Ley, 1999:72). Africa had about 20 sub species of lions; many of these are now extinct. Among these are the Barbary lion (*Panther Leo Leo*), which was a reputedly large animal with a heavy matted mane to keep it warm. The other was Cape Lion (*Felis Leo melanochaitus*), a similarly powerful animal with a measured mane. A few specimens are mounted in museums in South Africa, and England. The surviving species *Panthera Leo Linn 1758* has a number of subspecies such as the West African lion (*Panther Leo Senegalensis*),

the East African lion (*Panthera Leo massaicus Neumann* found in the Rift Valley and *Panthera Leo Vernay*; Roberts 1948 (Anon, 1989-1990:4; Fitzion, 1911:40; Encyclopedia Americana, 1962:552; Stevenson-Hamilton, 1947:126; Skinner and Smithers, 1990; 401) Mayhew, 1965:253-254; 260; Dutt, 1906:15; Short ridge, 1934:77-79; Harris, 1969:88-99; Kat, 1987)..

The African lion has a wide distribution stretching from Senegal, along the Sahel to Ethiopia and Somalia, down South to Eastern, Central (except the Equatorial forests) and Southern Africa - Northern Namibia (Caprivi, Okavango and Ovamboland), Botswana and northern parts of South Africa. Lions are now found only in the northern parts of South Africa Eastern and Central Africa. Lions are more abundant in the open plains with permanent water supplies, plenty of grazing and consequently, plenty of game. Lions can adapt to an immensely wide range of habitats: Semi-desert, desert, deciduous woodland and scrub Savannah woodlands, and open grasslands such as those found in the Rift Valley). It does not live in swampy places or deep forest (Anon, 1989-1990:4; Fitzion, 1911:40; Encyclopedia Americana, 1962:552; Stevenson-Hamilton, 1947:126; Skinner and Smithers, 1990; 401) Mayhew, 1965:253-254; 260; Dutt, 1906:15; Short ridge, 1934:77-79; Harris, 1969:88-99; Kat, 1987; Boddington, 1997).

The lion is the largest of African carnivores. The size of each animal varies from area to area, region to region. A full grown lion lives between 8 and 25 years (Smith, 1982:273), Schaller, 1972:248; Lake, 1963:31 -46) and weighs between 140 and 260 kilogrammes (kgs). The big males found in the Etosha Pan weighed up to 260kgs The length varied from region to region - 1.75 metres (m) to 2.9m while the height is between 81 to 101 centimetres Guggisberg 1975:142-3; Roseleaf, 1974, 463-4).; Smith, 1982:273; Bothma and Walker, 1999: 23; ; Boyd 1975: 141-143, 1976; Verona, 1997:56; Boddington, 1997)). Lawrence Green believed that the lions found in Zambia were “generally larger in dimensions and possibly the average size was larger than the lions from other parts of parts of Africa Lawrence Green (1961:640).

The colour is generally tawny with varying shades of pale to medium brownish hue. The adult male has abundance of hair called mane around the sides of the face, over the top and sides of the head, neck, and chest and between the shoulders. Sometimes this ranges from dull yellowish to medium-reddish brown and may be considerably darkened by an abundance

of black tipping to the individual hairs. The adult male has an abundance of lengthy hair - termed the mane - around the sides of the face, over the top and sides of the head, neck, and chest and between shoulders. In some cases, individual manes extend further along the back and the underside of the body. Apart from the extent of the area it covers, the manes vary a great deal in length, abundance and colour - ranging from black to gingery-yellow or tawny. All manes darken with age; the color varies according to geographic origin. The mane protects the lion from the claws and fangs of an adversary during combats. It also makes the lion look bigger, more impressive and vigorous. However, during a hunt, the mane makes the lion to easy to be seen by the prey or hunter. Some lions have also tufts of hair on the elbows. On the other hand, the lioness has no mane and has only short hair over the body). Lionesses have short hair over the body. The density as well as the size of the pride varies from area to area depending on the prey (Guggisberg 48 (1961, 1975, 1978), Schaller (1972); see also Rudnai, 1973). The lions found south of the Sahara tended to be very dark in colour with black manes. Those found in the drier areas such as the Sahara and the drier parts of Namibia were more golden with tawny yellow manes. Those in East Africa were silver grey to dark ochre - brown in colour and lighters on the belly. Usually, the males have black manes varying in thickness and shade. Recent studies, by Guggisberg, Schaller and Rudnai indicate that these shades are found to exist within a single pride. There are also occasionally species albino and white lions - especially in Kruger National Park and Timbatiwa National Park in South Africa. African elders in Africa believed that "these lions were sacred". In South Africa, they were connected with gold sites and were referred to as "lions of metals" Guggisberg 48 (1961, 1975, 1978), Schaller (1972; see also Rudnai, 1973; Tucker, 2002:43, 44, 46).

Breeding

Breeding takes place throughout the year. There is a lot of in-breeding in many populations. Scientists argue that in order to avoid in-breeding, which can lead to damaging genetic weaknesses, each lion population should contain at least 500 animals. But the largest populations in West and Central Africa have around 200 lions. (Tucker, 2002:43, 44, 46).

The gestation period varies from 100 to 113 days the litter contains between three and six cubs with an average of four that are weaned at the age of six months. From this age, they begin their apprenticeship in hunting. The percentage of survival in a litter varies from area to area. In the Kruger National Park, Steven-Hamilton (1917: 10) reported that about 50 percent

survived. Schaller (Schaller 1969:404-519) and Betram (1978: 88-9), who worked in Serengeti National Park, estimated a very high mortality rate of about 66 to 70 percent. Some deaths were purely accidental, arising from the separation from the mother, while others came from abandonment, starvation, and predation or drowning. Some cubs are trampled upon by adult lions; gored by bigger game and killed by porcupine quills; others are killed and eaten by leopards, hyenas, and even lions. Others die from cold, thirst during droughts and a variety of diseases such as those transmitted by ticks: *Phipicephalus carnivoralis*, *Rhipicephalus sanguineous*, *Rhipicephalus sinus* and *Haemaphysalis leach* and two varieties trypanosomiasis: *Trypanosoma Congolese* and *Trypanosoma Bruce* (. (Kat, 1987:126, 128, 130-133; The Star, 14 January, 1997). (Guggisberg, 1975: 174; Betram, 1978: 88-9; Kingdom, 1977: 388; Smuts, 1982; Schaller 1969:404-519).Kat53 (1945:137) In the Kruger and Serengeti and other national parks, hundreds of lions in game reserves are dying from canine distemper, deadly tuberculosis that is reducing them to "a skeleton covered in skin" contracted from pet dogs. The disease is common in dogs but often fatal to lions, killing at least half those infected. Researchers have discovered that the distemper is being passed to the lions from dogs owned by local communities via hyenas and jackals. In Kruger National Park, lions, numbering between 1,500 to 2,000 lions, have picked up the fatal disease after feeding on infected Cape buffalo, their natural prey. Researchers reported that more than 90 percent of the lions tested in the southern part of the vast park are infected with the disease. Lions are also affected by diseases spread by other wild animals such as rabies, feline herpes and feline immunodeficiency and sleeping sickness spread by tsetse (Kat53 (1945:137). All these have led to a sharp reduction in numbers that has impacted on the environment in several ways. If lions become extinct, this could have a serious knock-on effect, with other species of animals coming under threat

Lions' society is centred on the pride, which can consist of 3 to 30 lions, lionesses and cubs. I live in pairs or in a pride containing lions of both sexes numbering between 10 and 30. The average pride consists of about fifteen individuals, including five to 10 females with their young and two or three territorial males that are usually brothers or pride mates. Prides defend exclusive territories though individual responses to interlopers are varied. As a group, they hunt, eat and sleep together and groom each other Females in the pride are usually related and stay with the pride. Males, however, join a pride of females and stay for an indefinite period of time. They have been known to join several prides at the same

time. Females do most of the hunting. Males will band together to defend the pride against outside males. Each pride lives within a well-defined territory that can extend over many square miles. Lions favour elevated areas where there is plenty of water as well as shade from the intense midday sun. There they live among the elephants, giraffes, buffalo, and other animals of the plain. The life of a lion is divided between long hours of sleeping and short periods of hunting and mating (Schaller, 1978:31-32; Beer, 1966:51). Lions are plentiful in the bigger national parks but will often tend to stay in the remote parts for long periods at a time. They are the only cats moving in family groups and normally occupy a well defined territory.

Predation

Lions are carnivores: they feed on meat and are specialized in the process of catching, killing and consuming that meat. From the earliest age, they are trained to attain specialization in hunting and killing their prey. They are largely nocturnal in their hunting habits. Females do most of the hunting, and often work together in groups. They usually hunt during the day and prey upon mammals like antelope and zebra. In contrast males hunted frequently and successfully in the thicker habitats in Kruger National Park. The phrase 'the lion's share' comes from the males' habit of eating before the rest of the pride. They hunt either alone or in a group (pride) using various methods; ambush at selected sites or places - usually water holes or clear places on a river bank or shore; driving of animals to where other lions are hiding, stalking and then attacking when it is most convenient; communal hunting or direct attack. In numbers, lions are very courageous where a single one may be a coward. However, although a single lion can rarely take adults of these species, lions hunting cooperatively often kill them. Cooperative hunting has been recorded in some detail in Etosha National Park and individual lions demonstrated preferences for position in hunting formations (Stander, 1992a). Although cooperative hunting was initially proposed as a reason for sociality in lions (Schaller, 1972) subsequent work has suggested that it may be the dispersion of prey (Macdonald, 1983) or the combination of large carcasses, open habitat and high density (Packer et al., 1990) that creates conditions favourable for sociality.

According to Selous (1988), the strength of a full-grown lion is remarkable. An adult male lion possesses greater strength in proportion to its size and weight than any other African animal. It kills with astonishing ease, dexterity and speed. Hunting in prides, they have been known to pull down and kill animals weighing over 3,000 pounds. [1,300 kg] In

the initial chase, lions can reach speeds of up to 36 miles [59 km] an hour, but they cannot sustain that speed for long. Because of this, they employ stalk-and-ambush techniques to obtain their meals. Lionesses do 90 percent of the hunting, but it is the larger males that usually get the lion's share when the meal starts. When game is scarce, lions are sometimes so hungry that they will drive their own cubs from the kill. In Serengeti National Park, Schaller (1972:38-43; 1995, 195-279). Schaller noted more than one lion conducted half the hunts and more often where a single lion hunted alone, he was watched by other lions. He also observed that hunting was between two and four hours in the morning and that more hunts were successful in the moonlight. Socialization among lions enabled several lions to kill large preys more easily and share the spoils. There was also some sexual specialization with more female hunters than male. Schaller observed over three thousands stalks. Out of these, only three percent were by male lions Schaller (1972:38-43; 1995, 195-279).

Lions are recorded to have eaten almost every animal which are big or small. All categories of animals indicate levels of wildlife diversity, availability and abundance. The commonest lion food includes Zebra, Wild beast, Hartebeest, Eland, Waterbuck, Impala, Gazelle and Warthog, Giraffe, Wildebeest, Impala, Zebra, Kudu, Grant's gazelle Waterbuck, Duiker, Wild Pigs. Occasionally, they take relatively small species these are not powerful enough to defend themselves against lions, and they almost invariably flee rather than make an attempt to do so. . Prey animals, the source of meat, are adapted to avoid being caught, so they are, generally and thoroughly, alert and fast. . But often, they become careless and are caught. Elephants, Buffaloes, Giraffes, Rhinoceroses and Hippotami are too large and well armed to be taken regularly, although the young or sick individuals are occasionally preyed upon. Are both too large; adults of these species can rarely be taken by single lions, but are often killed by lions cooperatively and lions often kill many of their young. Lions also kill a wide variety of small animals: Dik-diks, Hyraxes, Hares, small rodents, Velvet monkeys, Aardvarks, Porcupines and Guinea fowls and Dikdik (Packer et al., 2005). They also feed on, birds and reptiles. The size and habits of the prey, what defences it has against predators, and its ability and speed, all influence how many are taken by lions There are reports of hungry lions eating tortoises, frogs, peanuts left in the gardens, wild fruits and even green grass 59. In some areas of Africa, lions scavenge during times outbreaks of anthrax and other animal epidemics. However, they are not susceptible to the diseases. Lions do not often eat

other carnivore and are known to hunt Leopards, Jackals, and Hyaenas. Often human beings are also taken.

Several factors determine which species occur in a particular lion's diet in the course of the year and in what proportions. , Obviously, the first is prey species inhabiting the same territory as the lions. However, some of these species are migrating and are within the lion's area for only part of the year; others are more or less permanently located in the lion's territory - providing opportunity to lions to catch them. Another factor influencing what lions eat is the numbers of each prey species among the population, from which those lions are taking their toll. In general, the commoner the species, the more of that species are killed, simply because the chances that lions will encounter one of them are higher Durbar-Branton 1912: 270; Smuts, 1979: 19-25; Bothma and Walker, 1999: 23 -25).

A lion does not just take its pick from an array of potential prey; it spends a considerable amount of time in searching for a prey animal to start to hunt. Certainly some prey species are killed more often than their abundance would lead one to expect, if lions were catching prey at random, or on the basis of relative abundance. In Nairobi National Park, Judith Rudnai () found that the wildebeest, which have for years formed a greater proportion of lion meal, contributed about twenty-five percent of the kill - although only about one in fourteen of this prey belonged to this species. In Manyara National Park, Schaller (Schaller, 1972) found that Buffalo contributed sixty- two percent, Zebra, sixteen percent, Impala, eleven percent, Baboon and Gnu, two percent each. In the Kruger National Park, Pienaar,(1969) found that Gnu contributed twenty-three percent, Impala, almost twenty percent, Zebra, sixteen percent, Kudu and Waterbuck, almost eleven percent each. And in Zambia's Kafue National Park, Michael and others (Mitchell et al, 1965) found that the Buffalo contributed thirty-five percent, Hartebeest sixteen percent, Warthog almost ten percent, Zebra almost seven percent with Gnu a mere six percent(Mitchell et al, 1965; Bere: 1966: 55; Gouldsbury and Sheane, 1911: 209; Bothma and Walker, 1999: 24 - 25).

Whilst these percentages reflect the relative numerical abundance of prey species, they also reflect the availability of prey that might be influenced by a number of factors. Where ungulates move over large distances in search of water or grazing, lions may follow and lay ambushes. The prey for lions that have established territories may vary from month to month. As a result of seasonal changes, some prey may become particularly vulnerable to

lions. In one study, Hirst showed that in Timbavati Reserve, Giraffes were killed in large numbers after being weakened by prolonged droughts. Bush pigs and warthogs were a favourite prey in Southern Tanzania where the grass was short enabling the lions to approach them steadily, which is not possible in the long grass. Lions are quite lazy creatures, and spend as much as 20 hours a day resting (Hurst (1969: 199 - 230)

In terms of speed, like other cats, lions can accelerate very quickly and run fast up to About 48 to 56km (30 to 35 miles) per hour - but only for a distance of one to two hundred meters. Almost all their prey can run faster for a much longer distance. The basic problem of the lion is to get close enough to the potential prey to be able to spring and capture it before it is able to run away fast enough to escape (Hirst, 1969: 199 – 230).

Hunting Habits

In Africa, lions can be found in savanna grasslands with scattered *Miombo* and *Acacia* trees which serve as shade. Lions are largely nocturnal in their hunting habits. Females do most of the hunting, and often work together in groups. They usually hunt during the day and prey upon mammals like antelope and zebra. The phrase 'the lion's share' comes from the males' habit of eating before the rest of the pride. They hunt singly, in pairs or groups (called prides). In Serengeti, Schaller observed that over half of the hunts were conducted by more than one lion and more often, the single hunter was watched by other lions. He also noted that the peak in hunting was between two and four hours in the morning, and that more hunts were successful in the moonlight. Socialization among the lions has led to a crude form of sharing of hunting spoils and large prey is obviously more easily killed by several lions. There is also some sexual specialization with more female hunters than male. Schaller recorded that out of a thousand stalks, only three percent were made by lions Schaller (1972: 38- 43)

Stalking to get as close to the prey as possible generally precedes the killing of a prey. Kaoze , a Tabwa philosopher vividly described this in the following words: “When there is reason to attack, it does not take such actions lightly, but goes with patience, painstakingly, as watchful as it is serious, taking all into consideration, everything: the weather, the place, the behaviour of the . . . prey, and their number. When all is weighed, it leaps, throws down its victim and renders it asunder. These attacks are more awesome for their being so calculated” Kaoze (1930:3). Apart from stalking, lions may also ambush their prey especially at watering

places and grazing grounds. These methods have been described in detail by Meinertzhagen and Copley . The lions kill their prey by biting them in the throat or at the back of the neck, by strangulation or by a blow from the paw. (Lydekker, 1908: 118; Guggisberg, 1975: 160). When a lion secure their kill, it is disemboweled neatly through an opening in the flank. The entrails which are rarely eaten, are buried while the ears are bitten off and the tongue torn out. The heart and lungs are eaten first, then the soft flesh of the buttocks or the inside of the thighs is torn off and eaten while the brisket and the adjacent soft parts are devoured last. Usually a lion does not eat where the prey is killed, the prey is dragged close to water or under a shade. Occasionally, lions have been observed guarding their prey from hyenas, jackals, vultures and storks. In some cases, carcasses have been cached in branches of trees or even covered with grass or earth Meinertzhagen (1957) and Copley 65 (quoted by Guggisberg, 1975: 159)..

The amount of meat eaten in one meal varies widely. Schaller estimated an average of between sixteen and thirty-three kilograms. After having their fill, the carcass is usually abandoned and taken by hyenas, vultures, storks or human beings. In some areas of Africa, men often drove lions off their kill. The San in Kalahari favoured the presence of lions because of a "chance of obtaining constant supplies of meat without undergoing any extra personal exertion on their part" (Nicols and Eglington 1892:81; (Kirby, 1940); (Lydekker, 1908: 118; Guggisberg, 1975: 160). . Smith also found that the San actually protected lions because of the fresh meat they provided (Smith, 1900) And Edward Alexander (, 1838 Quoted in Guggisberg, 1975: 292), commenting on his travels in Namibia, reported on the intimate relationship existing between the San and the lions where the former were largely dependent on lions for the supply of meat. This was not unique to Namibia. In 1928, in Bugyerere in Southern Uganda, the people of got to know the habits of a resident lion and systematically helped themselves from part of his kills without fear. This continued until some European photographer seeking close-quarter portraits shot and disabled "this very accommodating lion"(Kingdon: 1977, 390). Lions do scavenge where they can. In the Ngorongoro Crater area, where hyenas heavily outnumbered lions, they rely on the former's hunting and take over a high proportion of the hyena's kills (Kingdon: 1977, 390)..After a good meal, lions drink lots of water whenever it is available. Where is not available, they are able to go without water for four to five days. During times of drought, lions have been seen chewing fibers and the roots of *Sansevieria* to extract the sap. And while in the Kalahari,

Livingstone observed lions eating *Tsama* melons (*Citrullus* or *Cucumers caffer*) for their liquids (Kingdon: 1977, 390).. 71

Lions may pass on the behaviour of attacking people to their offspring. This is especially likely during long outbreak periods where multiple generations of lions are involved. In addition to learned behavior, lion attacks on humans may be spurred by competition between prides and by expulsion of juveniles from their natal prides. The stress suffered by a small pride living next to a large pride was implicated in a 1991 outbreak of man-eating in Zambia (Yamazaki and Bwalya 1999). Data collected outside Tsavo National Park in Kenya indicates that most problem lions were less than five years old and had most likely left the park because they were unable to establish themselves in existing territories. By leaving the park, these lions were more likely to encounter people and attack livestock or humans (Patterson et al. 2003).

It is possible that some outbreaks of man-eating started because lions tend to attack prey that is either ill or behaving abnormally. Malnourished, wounded, or aged lions that have difficulty catching their normal prey may start capturing humans. Historic man-eating incidents have been attributed to lions with tooth ailments, damaged limbs, and porcupine quills embedded in their paws (Peterhans & Gnoske 2001, Patterson et al. 2003). In some cases, inebriated men and women leaving a drinking party or bar late at night; herbalists, exorcists, moving from one village to the other at night or during any time of the day alone or accompanied, and hunters became targets due to their abnormal behaviour (Schaller 1972). Another important factor may be the health and age of the lions themselves.

Man and the Lion

The lion is a subject of varied symbolic interpretation. To Guggisberg (1975: 138), the lion has "made deeper and more lasting impact on human imagination attaining a prominent place in myth, fable and folklore" Anthony Dyer (1973: 68) noted that "the lion has always been a symbol of many things to man - especially courage, fierceness and strength". Cynthia Moss argued that throughout history, "the lion has been a symbol of power and nobility". These comments reflect the reverence and respect that was and is still given to the lion. It is admired for its agility, courage, strength and dignity and feared for its ferocity as a stock and man-eater (Fitzsimons, 1919: 111).

There are biblical references to the lion, the best story is about Daniel, the Hebrew captive in Babylon who was thrown into a den of lions because he persisted in praying to

God. But the lions did not harm him (Daniel 6). In Judges 15:5-6, Samson killed a lion with his bare hands. In Peter 6:8. Satan is compared to a roaring lion that goes about "seeking whom he may devour". And in Psalm 10:7, we are informed that the wicked lie in wait secretly as "a lion in his den". In the Christian period, lions devoured thousands of Christians in Rome in front of spectators. In some societies, lions served the role of the executioner. In ancient Egypt and Nubia (Meroe), they played a prominent role in religion. They were reared, tamed and kept in temples as living representatives of Gods (Shinnie, 1967: 101, 107). The flooding of the River Nile, which was the most important even in the Egyptian calendar, was represented by the hieroglyph of the lion's head. Probably this had astrological connotations. In Upper Egypt, the town of Leontopolis took its name from a lion cult that flourished there. The influence of this cult reached such a point that whenever one of the venerated lions died, elaborate funerals were held. This practice continued well into the Christian era and was finally abolished by Emperor Theodosius in AD 384. (Guggisberg, 1975:138-9; Rosevear, 1974, 460-1; Kingdom, 1977:367).

Lions have played a very important role as insignias of kingship and political power in Europe, Africa and Asia. Tamed lions guarded Jubilee Palace in Addis Ababa during the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie, Before 1935, a huge statue of the Lion of Judah stood near the railway station in Addis Ababa, which was later taken to Italy during the Italo-Ethiopian war of 1935 to 1941. The lion was a proud symbol of the Ethiopian Airlines. In Zambia, statues of lions in stone guard the entrance to the High Court in Lusaka. And in Europe, stone lions guard palaces, fortresses, strongholds, battlefields, gothic cathedrals, libraries, houses of the rich and powerful and important places. Lions also appear in flags and coat of arms of nations, city or town councils as well as on many seals of Banks and private companies (Woldering, 1965:40; Carr, 1956: 24, 66, 83, 3212, 217, 223, 240, 266. Greenfield, 1968:242); conflict (Greenfield, 1968: 242; Guggisberg, 1975:138-9; Rosevear, 1974, 460-1; Kingdom, 1977:367).

Lions are a culturally iconic species the world over. They have been awarded religious, heraldic, and flagship status at least for very many cultures. No other species on the planet is represented in so many symbols, statues, representations, works of art, and representations in literature as the lion Africa, Europe and Asia. The name "lion" is used in several brands of products ranging from matches, bicycles and beer. It is also used in sports such as football (soccer), basketball and rugby; and service organizations such as Lion

International. There are also dance groups called the Lions of Africa found in a number of West African countries. These are a multi-talented traditional groups offering rare and exciting shows with traditional dancers in full costume, which bring unique energetic dance movements of West Africa. Their performances include intricate cultural drumming, dancing, fire-eating, acrobatics, chanting and singing. ((Guggisberg, 1975:138-9: Rosevear, 1974, 460-1: Kingdom, 1977:367).

The various types of the lion as seen by the Africans

The Africans perceive the lion at two levels: as a symbol and as a beast. From time immemorial, man in Africa, as an individual, community and society, has always regarded himself as being closely related to the animal world, so closely in fact, that among many societies, a number of animals, which include the lion, were picked as totems - a mystical association or relationship between the human beings organized in clans. The members of the lion clan are found in East, Central and South Africa (Chisanga). They believe that they possess the characteristic qualities of their totem animal - that is being courageous, strong and spirited in fights. It was a taboo for members of this clan to marry each other or touch a dead lion, skin it or eat its flesh because of the belief that they are related(Chisanga)

The term "lion" is used in symbolic terms as a description of character of those who are judged to be fearless, powerful and brave. Strong men and women are referred to as "lions" to refer to their ability to work hard. The term is also use to describe gluttonous individuals who do not share food with others (Chisanga). It is a title for important persons such as such the King of Swaziland who is adorably called *Ingwenyama*- (the eater of game) to connote his position(Stow, 1910: 416). Douglas 1947, 231-247; Roberts 1983: 119-133; 1979, 35-63; Bothma and Walker, 1999: 26 - 27).

The Africans admired the lion for its beauty, courage and strength. Daniel Kunene, (1971:131-2) discusses the reasons for this phenomenon in the following quotation:

Men had to survive - their survival depended very much on possessing the qualities which they saw in their powerful adversaries, qualities with a great destructive potential. Observing these, the warriors saw their accuracy, their cunning. [Man] observed . . . these qualities and desired them for himself. Just as he feared the potential destroyers of his life, so did he wish his enemies to fear him, and so for that reason, he desired for himself these qualities. He not only feared the lions but at the same time admired it and therefore composed praises for them.

Praises of lions are found in many societies (Chisanga). Among the Bemba of Zambia, the praise part of a warning:

<i>Mundu walila munsunga</i>	The lion has roared
<i>mwebana banama cenjeleni</i>	Ungulates, take care
<i>Mundu, mupeteka abafu</i>	The lion, breaker of ribs.

S.K. Lekgothoane(1936:192),, a northern Sotho in South Africa, gives one praise from his area:

Mr. Lion, the Tremendous
Awful Roarer, the Attacked-by-all
Poor body that summons together a gathering
Wild cat with fat cheeks that eat the heritage
of other animals also
It is bitter, it is bitter [its courage is great]
this little plant of the lion that calls for axes
The dogs and the vultures fear to attack him
This lion with the huge mane
This roarer with his deep throat, that all the
animals know
His head is a while and shaggy mass of hair
His nails are long and sharp
The diaphragm (fear) of all animals
Predatory devourer, father of all animals. 84

And the South African academic Daniel Kunene (1971: 31) quotes Thomas Mofolo, a noted South-African novelist who praised the lion in the following words:

Tawny one, brother of Mathebele, rise up
Tawry one, fawn-coloured King of the Wilds
Why, you eat not what belongs to men
But eat for your part, the sleepers in the Veldt. 85

From the DRC, Burton (1943: 95) gives us praise from the Luba speakers:

<i>Ntambo Kibwende.</i>	The lion does not roar for nothing
<i>Kadila adile adya.</i>	When he roars, he devours

In many African societies, the lion is seen as a beast that has to be hunted and killed because of its man-eating activities or eating livestock. When a lion is killed it, in some cases, the carcass is not left to rot. .However, in most cases, the carcass was collected by senior councilors and medicine men who supervise the skinning. The first is the skin which collected and given to either a chief or a king who had the medicines and power to banish its soul. The chiefs or kings were believed to have power to step “ritually” on the spirit of the

lion. Among the Bemba this ritual was referred to as “stepping on the lion - *ukunyanta inkalamo*” (Chisanga). After this ritual, the carcass was skinned. The skin was laid in the sun to dry. After this, it was treated with salt and the soup made from cooked boiled beans and tanned into a soft skin which is spread in a special place and a chief’s stool is placed on it. Before the chief is enthroned and sit on his stool, he is bathed in specially prepared medicines and his body is rubbed with red camwood powder (*inkula*) to fortify and protect him from the spirit of the dead lion. When the chief sits on this stool, he is described as sitting on the lion-*ukwikala pa nkalamo*, a sign of power, royalty and authority((Reefe, 1981:113; Campbell, 1929: 57; Gamitto, 1960: 56 –57; Shorter, 1972:105; Chicana).

In many pre-colonial societies, it was a rule that any commoner who inadvertently stepped on the lion skin, was enslaved, sold into slavery or made to pay a huge fine of ivory or heavy loads of salt. The chief or king also holds a ceremony to banish the spirit of the lion to protect the country from further or possible attacks. In some countries, after the establishment of colonial rule, the lion skin became a government trophy and was delivered to the government post instead of the chief, which has continued after independence (Marks,1976:33) . At important annual and religious ceremonies, many African chiefs, councilors and the elites, wear whole lion skins or strips of it which form part of the royal insignia and regalia. For example, the King of Swaziland puts on a black mane during important celebrations like the Reed Dance. Other chiefs like Mwata Kazembe wear strips or amulets of lion skin on their arms., Among the Lozi, the paddlers on the Nalikwanda have strips of the mane ornamented on their caps (Deak, 1996:8). Similarly, in many ethnic groups, during important ceremonies, members of the royalty, warriors, highly honoured hunters and religious leaders, wear pieces of lion skin or the mane, to indicate and highlight their status in the society (Shinnie, 1967: 103; Chiwale, 1963: 66; Hauling).In many communities, when a chief identified a person in the community who had done a very honorable act and decided to honour him or her, he usually held a public ceremony during which he presented this person with a tanned skin of the lion. Out of this, the Bemba-speaking people had a saying: “*Kunaka kunaka apapilwe mu mapapa ya nkalamo* –those who were humble or performed a distinguished service were rewarded with a lion skin”. (Chisanga).

Second, fresh or dried blood is collected and used in a variety of herbal medicines by those who engaged in regular fights (brawls) because there is a belief that lion's blood and medicine would give them strength and courage to face and beat their opponents and defeat them. Medicines mixed with the blood of a lion is also used by big game hunters who believe that they would acquire the courage and strength or acquire the imposing dignity and respect, of the lion. Dried blood made into a powder is a good cure for cancerous wounds. Third. The faeces and urine, are kept by medicine men. Small portions of these items were mixed with herbs as catalysts (*Ifishimba or Vizimba*) to cure a variety of ailments such as sterility in women and impotence in men (Stow, 1910: 416, Kingdom, 1977: 394; Gibbons, 1904: 172). Fourth. The tail is kept by chiefs or religious priests., It is displayed at important ceremonies (Chisanga).

Fifth. the internal organs including the tongue, intestines and the heart are removed to serve as catalysts in healing several ailments(Chisanga; ZNBC, 20 February 2013).. In the stomach of the lion is a kind of "bezoar stone", a ball formed out of the hairs swallowed when the lion is licking his/her fur that, in the course of time, becomes hard as a stone and looks as if it is polished. This stone, which grows to the size of a fist, is highly sought after by medicine men as a remedy for various ailments (Stow, 1910: 416; Guggisberg, 1975: 278; Mudenda) . Sixth. Fangs are removed. In some societies, the members of royalty, diviners or priests of shrines wear fangs around their necks as a mark of their status and the offices they hold. In the pre-colonial period, fangs were used as war fetishes or worn as lucky charms or amulets (Chisanga).. In the past, in some societies, lion claws and teeth were buried with the dead body of the chief as a mark of respect. It was believed that the claws enabled the spirit of the chief to reincarnate and turn into friendly lion in after- life. These lions are friendly that they catch game and leave it close to the villages for the villagers to pick. They also fight off aggressive lions that might want to attack human beings. The claws are also used as fetishes and charms(Mudenda; Chisanga;Bothma and Walker, 1999: 27).

Seven. The parts of the body are used for a number of purposes. The meat is collected but is not eaten except in very rare cases as was reported by the BBC on 29 November, 2004 where a community in Zimbabwe demanded the carcass to eat it in revenge for the loss of their livestock!. In most cases, the flesh is dried and bits of it are mixed with herbal medicines to treat a variety of illnesses and give some people physical power to fight one or more men-similar to the case of Samson in the Old Testament (Judges

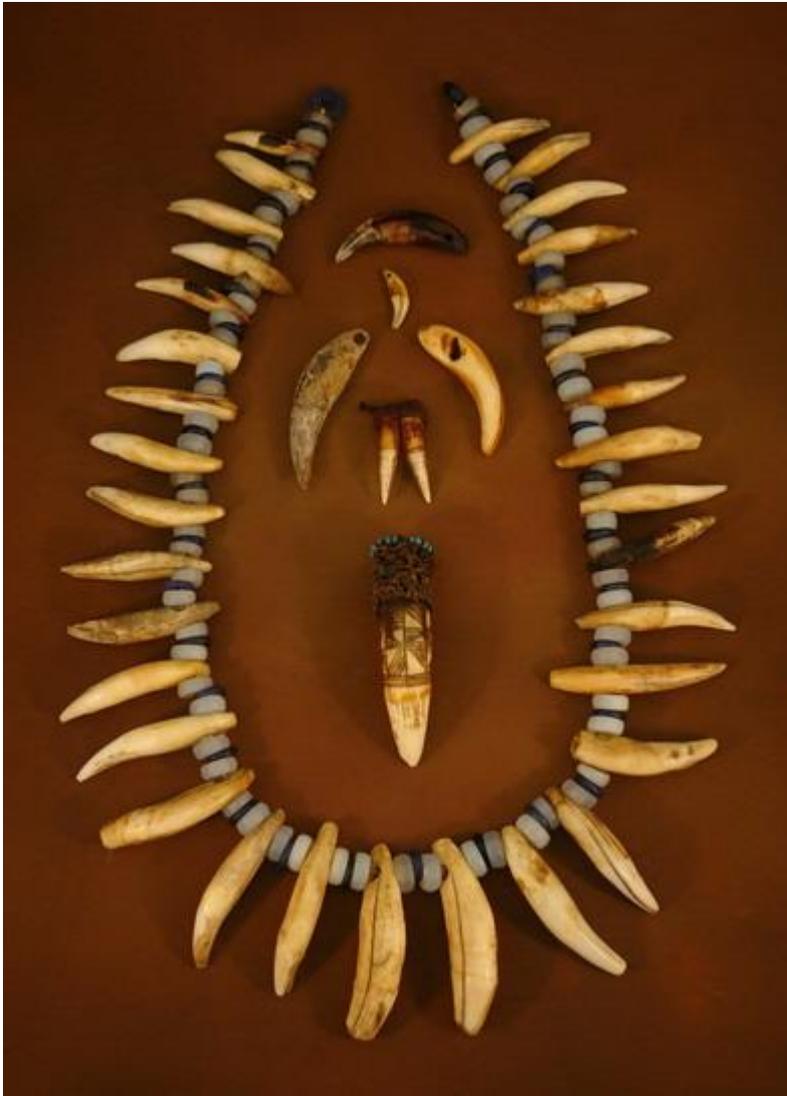
15:5-6)... Eight. In many societies, the lion's fat is collected by medicine men. It is very important ingredient in anointing chiefs at their installation to give them courage in tackling the problems brought before them without fear or favour. Lion fat is also believed to have medicinal properties. It believed to be an excellent cure against carbuncles, swollen glands and other hard growths, ear aches and rheumatic pains. The Baganda use it to heal fractures and believed that it helps to join dislocated bones more quickly and that it was a cure for poliomyelitis, heart disease, blemishes and spots on the face. It is also believed that if the fat is mixed with powdered vertebrae of the lion, it cures backache. Lion fat is also believed and used as a portent love potion (Stow, 1910: 416, Kingdom, '977: 394; Gibbon, 1904: 172). In some societies, the lion fat is also used as a repellent to chase away tsetse flies and protect the cattle from their deadly bites. It is smeared on the ox-tail; and enables cattle to pass through tsetse infested woods or forests in safety. Lion fat is also used by sophisticated robbers targeting homes with fierce dogs. The robbers would smear their bodies with lion fat which, once smelt by the dogs, would send them into hiding leaving a free way or passage for the robbers (Habulungu)

Nine . The genitals were collected and dried. Small pieces of the dried penis and testicles are mixed with some herbs as an activating agent (*vizimba* or *fishimba* to give impotent men virile qualities, cure impotence, and enabled them to produce a large quantity of active sperms; and cure sterility in women (Marks, 1976:215.) Father Edouard Labrecque (1931), a missionary with the White Fathers who worked in North East Zambia for many years, informs us that

“For our Africans always use a magical charm ('cishimba') besides the natural remedy on the ground that the natural remedy is efficient only through the magical charm. In their minds this charm has a double purpose: to activate the natural curative power of the remedy and to thwart the supra-natural cause of the illness. But for the charm to be suitable and really efficacious, the supra-natural cause of the illness must be investigated and brought to light, and the only way to do it is to consult the spirits”

The virility of the lion was judged from the number of times it is able to copulate with a lioness - which could be every 15 to 30 minutes. for several days in a row. Pieces of female genitals are also mixed with herbs to cure infertility in women (Mudenda, 1984).

Ten. The cranium is collected and used to keep paraphernalia used in divination and protection from witchcraft Eleven.. In some places, the teeth of the lion were collected and made into a string worn around the neck by hunters on a hunting trip for protection from harm from witches and lions. The teeth are collected and put in a string which was worn by the chief or hung at entrances to the palace



A string of lion teeth collected from DRC (Ezakwantu)

Twelve.. The bones are collected by diviners and used in divination. Lion bones were believed to have healing properties. Recently it has been noticed that lion bones were being used in medicinal brews by the Chinese instead of tiger bones. This to some extent has increased the toll on lions (Mail and Guradian, 20 April 2012) Other bones are kept by

medicine men. At times, a few pieces of bones are crushed and mixed with traditional medicines used by the hunters to give them courage and valour or used to treat some forms of madness..Thirteen. The eyes are collected and mixed with medicines used by hunters to give them better sight of the animals during a hunt. Fourteen., the nose is collected. Bits of it are mixed with medicines used by hunters who believe that it would help them to pick the scent of animals of the spoor. Fifteen.. The facial hairs are collected and mixed with medicines to make a love portion. This blend is rolled into a cigarette and smoked. With each puff, the intended target is mentioned. Alternatively, the facial hairs are burned. The ash is collected and mixed with some herbs to make love portions or to win affection. . And sixteen. Whiskers are mixed with medicines which is thrown in water which bathed either at the edge of the rubbish pit or where the paths met to overcome enemies, win court cases or create a good and favourable working relations at work. Alternately whiskers are rolled in medicines to make a charm that is worn around the neck or waist to seek protection from witches (Mudenda, 1984)..

Lion parts are not only used in Sub Sahara Africa. They are also exported to other countries. The legal export of lion bones and whole carcasses has also soared. For example, the Campaign Against Canned Hunting (2012) reported that South Africa exported 327 lion carcasses to Laos Peoples Democratic Republic in 2009 and 2010 which must have spread to other East Asian countries including The Peoples' Republic of China. Exports from Sub Saharan Africa include those to the United States of America where they were used for a variety of purposes. According to testimonies of the International Fund for Animal Welfare, Humane Society of the United States of America, Humane Society International, and Born Free Foundation and Defenders of Wildlife, "the United States is the leading importer of live lions and lion parts for commercial and recreational trade – this includes skulls, claws, hides, and live lions". And according to Teresa Telecky, Director, Wildlife Department, The Humane Society of the United States, the "Americans' thirst for exotic goods and trophies to hang on their walls is driving lions to extinction. According to Antony Mukwita (2013: 1, 6), American are ready to pay \$40,000 to \$45,000 for a lion trophy shot in Africa and brought to the United States after paying only between \$2,00 to \$4,000 for the licence!

. The African lion cannot endure this level of exploitation if their long-term survival is to be ensured and assured. Listing the African lion as ""Endangered"" would generally prohibit the import of lion trophies into the United States, an essential step to reversing the

current decline of the population. Moreover, the listing would stop imports of commercially traded lions and lion parts that do not benefit lions in the wild. Jeff Flocken, DC office Director of IFAW once complained that . “Our nation (USA) is responsible for importing over half of all lions brought home by trophy hunters each year. The African lion is in real trouble and it is time for this senseless killing and unsustainable practice to stop. This is why some nations have proscribed hunting of the lion and big cats. Many people have welcomed the recent action by Mrs. Silvia Masebo to ban the hunting of big cats.(Post Newspaper, January, 2013). The U.S. government must recognize that African lions are in danger of extinction throughout a significant portion of their range, acknowledge our nation’s significant role in the lion’s fate and bring greater scrutiny to all factors contributing to the decline of lion populations,” said Bob Irvin, senior vice president for conservation programs, Defenders of Wildlife. “The African lion is a vital cultural asset, a symbol of the world’s last great vestiges of wildness, and a critical part of healthy ecosystems that must be protected. The groups fighting for the conservation of the lion appealed to the Secretary of the Interior to intervene and take action to save the lion,. (HSS,. 28 February, 2011)..

Different types of lions as seen by the Africans

African societies pay a lot of respect to the lions. They are not hunted anyhow They distinguish several types of lions based on observable behaviour of each lion and circumstances of its interaction with the people According to Stuart Marks (Marks, 1984:2) and supported by Chisanga (1972;), generally, African societies believe that “ it is dangerous to assume the identity of any lion until it reveals itself through its behaviour”. Among these are, first, described as “ordinary” lions or lions of the soil which usually stay in the bush described as "biological predators”. (Marks, 1976: 38; Marks, 1984:2; Letcher,1995:95; Kaunda, 1963, 54; Bothma 1950:71-73.They are identified with the bush where they usually stay. They are timid creatures and do not attack human beings. In fact, they are generally timid creatures. In daylight, they normally give way their catch to the people or flee like a dog.((Kaunda, 1963, 54).) This is the type that field biologists would like to study, the tourists seek to photograph, and from which people can steal carcasses. It is also the target professional hunter look for trophies. It is also the ideal animal that game guards look for. Sometimes, some of these lions become stock raiders. In Namibia, research shows that these were on two levels: the occasional and habitual problem animals. The occasional were easy to dissuade, harass and scare off by taking strong and intimidator measures. The habitual

raiders were difficult and in most cases had to be destroyed as no coercion or intimidation could deter them. Some of these became man-eaters (Turner, 1967: 192-3). Theo Kassner (1911:186) believed that “a lion that has never tasted or fed on human flesh will not normally attack a human being except when provoked. In normal circumstances, he would run away. But “a lion who has once tasted human flesh becomes a man-eater and a man hunter”.

(Sellouts, Chadwick, 1919: 767-70; Blackie, 1910:55; Livingstone, 1857: 13696 A number of hunters like Livingstone and even Selous, were of the opinion that man-eaters were usually old lions with broken or bad teeth. Recent observations have disapproved this belief. Some of the man-eaters killed were fairly young lions or lionesses.(Theo Kassner (1911:186) (Kat, 1987:137).

The second type is a spiritual lion – a reincarnation of dead chiefs. These lions are referred to as guardian spirits of the land, reincarnated chiefs” and guardians of particular locales. The spirit of the chief reincarnated in form of a lion, divined through the use of divination, attacks people only on specific occasions and for obvious reasons to draw their attention to a misdemeanor that has to be corrected. It can only be dispelled through making a proper and accepted sacrifice, libation and ritual and through the use of very powerful protective magic prepared by a highly respected diviner. These lions were, in the past, were seen to be closely associated with the chiefs’ graveyards usually located in the evergreen forests (*Imishitu*). These lions are accepted as a media through which the tutelary deities of the land monitor the social and political landscape reminding the present generations of their past roles and observances (Letcher, 1995:95; Marks, 1984: 2; Chisanga; Anonymous,1950:71-73.). They visit the villages at night, roar loudly as they move between human dwellings but do not harm people. Sometimes they come to the villages to warn and pump "sense" in the minds of people when mistakes were made in rituals and other observances. Other lions come to express disapproval of actions taken especially those relating to rituals. Sometimes, these lions hunt for the villagers, kill an animal and carry to the outskirts of the village, leave the carcass in an open space for the villagers to pick, or lead the villagers to the kill. These lions, when properly identified, were in the past, on some occasions, driven off their kill by villagers who also shout praises for the chiefs. (Letcher,1995:95; Chisanga; Kafutu; Mutembo; Sebente; Musonda;).

The third, are men-lions (or were- lions) also called *Chisanguka sing.*; *Visanguka or Bachisanguka, pl.*, believed to be men (never women) with powers to turn themselves into

lions to avenge a wrong or punish people for a crime committed, They appear in times of social crisis, turbulence and uncertainty In many parts of Sub Saharan Africa, there is a widespread belief that they are the means by which some people influence and exploit members of other social groups, being controlled by a sorcerer who sends them to kill, maim, punish and harm others. Many of the man-eating lions were men who, in many cases, hold a grudge against the victim, family or clan(Marks, 1976: 38; 1984: 3; Jelf, 1950: 351-354: Dunbar-Brandon, 1912, 288- 307; Letcher,1995:95). Fourth, there were those who “termed” lions through the use of black magic, which they could summon and send to punish people for a crime for which no satisfactory fee or payment was made.These lions could be summoned at will or when needed. Some sent to guard gardens from the ravages of wild pigs, baboons and other clever beasts. The owners of these lions often kept pouches filled with fur, paws or claws, bones, feaces and urine of the ferocious predator lions. Such pouches would be buried under the floor of their homes and when they wished to call forth a lion, they could tap the floor or tap the spot where the pouch is buried with either the lion’s bone or tooth and the lion would appear and is sent on an errand to catch a desired victim. And fifth, there were lions which turned into man-eating either due to old age or preference for human beings or stock - cattle, goats and sheep. The last three are as a single group or collectively, responsible for considerable loss of stock and human life(Malderen, 1955: 22-4; Gouldsbury and Sheane, 1911;Werner, 1906: 85-7; Dunbar Brandon, 1912: 288-307; Shaw, 1938: 23; Letcher,1995:95; Chishimba, 1988).

Some parts of East, Central and South Africa were notorious for having too many man-eating lions.. in East and Central Africa, attacks by lions tend to be highest in districts with high abundances of bush pigs and low abundances of other natural prey. Most attacks occur when people are tending crops in their agricultural fields, and concurrently, during harvest time. Along with tending and protecting crops, other common activities during attacks include walking alone in the early morning and evening hours, using the outhouse at night, and participating in retaliatory lion hunts,. Asset ownership, distances to key resources, amount of time sleeping in agricultural fields/outdoors, and house/hut construction (Chishimba, 1988; Anonymous, 1950:71-73.).Staged (1989:128) informs us that in some countries, there were “periodical epidemics of man-eating” by lions, directed at villages, especially during the rainy season when it was difficult for them to hunt in the tall grass. Dunbar-Branton (1912: 263) argued that they were "exceedingly plentiful and indeed too

common ... for the comfort and safety of the natives. C.R.S. Pitman. (1942: 11), the Game Warden of Uganda, noted in the faunal report submitted to the Northern Rhodesia Government that "in various localities, [the lion] has acquired a most unsavoury - though evidently well deserved reputation ... " of being man-eaters. Thomas Alexander (1929, 1964: 611-3) observed that some of these lions, such as one named Chienge Charlie, became legendary celebrities around which many stories, several rumours and myths, folklore and anecdotes have been woven around. Among the many victims included European travellers for example. Livingstone had a very narrow escape (Livingstone (1866: 17). Traders, hunters like Selous, administrative officials, boundary commissioners, messengers (quasi policemen), hunters, and ordinary villagers have had escapes from lions (Malderen(1935: 22-4); .; Wyatt (1950:); Gouldbury and Sheane(1911; 84); Werner(1906: 87-88)

Several European observers have discussed this phenomenon: Van Malderen(1935: 22-4) for DRC.; Wyatt (1950:) for Singida in Southern Tanzania, where the attacks were referred to as "Mbojo"; Gouldbury and Sheane for North East Rhodesia; Werner among the Tonga of Malawi and Marwick(1965: 90) discuss it among the Chewa among whom it was referred to as a "*Mpondolo*" (Maugham, 1910, 264-5). Attacks by lions took place in the bush whilst hunting game or birds ,herding of livestock, collecting mushrooms, honey, wild fruits and herbs, along the path or road for travellers walking long distances between villages or between water collecting points and villages, at the time of pollarding branches to form "Chitemene" or ash gardens in which millet is grown, in the gardens at the time of cultivating, weeding or harvesting, and within the village. The attacks on villagers included breaking the walls with blows, breaking in through the flimsy doors using its strength and weight or jumping on the roof and getting inside to catch the occupants. In some areas, for examples, the lower Zambezi Valley, the lions carried their "depredations" from well-build villages. When attacks were frequent, these villages were abandoned owing to the number of people taken. (Maugham, 1910, 264-5). In other cases, lions caught victims trying to escape by hiding in trees by making leaps up to heights of seven meters. To give villages some protection, stockades of palisades interwoven or ringed with thorn bushes constructed around the villages. Where all these did not work, villages were abandoned(Torday, 1913: 47-8; Maugham, 1910: 264-5; Hollub, 1975: 240).Protection from were-lions was sought from diviners. Others resorted to charms and other medicines. (Maugham, 1910, 265; Chishimba, 1988).

And fifth is the lion that turned into a man-eater. A number of factors are believed to contribute to man-eating outbreaks by lions, including passive provisioning with human remains, attraction to livestock, lion social traditions and behaviour, poor health or injury, vegetation and habitat characteristics, climate and seasonality, and prey depletion (Peterhans &Gnoske 2001). It is likely that for both historic and current outbreaks a number of these factors are working simultaneously. Passive provisioning of lions with human remains may have played an important role in historic man-eating outbreaks. The number of victims varies from area to area and year to year. The most common context of attacks is when people are tending crops, and almost the majority of attacks occur during the wet season especially during weeding and harvesting times(Packer *et al.* 2005).

In 1813, the lion was reported that in the Cape area, more Bushmen (San) were killed than sheep. (Stow: 1910: 253) In 1898, in Kenya, two man-eating lions caught about 130 Africans and Indians constructing the railway line between Mombasa and Nairobi bringing the work to a stand-still for three weeks. They were finally killed by Colonel Patterson. (Patterson, 1930: Green, 1961:57). Between 1908 and 1910, North Eastern Zambia experienced a number of attacks by man-eating lions. In Chienge District, on the eastern shores of Lake Mweru, one lion nicknamed named “Chienge Charlie”, by a local administrator, terrorized the whole district for two years from 1908 to 1910. . It was described by Owen Letcher, 1995:118) as a “daring, cunning and resourceful” beast, credited with killing and eating nearly ninety people before it was killed by a lone Messenger (a quasi-policeman), employed by the local administrative officer. using a firearm. It has now become a subject of local traditions (Letcher, 1995:112,116; 175, 201,229; Hughes, 1933: 356-8; Alexander, 1929: 1964; 611-3; Jelf, 1950, 351-4; Dunbar-Branton, 1912: 255-287; Green, 1961: 57-64). Further to the east in Mporokoso District, the number of victims averaged from 10 to 20 per year in the years between 1910 to 1915. In 1921/1922 Kasama was invaded by marauding lions resulting in a loss of between 10 to 25lives (Anonymous, 1950: 73). Before the outbreak of the First World War, a lion nicknamed *Chisanika* (the glowing one) that terrorize in Luena area (now part of Luwingu) District, killing a large number of human beings and a few cattle(Hughes, 1933: 355; Chalwe). Ordinary lions killed some of these accidentally, others were victims of man-eating lions that roamed and terrorized large districts. In the late 1920s, two lions nicknamed *Nanshila Ikampa* (the road will provide) and *Nanshitina Milongo* (I do not fear crowds) terrorized Luwingu and Kasama

Districts. Another called *Namweleu* (the cunning one) terrorized the same districts in 1945 and was credited with forty-five victims before it was killed. In Eat Luangwa now Eastern Province, one lion nicknamed *Msoro*, terrorized the area around Msoro Mission between 1926 and 1929. It claimed over 100 victims before it was poisoned (Langham; 1950 70-72; Pitman, 1934: 11; 1942; 136-68; Bradley, 1932: 43- 118; NAZ; Chishimba, 1988; Kapotwe, 1980: 51-2; Musambachime,1988; Hughes, 1933: 355; Chalwe). There were many other attacks in other districts which were not reported or given prominence.

There were similar experiences in other parts of Africa. In Uganda's western Ankole District, at least a dozen lions terrorized the area in 1937 and 1938. The number of victims was not known, but it took eighteen months to kill them and bring the situation to normal. (Maugham, 1910, 264-5; Stow: 1910: 253). In 1946 and 1947. In Western Tanzania, among the Ubena living on the shores of Lake Tanganyika, between 1930 and 1940, twenty lions killed at least 500 people. One of the worst recorded cases occurred in the Njombe district of southern Tanzania in the 1930s, when lions killed about 1,500 people in a 150 square mile area over a 15 yr period (Peterhans & Gnoske 2001). Perhaps equally shocking is the level of attacks currently occurring in south eastern Tanzania. Since 1990, lions have killed close to 600 people and injured at least another 300. This number represents a four-fold increase in attacks in the last 15 years (Packer *et al.* 2005). These attacks are not one large outbreak attributed to a single lion or lion pride but are due to multiple isolated outbreaks geographically dispersed throughout the country and attributed to dozens (if not hundreds) of lions. In 1946 and 1950, In Njombe, home to the most deadly man-eating outbreak in history, lion attacks no longer occur because lions have been eradicated from the area. With Tanzania hosting almost 50% of Africa's lion population, man-eating outbreaks threaten not only human lives and livelihoods, but also threaten lion survival throughout Africa Singida District achieved some notoriety from the number of attacks by lions on human beings. There were 30 victims in 1946. The number rose to 50 between October 1947 and February 1950. During the same period, 38 man- eating lions were accounted for. In recent years, attacks on human beings have been reported in Zambia, Malawi, Tanzania, Botswana, Zimbabwe and a few other places Malderen(1935: 22-4); .; Wyatt (1950:); Gouldbury and Sheane, 1911; 84; Werner,1906: 87-8; (BBC, October, 2004); Wyatt, 1950: 7; Green, 1961). Aside from being a major threat to people, man-eating outbreaks also cause a major threat to long-term lion population viability. People who fear for their lives and safety are, at best, unlikely to support

conservation effort and, at worst, likely to retaliate by killing any lions found near human settlements.

European visitors such as Livingstone (1957: 136), and Government Officers such as Dale and Smith (1920:129) have commented on attacks and eating of stock by lions. Reported losses in Northern Rhodesia, Malawi, Uganda, Zimbabwe, South Africa and other countries varied and continue to vary from place to place, time to time and year to year.

In a number of societies, such as Kamba of Kenya and Lunda people of North Western Zambia, Angola and the DRC who practiced circumcision, the lion, in a symbolic way, performs a number of important functions. And in some secret societies, symbolic lions performed a number of functions important functions. (Cole, 1914: 197; Bertram 1943: 93-96); (Stow, 1910: 416; Turner, 1967: 192-3).

Depredation Circumstances

There have been few efforts in the past to estimate the number of Lions in Sub Saharan Africa. The most quantitative historical estimate of the African Lion population in the recent past was in 1996 using a GIS-based model to predict African Lion range and numbers, calibrated by surveying experts about the factors affecting Lion populations. First the vegetation (Leaf Area Index) was correlated with Lion densities, using known values from 37 studies in 19 African protected areas, and mapped potential Lion range. Then the reduction effect of human activities on Lion range and numbers were estimated. Lion experts were surveyed in order to develop and rank a set of factors which would lead to lower Lion densities as well as Lion absence. These included agriculture, human population density, cattle grazing, and distance from a protected area (IUCN 2012),.

As with the worlds other large carnivores, the reduction in lion populations has been largely due to conflict with humans over livestock. Large carnivores kill livestock and are in turn killed by livestock owners or herders. Lions also attack people, and even in the 21st Century man-eating is a serious problem in Ethiopia, Tanzania and Mozambique. In the great majority of lion depredation occurs at night (Frank, 1998; Ogada et al.,2003, Hemson, 2003). Lions most frequently approach a cattle shed, causing the cattle inside to panic once they detect their presence. If the shed is not sufficiently strong, or if it has weak points, the cattle

stampede, burst out and flee into the bush where they might be taken by the lions or by hyenas. Rounding them up often takes several men and most of the next day. Aside from the actual loss of cattle killed, cattle owners complain that the stress of escaping in the bush, cause cattle to lose of weight, and hence, profit. Depending on the structure of the shed, some lions learn to leap over the wall or fence, particularly when taking small stock.

In Botswana, livestock are frequently not herded and are often left to wander outside enclosures at night. As a result, while people did complain that lions raided their enclosures, the majority of kills recorded were away from the enclosures.., The enclosure structure had no significant influence over stock losses(Herne. 1999).Less commonly, lions take stock by day. This seems to be more opportunistic than taking them from sheds at night, and probably occurs when a herd inadvertently wanders into lions sleeping in the bush. Most cattle owners consider this to be simply bad luck, and do not hunt down the responsible lions. In some places, lions learn that they could take stock by day with impunity.

In some areas, livestock losses are higher (Woodroffe and Frank, 2005; Patterson et al., 2004). During periods of droughts, the losses sky rocket and many lions are shot in response. The ready availability of carcasses during dry periods provide easy meals, but that lions are likely to turn to livestock when abundant grass makes wildlife harder to catch. In the Makgadikgadi and Ngorongoro Conservation Areas in Botswana and Tanzania, clear seasonal trends in livestock predation are noted.. These were related to wild prey availability and stock raiding decreased when migratory wild prey was present in large numbers despite local increases in lion populations. As migrant zebra and wildebeest moved to other areas local livestock predation increased despite a local decline in lion density (Hemson, 2003; Ikanda 2005). In this case some lions remained resident in areas in which they could kill wild prey when it was abundant and livestock when migrants were scarce. Another subset of the population tracked the wild migratory prey throughout the year and rarely encountered livestock According to Stander and Anderson (1981), during a prolonged drought in Makgadikgadi, livestock were left to wander untended for days and weeks to allow them to find fodder. The more mobile lions began to encounter livestock throughout the park and evidence from the very end of the project suggested that these newly acclimated lions subsequently became resident livestock killers(Stander and Anderson, 1981).

Although Stander and Anderson (1981) suggested that adult lion males are most likely to become livestock killers, that all lions are potential livestock killers. While young adults can be a major source of livestock loss in some areas, these situations tend to occur some distance away from protected areas or on the boundaries of protected areas with very hard edges such as fences. Closer to soft-edged protected areas, in multi-use landscapes and in unprotected areas with viable lion populations (as opposed to scattered sub-adults) all age-sex classes are known to kill livestock. Although -adult males may be more likely to become livestock killers, these animals may be important to maintaining the genetic integrity of otherwise isolated regions of a met population (.Senator, Logan and Hornocker, 2000).

Destruction of Lions

[Endangered species Africa!](#) means protecting wildlife. There is ambiguity as regards lions. On one hand, they are admired, hence the desire to conserve them for tourism. But on the other, they are also despised because of its attacks on livestock and humans. Livestock production in Africa ranges from large-scale ranching operations to small-scale and often subsistence livestock ownership typical of the majority of rural Africa. However, while larger scale operators may have different motivations and attitudes they may still employ traditional livestock husbandry techniques. Lions have been identified as major livestock predators in several studies, often killing valuable livestock than other large carnivores The lion is a good example of a species whose distribution and conservation status is affected by conflict. They are widespread, ecologically and spatially needy, large enough to tackle all species of livestock and people, and relatively easily poisoned and trapped Africa's lions face a three-fold threat:

- i. Retaliatory persecution by herders and farmers who perceive lions as a threat to their livelihood. Lions are coming into increasingly closer contact with humans, as their habitat is converted for human use, and livestock replaces their natural prey. This can fuel intense conflict situations where lions are speared, shot, or even poisoned; Kenya alone loses approximately 100 of its 2,000 wild lions every year due to killing by people. At this rate, lion experts believe there will be no more wild lions left in Kenya by the year 2030;

ii. Dramatic loss and fragmentation of habitat due to an ever-expanding agriculture frontier. This is confining lions to isolated islands of habitat, increasing their risk of extinction; .

iii. Scarcity of wild prey due to overhunting by humans. When wild prey are overhunted by people, lions are forced to feed on livestock, especially when cattle are poorly managed and not actively herded. This establishes a vicious cycle in which lions are forced to prey on livestock, driving further conflict with humans in which the lion ultimately loses;

iv. Hunting for trophies by hunters from Europe and the Americas. The price for a wild lion shot on a safari in Zambia will cost about \$5,000, in Tanzania it might cost £50 000, compared with £5 000 pounds for a captive-bred specimen in South Africa. According to figures released by the Environmental Affairs Department of South Africa last year, the skeletons can fetch up to R80 000 and often end up being ground into potions for fake "tiger wine" or "tiger cakes. According to figures released by the Professional Hunters' Association of South Africa, in November,2013, registered lion hunts showed the largest increase of any species from 2011 to 2012, from 445 to 596 lions. Revenue generated increased from R77-million in 2011 to R122-million in 2012, at an average fee of R203 000 per lion " (Mail and Guardian, 9 December, 2013); and

v. Hunting of lions for zoos in Europe and Americas



Hunters with their trophy



Playing with the carcass of the lion

Source: Lusaka Times 218 May 2025

In the distant past, thousands of lions once roamed much of the African continent. Recent studies and estimates suggest that lion populations may have decreased considerably due to government approved policy on hunting of lions by trophy hunters and museums, natural deaths and hunting to protect and people, with fewer than between 30,000 and 20,000 remaining in just a handful of countries. Over a century ago, eighty percent of Africa had estimates of over 200,000 lions. Most lions now live in Eastern and Southern Africa, but their numbers have rapidly decreased, with an estimated 30–50 percent decline over the last two decades being ghee latest. Estimates of the African lion population now range between 16,500 and 47,000 living in the wild down from early 1990s estimates that ranged as high as 100,000 and perhaps 150,000 in 1950. Currently, lions are extinct from 26 countries. The remaining numbers in 28 countries vary between 30,000 and 48,000. An increase in human population and the resulting ecological impacts have led to an increase in human–wildlife conflict throughout Sub Saharan Africa making it one of the foremost issues facing wildlife conservation today(BBC. October, 2004).

Because of recent declines in lion populations, it is important to study and protect lions across the continent. Lions vary greatly in behaviour, social structure, and morphology across locations, making it necessary to observe and survey them in all types' habitats where they're found. By learning more about lion behaviour, biology and ecology, we can better understand the regulatory mechanisms affecting them and use this information to establish sound conservation strategies. Reports in the popular press have implicated Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV) and sport hunting as playing roles in the decline but there is little supporting data; FIV is notable for its apparent lack of clinical effects on individuals, and there is no credible evidence that it poses any threat to wild populations (Packer, et al. 1999, Troyer et al., 2005).

One report has blamed a local population decline on poorly regulated trophy hunting (Love ridge and MacDonald, 2003), but this problem appears to be restricted to Zimbabwe (see Packer, et al. this volume) and extensive retaliatory killing, snaring and habitat loss in the surrounding area are likely to be the major conservation risks to lions. Our opinion is that retaliatory and pre-emptive killing of lions by rural people, particularly livestock owners is

the single greatest threat to lion populations. European settlement of Africa had a major impact on wildlife generally and predators in particular. Because they readily prey on livestock, large carnivores were considered vermin (they are still legally classified as such in some countries), and settlers made great efforts to exterminate them in farming and ranching areas. These killings were exacerbated by a burgeoning demand for exotic wildlife products such as skins and ivory. Lion and other wildlife populations were viewed as inexhaustible and exploited as rapidly as they were encountered. As an example of the zeal with which lions were shot, safaris to the Serengeti area in the early part of the last century sometimes shot over 100 lions (Turner, 1987), clients of just one safari company killed 700-800 lions in 1911 (Herne, 1999) and in 1908, over 150 lions were killed 'on license' in Laikipia District, Kenya, alone (Payne, 1909). This scale of slaughter was not exclusive to the early twentieth century: in Southern Africa the large scale slaughter of wildlife kicked off the early 1800's and between 1946-1952, one Laikipia game warden shot 434 lions 'on control' (Herne, 1999), and several individuals killed over 300 lions apiece in the course of ranching in Kenya in the 1970's and 80's (Anonymous, pers. comm.). By the 1960s, lions in South Africa were restricted to just two National Parks: Kruger and the Kalahari.

Much of this killing no doubt took the form of 'sport', but was motivated primarily by the perceived need to protect domestic animals. Although ranchers in East Africa used traditional African cattle husbandry methods which effectively minimized losses (below), western practice was to eliminate predators rather than try to live with them. Poison (**strychnine** and **organophosphate** cattle dips) was used very widely on East African ranches, continuing well into the latter half of the twentieth century (Denney, 1972) and is still reportedly used by a small minority of commercial ranchers. At least until very recently, the Kenya Wildlife Service and the Kenya Veterinary Department poisoned hyenas on a wide scale, no doubt affecting lions and other scavengers as well. According to the Lusaka Times (19 May 2015) the massive killing of lions has long term ecology consequences. Among these is the rapid increase in the population of baboons abused the baboon population to swell a possible increased transmission of intestinal parasites from baboons to humans as the primates were forced to forage closer to human settlements.

Human population growth has led to encroachment into Game Management Areas (GMA) designated for as wildlife areas result in serious human-wildlife conflict, alteration of

carnivore habitat, and depletion of prey populations (Chomba,2012:303-313). Not only are lions important to predators to the natural ecosystem, but they are also of great economic importance where nature-based tourism, including trophy hunting and photographic tourism, is the second largest source of foreign revenue. Successful conservation has allowed for the recovery of several carnivore populations. Carnivores have the potential to cause serious economic damage and even harm humans, diminishing public support for wildlife conservation and motivating the extermination of problem animal species. Persecution by people in response to conflict—real or perceived—is one of the main factors in decline of lion population. In recent years, the presence of one or more lions in an area other than the designated game reserves, even if the affected lion is or lions are totally innocent, creates fear and despondency in the population. Movements are curtailed and people retire early.. As a result, lions are hunted and killed without mercy. To create a convincing reason for their destruction, lions are accused of things that they are not able to do such as those reported in the *Livingstone Mail* of 1905 which reported that a number of lions re broke into European houses in Livingstone, the capital of North West Rhodesia, “to drink whisky and soda”, *Livingstone Mail*, 1905) which is inconceivable!



Source: African Lion Working Group; BBC, Friday, November 02, 2001.

As with the world’s other large carnivores, the reduction in lion populations has been largely due to conflict with humans over livestock. Large carnivores kill livestock and are in turn killed by livestock owners or herders. Lions also attack people, and even in the 21st Century man-eating is a serious problem in Ethiopia, Tanzania and Mozambique.

The destruction of lions has gone on for several centuries resulting in a considerable shrinking of the distribution and range of the populations of lions in historic times. **See the maps above.** This has been carried on in several forms. Because they readily prey on livestock, large carnivores were considered vermin (they are still legally classified as such in some countries), and settlers made great efforts to exterminate them in farming and ranching areas. These killings were exacerbated by a burgeoning demand for exotic wildlife products such as skins. Lion populations were viewed as inexhaustible and were shot as rapidly as they were encountered. Much of this killing no doubt took the form of 'sport', but was motivated primarily by the perceived need to protect domestic animals and human beings.

While this is an extreme example of lion intolerance, killing of lions for livestock losses and threat to human life is near ubiquitous in Sub-Saharan Africa. In Mozambique lion-human conflict is a source of livestock and lion mortality in all four provinces (Anderson and Pariela, 2005 and below) and popular press reports from Zambia indicate the problem occurs widely (The Times of Zambia, November 2005). In Namibia human lion livestock is restricted to areas surrounding Etosha, Caprivi and adjacent to the Southern Kalahari with a small population occasionally problematic in the Skeleton Coast (Stander and Hanssen, 2003). In Botswana, reprisal killings of lions in response to lion depredation on livestock led to a total ban on lion hunting in 2000. Indeed it is reasonable to conclude that lions and other predators are being killed in all major range states in response to their depredations on livestock. In some areas such as the Okavango Delta, large source populations and low human densities might sometimes mean that the human threat to lion population integrity is limited. However, long-term viability of the lion population may not be sustainable in areas of high human and low lion density, for example, Makgadikgadi, the Southern Kalahari, and Masailand. Even populations as large as 500 animals may become unsustainable in the face of stochastic environmental variation if persecuted by people and completely isolated from more robust sources (>1000 animals). There appear to be only five or six populations that large in all of Africa (Kruger, Okavango, Serengeti, Selous, Moyowosi/Rungwa, and possibly Tsavo). It is reasonable to conclude that direct killing threatens lion populations in smaller reserves and outside large protected areas today, and in the long term threatens almost all lions as meta population connections are broken down.

. The first hunt was a revenge killing on lions which attacked livestock and human beings. This retaliatory and pre-emptive killing of lions by rural people, particularly livestock owners is the single greatest threat to lion populations. European settlement of Africa had a major impact on wildlife generally and predators in particular. Some of these attacks took place in the gardens, in the bush, near watering points and along established paths or roads linking one area to another. Some areas became notorious for lion attacks. In the pre-colonial as well as colonial and post colonial times, whenever there were losses of livestock due to attacks by lions, cattle-keeping societies, such as the Masaai of Kenya, Ndebele of Zimbabwe, Lozi of Western Zambia and the Ila Southern Zambia, Ila of Southern Zambia, the Kaunda of Luangwa Valley, and Ngoni of Eastern Zambia, Southern Tanzania and Central Malawi, Ovambo of Northern Namibia, Ankole of Western Uganda and the Zulu of South Africa, organize well armed warriors in strength to hunt and kill the erring lions (Hollub, 18 -25, 26 -28,41-44,50 -51; Hearne, 1999; 82;Adamson, 1968: 208-210-12; Simon, 1962: 210; Patterson,1996; Smith and Dale, 1920; Prins,1981). In the pre-colonial days, successful warriors were, on their return, welcomed by joyous crowds singing war songs. They were smeared with oil, red powder and white kaolin before they entered the village. (Chisanga). From time to time, all societies, regularly or frequently, and depending on the seriousness of the situation, hunted lions that threatened or attacked villages, farmers in their gardens, travellers along the paths ore roads, hunters and livestock. Lions were hunted with spears, bows and poisoned arrows and firearms where these and gunpowder were available. In some cases, lions were lured to baits set to trap them (Patterson, 1996:19). Poisoned carcasses of livestock or chunks of meat were left in selected areas to attract the lions to eat them.

On Monday, 29 November, 2004, The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) reported that a group of Zimbabwean villagers exacted sweet revenge on a lion which had wreaked havoc on their livestock by eating it. They are reported that". It ate our animals so it is only fair we eat it, too," one man said after enjoying the barbecued meat. Others said they wanted to eat the lion to inherit its bravery and strength. Game wardens killed the lion after a six-month rampage against goats and cattle in Muzarabani, 200 km (125 miles) north of the capital, Harare. Local villagers then asked the parks authorities for the "huge" carcass of the male lion. "A few lucky individuals got to have a piece or two - some said they had eaten the

meat in the belief that they would get lion-like bravery and strength," a witness said. A senior official at Zimbabwe's Parks and Wildlife Management Authority said that people are not encouraged to eat the meat of animals which can eat humans. "Our policy is that we offer only the carcasses of herbivores such as elephants," he was quoted as saying. (Baldus, 2006: 59–62)

The second was for rituals of *rites of passage* into manhood among the Masaai, Ila and other groups which required the initiate to hunt and kill a lion either with spears, bows and arrows or with bare hands (Barnes, 1967, 148; Roscoe, 1922, 315; Dale and Smith, 1920; Hearne, 1999; 82; Adamson, 1968: 208-210-12; Simon, 1962: 210). The third was to acquire the lions' skins for the royalty who, by tradition had the right to sit on them or dressed in full lion skins and manes or used pieces of skins during important ceremonies. The skins and manes formed important insignias of kingship and a few selected high positions in some societies. We are informed that for the King of Swaziland to prove his valour, bravery and strength, he is required to kill a lion before coronation. This is probably the source of the mane the king puts on during important ceremonies (Guggisberg, 1975: 293). The fourth the hunting of lions to prove bravery and valour of young men. This was common in some societies, such as among the Ila southern Zambia (Habulungu).

And fifth, lions were hunted for sport reserved for nobles and kings. Guggisberg (1975: 293), quoting an ancient text stating that in Pharaonic Egypt, one Pharaoh named Anenoplus (Amenhotep III) who lived from 1405 to 1367 BC killed no less than 102 "fierce-looking lions" during the first ten years of his reign. He goes on to inform us that the Northeast in Assyria, from the ninth to the Seventh Century BC, Kings and their courts were great hunters of lions for sport. Thousands were hunted and captured alive and taken to European capitals where they were kept as pets, executioners or to provide entertainment in arenas. From the Fifteenth to the Twentieth Century, thousands more were captured for zoos or hunted as trophies to be displayed in Museums as well as in private homes of the rich in Europe and the Americas.

The increasing contact between Europe and Africa from the sixteenth or seventeenth Centuries introduced firearms- muzzle loaders and breech-loading percussion rifles, gun powder and bullets which increased the numbers of lions killed. And from the Nineteenth Centuries, the writings and descriptions of travellers like Livingstone (1857), Hollub (1885) and hunters such as President Roosevelt (1910) who took a safari in 1909, who wrote

glowing and self-glorifying tales of the hunting and shooting of lions used modern sophisticated firearms, initiated a rapid destruction of lions (Adams and McShane,1996:25-36). In an article published in the Diamond News in South Africa on 1 March 1877, Emile Hollub, a Czech traveller in what is now Southern Zambia, informs us that he and many other European travellers were “anxious to shoot lions in order to gain the name of a good lion hunter”. However, he was quick to add that he thought it imprudent to “go in search of lions only for the sake of gaining a name of a good name lion hunter such a hunter becomes very experienced, he may slay many lions . . . and when he mostly trusts to eye, arm and rifle then such a moment may prove most fatal to him, ending a life which perhaps deserved a better fate”. He went to add “ If a lion crosses my path, if he is the cause of trouble in a village near to my encampment, or should he try his strength on my cattle or that of my companions, I am most happy to face him armed with my gun” (2006:26). This attitude and view were echoed by many big game hunters. Owen Letcher (1995; 34 -35) Informs us that one hunter went to the extent of using cayenne powder (red pepper, locally called *Piri-piri*) on their baits so that the lions who came in touch with it would “sneeze”, reveal their position and provide a good target for the hunter.

European settlement in Africa had a major impact on wild life generally and predators like lions in particular. Because they readily preyed on livestock, large carnivores like lions were considered to be vermin (they are still classified as such in many countries) and European settlers, traders, missionaries and large game hunters made a great effort to exterminate them in farming and ranching areas. These killings were exacerbated by the burgeoning demand for exotic wildlife products such the skins, tails and various parts of the lion. Lions which were a major target were viewed and regarded as inexhaustible. They were shot wherever they were encountered. To indicate the zest and zeal with which they were hunted, hunting safaris of a single or a number of large game hunters were organized. In the early part of the Twentieth century, a safari which went to the Serengeti shot as many as 100 lions in a very short period (Turner,1987). Payne informs us that in the Laikipia district of Kenya alone, over 150 lions were killed on “licence”. In the same district, were are informed by Herne (1999) that between 1946 and 1952, one game warden shot 434 lions “on control”. Several other farmers and ranchers shot over 300 lions a piece to protect their holdings in the 1970s and 1980s. And .Herne(1999) informs that one safari company killed 700 to 800 lions in 1911.tnhe western practice was to eliminate predators such as lions rather

than co-exist with them. Those that were not short were poisoned with Strychnine and Furadan – a soil dressing (Frank et al, no date).

While there is an extreme example of lion intolerance, killing of lions for retaliation for livestock losses and threat to human life are near ubiquitous in Sub-Saharan Africa. In Mozambique lion-human conflict is a source of livestock and lion mortality in all four provinces (Anderson and Pariela, 2005 and below) and popular press reports from Zambia indicate the problem occurs widely (The Times of Zambia, November 2005). In Namibia human- lion- livestock-conflict is restricted to areas surrounding Etosha, Kaudom, Caprivi and adjacent to the Southern Kalahari with a small population occasionally problematic in the Skeleton Coast (Stander and Hanssen, 2003). In Botswana, reprisal killings of lions in response to lion depredation on livestock led to a total ban on lion hunting in 2000. Indeed it is reasonable to conclude that lions and other predators are being killed in all major range states in response to their depredations on livestock.

In some areas such as the Okavango Delta, large source populations and low human densities might sometimes mean that the human threat to lion population integrity is limited. However, long-term viability of the lion population may not be sustainable in areas of high human and low lion density, e.g. Makgadikgadi, the Southern Kalahari, and Masailand. Even populations as large as 500 animals may become unsustainable in the face of stochastic environmental variation if persecuted by people and completely isolated from more robust sources (>1000 animals). There appear to be only five or six populations that large in all of Africa (Kruger, Okavango, Serengeti, Selous, Moyowosi/Rungwa, and possibly Tsavo). It is reasonable to conclude that direct killing threatens lion populations in smaller reserves and outside large protected areas today, and in the long term threatens almost all lions as metapopulation connections are broken down.

Partly arising from its man-eating activities and the wide application of the term "vermin", the lion has been a target of mass destruction by European hunters hunted far and wide in Eastern and Southern Africa by administrative officials, traders, ranchers and farmers who established commercial ranches and farms (Letcher, 1995; Moss, 1975: 234; Caruthers, 1995:43; 2001: 107 –108). To kill a lion referred to by Cowie (1961:13), as an embodiment of Satan", was proof of courage. In the early days of colonial rule, to be counted as a brave man or even a woman, one had to have killed a lion and make this known to the community (Cowie, 1961:13). These activities were duplicated by administrative officers manning

remote and rural district centres, traders trading in remote areas, labour recruiters using paths from one place to the other and missionaries searching for souls to save. In fact, within the last hundred years or so, largely due to the proliferation of sophisticated firearms - the lions together with a large number of wildlife, have been extensively destroyed and exterminated. This process reached its peak between 1900 and 1950 when big game hunting in Sub Saharan Africa became a fashionable pastime among rich Europeans and Americans who paid huge sums to shoot and collect skins and trophies their homes. Others were contracted to hunt for Museums in Europe and North America. Other hunters took it upon themselves as a mission to remove prides of lions which were a menace to human beings, such as those which attacked Asian workers constructing the Mombasa to Nairobi railway line at Tsavo in Kenya (Betram (1975: 3; Patterson,1989:9; Cowie, 1961:15).

As the vital role of the lions in preserving a balance of nature was not appreciated, they were relentlessly destroyed as "vermin". Brian Betram (1975: 3) observed that Europeans "in pursuit of big game, slaughtered thousands of them and inflated many egos in the process", tells us that tales of encounters with lions were "popular". The hunting and killing of lions was supposed to require courage, great bravery and strength, many hunters-turned -writers wrote for public consumption sensational self- praising tales of exciting adventures "they had" with the lions. Many took pictures of their kill as evidence of their valour, courage, good marksmanship, tenacity, endurance and bravery (Adams and McShane, 1996:13; Caruthers, 2001:108)).

In the early years of European settlement which brought about the policy of conservation of wild life in Africa, lions were shot as a deliberate management strategy. In the process, thousand of lions were shot or "culled" to allow their prey-cattle and sheep to thrive. Through these methods, the population of lions has steadily declined over the years. As a species, lions were virtually exterminated from Egypt in about the Fifth Century BC. The last lions in Algeria were killed in the early 1890s. In the Air region of Northern Mali and southern Algeria, the last lions were killed between 1915 and 1918 and in Morocco in 1920. In South Africa, lions were last reported in the Cape in 1707 and in Natal in 1865. During the closing years of the Nineteenth Century there was a heavy slaughter of lions in East and Central Africa (Patterson, 1996:28). They were the most sought- after as a sportsman's trophy. They were also destroyed because the presence of prides of lions was

hardly compatible with the establishment of settler farms, plantations and ranches. Cattle owners and ranchers in Africa regarded lions as a particularly powerful cruel and wasteful kind of vermin against which their cattle had to be protected at all costs. In the vast stretches of Africa where ranches were established, lions, even if they did not pose any danger, were shot on sight. There was a strong belief that the "a good lion was a dead lion". This mindset contributed to thousands of lions being exterminated. (Simon, 1962: 210; Adamson, 1968: 209).. For example, although Selous killed sixteen lions, he lamented that this was not "a sufficient number" Selous (1881: 261).

Some hunters, in fact, gained very high reputation as lion hunters. Various hunters have made varieties of claims of the number of lions shot. In Somaliland, a hunter claimed that he shot lions in numbers ranging from "as many as eight before breakfast", "eleven shot in a few hours". In Kenya, hunters reported killing up to 200 in 1907/1908 for the whole of Kenya; up to 150 killed in Sotik, a district of Kenya in 1908/1909; 795 in 1910/1911 and between 50 and 70 each year prior to the First World War. In Kenya, sportsmen shot lions from waiting rooms along the railway line, from moving trains and cars; others hunted on horses. Many lions were killed by baits and poisoning of carcasses and water (Hearne, 1999; 82; Adamson, 1968: 210-12; Simon, 1962: 210). In Kenya and Northern Rhodesia, where the lion was declared to be a "vermin" at various times, a bounty, similar to that offered for crocodiles and elephants, was offered to encourage its rapid destruction. Their numbers dwindled rapidly. They are now found only in much reduced numbers in few restricted areas - mostly game reserves and parks in Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Namibia and Botswana as well as in zoos. A good number also die from plagues. (Letcher, 1995; Millais, 1918: 139; Patterson, 1996:28).

A very worrying development has been the increasing use of the soil dressing Faraday (**carbofuran**), to kill predators in some traditional pastoralist areas of Kenya (Frank, unpublished paper). Although shooting can target specific problem animals, poison is indiscriminate and often removes whole prides at once, as well as large numbers of other predators and scavengers (Jenkins, P. 2001). The Kenya Veterinary Department appears to be restricting availability of **strychnine**, but **Furadan** is widely available, cheap, and thought to be the poison of choice for eliminating predators. During a recent ban on lion killing in Botswana, several reports of poisoning appeared in the popular press and one was recorded and reported by Hemson. (2003). Subsequent observations and conversations with wildlife

officials made it apparent how difficult it was to identify and prosecute the people using poison (it being illegal in Botswana).

Spearing and poisoning in retaliation for livestock depredation appears to be decimating lion numbers in southern Kenya. Masailand comprises about 93,000 km² of grassland, including Serengeti National Parkland the Ngorongoro Conservation Area in northern Tanzania, the Masai Mara National Reserve and Amboseli National Park in southern Kenya, and vast tracts of unprotected country in between. This region is inhabited by traditional Masai pastoralists with their large herds of cattle. Because of the large amount of wildlife and these world famous protected areas, it is one of the most important remaining semi-natural ecosystems in East Africa. It has also been home to what is probably the single biggest contiguous lion population in Africa.

The lions of Nairobi National Park and the adjacent Kitengela Plains were decimated by spearing by Masai warriors (called *morans*) in retaliation for attacks on livestock (Ogutu, 2005). Due to the lack of land-use planning around the Park, development and fencing have severely reduced natural prey in the region. A recent study (Ogutu et al., 2005) found that the lion density to the north of the Masai Mara National Reserve was only 12 percent. Until recently, lions were abundant throughout the rangelands adjacent to the Reserve.. One observer has documented a minimum of 76 lion killings using poison or spears and a drastic decline in lion sightings on and around Mbirikani Group Ranch in southeast Kenya, between Amboseli and Tsavo National Parks (Richard Bonham). In Tanzania, an observer documented over 125 lion killings between 2000-2005 in the greater Tarangire-Manyara ecosystem, and another reported 35 lions killed in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area between 1998-2004. Thus, the same pattern is occurring in a wide range of areas. (Bernard Kissui (Dennis Ikanda (2005)

Apart from hunting, the decimation of the lion has come about by the advance of industrialization and urbanization that have considerably reduced the range and territory of the lion. As the vast heads of game upon which it depended for food have been swept away, it has been forced to retire in remote parts or disappear altogether (Adamson; 1968: 209). The remaining few are now found in the Kruger National Park, Etosha Pans, Kafue and Luangwa in Zambia, Serengeti and Ngorongoro in Tanzania, Nairobi, Mara Masai, Tsavo and Samburu in Kenya and other smaller packs in various parts of Central, East and West Africa.

The nature of lion hunting has changed from colonial days. Faster vehicles and high powered rifles have further reduced the already bad odds against the animals (Lydekker, 1908, 417; NAZ/ZA1/A/50: Simon, 1962: 210; Musambachime, 1987: 197-207). There are also about 150 farms in South Africa specializing in breeding lions and other big cats to be shot for sport and for trophy hunting (Barkham, 7 June, 2013 in Mail and Guardian, 7 June 2013)

. Conflicts between humans and wild animals is as old as the coexistence between them. They occur in various typologies and circumstances. Conservation of wildlife is an issue that has captured the public imagination of the industrialized world through articles, reports, debates and discussions in newspapers and magazines and television documentaries and programmes which are watched with keen interest. And in addition, international conservation organizations run highly publicized campaigns to save some of the highly endangered species from African illegal hunters (or poachers) who needed to be controlled (Duffy, 2000:1; Frank et al, no date). Within Africa, human-wildlife conflict increased in leaps and bounds after the establishment of colonial rule... Conservation of wildlife h became a serious concern of worried African villagers headmen, chiefs and governments who saw as rapid depletion of wildlife (Marks, 1984; Mackenzie, 1988; Grove, 1990: 15-51; Duffy, 2000:1). Mervyn Cowie (1961: 73 -86, 129 -1333) informs us that some people, many European settler farmers were not keen to conserve wildlife. They campaigned l for the elimination and getting rid “the land of all useless creatures. . . It is futile to keep wild animals in an area that is required for agriculture, high-grade cattle or other purposes”. Many subscribed to this kind of thinking because they were not aware of the importance, role and functions the wild animals played in the balancing of nature, in the economy and well being of the communities. In the early part of colonial rule, the attitude was that to shoot wildlife was part of relaxation (sport). When wild life dwindled, this perception changed to a desire to conservation and establishment of game reserves or management areas which became tourist attractions (Cowie, 1961:55 -149; Marks, 1984).

Looking at the example set by the United States of America where parks were established under Federal control to protect wild life with undoubted success. North East Rhodesia established the Mweru-wa-Ntipa Game Resave in 1901, and later, as Northern Rhodesia, established others along the Luangwa and Kafue Rivers; and South Africa established the Kruger National Park in the early 1920s under the guidance of Colonel Steven-Hamilton. The Belgian Congo established the *Parc National Albert* (now *Virunga*

National Park) (Cowie, 1961:35 -38). Other countries such as Kenya, Nyasaland, South West Africa, followed suit. In 1961, President Julius Nyerere, President of the Republic of Tanganyika, addressed a Symposium on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources in Modern African States, held in Arusha, issued what became known as the Arusha Declaration on Wildlife Protection, in which he highlighted the need for professional training in conservation of wildlife. He went on to note that

"the survival of our wildlife is a matter of grave concern to all of us in Africa. These wild creatures amid the wild places they inhabit are not only important as a source of wonder and inspiration, but are an integral part of our natural resources and of our future livelihood and well being. In accepting the trusteeship of our wildlife we solemnly declare that we will do everything in our power to make sure that our children's grand-children will be able to enjoy this rich and precious inheritance.

The conservation of wildlife and wild places calls for specialist knowledge, trained manpower and money, and we look to other nations to co-operate with us in this important task the success or failure of which not only affects the continent of Africa but the rest of the world as well."

(Adams and McShane, 1996:113-114; Nyerere, 1968, 349)

New conservation ideas are needed to conserve wildlife in general and the lion in particular, if the lion is to survive. Local communities need to be engaged in protecting the species as well as the environment within which it can thrive. Also where wild populations are most diminished, a workable method of restocking should be embarked upon, which should include the reintroduction of lions into these areas, needs to be found. In the past it was possible for wild populations to expand into areas where populations had been lost. So where are these new lions going to come from? The African Lion and Environmental Research Trust (ALERT), founded by Andrew Conolly in Zimbabwe in 2005, believed that the reintroduction of wild borne cubs from rehabilitated captive bred lions is a viable option. There are many complications and potential dangers inherent in reintroducing lions back into the wild however; most notably the likely conflicts with humans and their livestock following release; this may be especially true of captive bred lions that might not have learned the human avoidance characteristics of some wild lions. There are several reasons that have been put forward to explain why past predator releases have had limited success.

Conservation of wildlife is dependent upon complex socio-economic processes and many factors, which are difficult to influence. Among these a conservation initiatives,

including: i. Reduced lion poaching and retribution killing; ii. Greater local awareness and interest in conservation; iii. Vastly increased knowledge about lions and other carnivores; iv. Habitat restoration projects; v. Better sensitization of the population on the benefits derived from wildlife; and vi. Reduction of rural poverty through better employment opportunities, provision of infrastructure and services. Whether the benefits of community conservation can, in the long run, outweigh the costs of wildlife, the lives of many brave and anonymous Game Scouts and Guards taken by poachers and the animals who have died in the line of their duty, or alternative economic options of land use remains to be seen. In any case, however, it will be impossible to maintain viable protected areas and wildlife on village land in the future, if utilization rights continue to be withheld and if rural communities are not involved in conservation. In order to be successful, conservation has to be practised 'with' and 'by' the people and not 'against' them. In Africa, conservation of the wildlife has been commonly associated with wilderness - preservation of wildlife and its natural habitat. It symbolises the serenity, eternity and the unspoilt beauty of nature. Through the print and electronic media (radio, television and film), internet and extension services, the world, has become conscious of the environmental problems of Africa where human and wild life, soils and vegetation appear to be more vulnerable than ever before (Adams and McCone, 1996:160-183, 227-247).

Few people realize however that illegal killing, relentless habitat loss and overhunting of wild prey by people has left this species teetering precariously on the brink of extinction. Few people realize however that illegal killing, relentless habitat loss and overhunting of wild prey by people has left this species teetering precariously on the brink of extinction. Over the last three decades, the plight of wildlife has been the focus of the CITES, non-governmental organisations and governments. To protect these and other species CITES has produced a list of endangered species and has urged governments to introduce measures. Successes have varied from country to country. One species that has been decimated in large numbers and requires urgent protection is the African lion (*Panthera Leo*), Africa's largest carnivore, which is now an endangered species. They can be extremely fierce and, occasionally, as gentle and playful as kittens. At times they seem to be lazy and lethargic, but they have the ability to move with surprising speed and attack (Macgregor, 1989, Ethringham 1984; Pitman, 1934; 13-150; MacCracken, 1990; Kat, 1987; MacGregor 1989).

Experts of the African Lion Working Group of the World Conservation Union believe that lions could disappear from West and Central Africa within the next ten years because their populations are fragmented and too small to survive. In their report, they state that the largest concentrations of lions consist of two groups of 200 animals each in Cameroon and along the borders of Senegal, Mali and Guinea, but that in order for lions to continue to exist without inbreeding, at least 100 breeding pairs, or 500 to 1 000 animals, are needed. According to 1996 estimates there are between 30 000 and 100 000 lions throughout Africa, but some of the experts believe the numbers are closer to between 10 000 and 30 000. According to them, in the whole of West and Central Africa, from Senegal to Chad, there are no more than 2 000 animals. The report says that the lions are being squeezed into smaller and smaller areas because more land is being used for agriculture and livestock breeding, but they need large tracts of land over which to roam and survive. "It is a serious problem," said one of the experts (Baldus:2006).

Because of intensive hunting, eradication and destruction of its habitat, lion populations are scattered in various countries of Sub Saharan Africa. In some areas, like the Ngorongoro Crater in Tanzania, there is too much in-breeding that has led to a sharp reduction in population. In the Etosha Park in Namibia, the exact opposite has happened in that there has been a sharp increase of the population leading to a decrease of other predators. The government had to reduce the population by culling and sterilization. Overall, there is concern that the dwindling lion populations will affect the food chain(Anderson and Bridge, 1994:13 –35; Carruthers, 2001). Currently, the biggest threat to lions comes from poachers and trophy hunters who hunt the lions for various monetary gains. Rich Americans, Europeans and Japanese pay from £20,000 to £30,000 a time to kill a lion in Botswana. The government usually permits the shooting of about 50 lions a year by trophy hunters but decided to impose the ban in part because American shooters favour lions with thick manes for their walls, leading to a disproportionate killing of mature males. Exact numbers of lions are notoriously difficult to measure but there is broad consensus among conservationists and governments that the population in Africa has fallen from about 50,000 to less than 15,000 over the past decade. The surviving lions are largely confined to four viable populations in southern and east Africa. The nature of lion hunting has changed from colonial days. Faster vehicles and high-powered rifles have further reduced the already bad odds against the animals. On top of that, the idea of three week hunts deep into the bush in the hope, but not

necessarily the expectation, of bagging something big have given way to the concept of a sure kill (BBC; IUCN Environmental Law Centre 1986).

Because lions come into conflict with mankind, in particular with domestic livestock, they have been systematically eliminated over most of the continent and their known range has shrunk by about two thirds. Recently the BBC carried an article on the merciless hunting of lions in the Maasai Mara Game Reserve because they were a threat to livestock. The areas previously infested with tsetse fly (carrier of dreaded livestock disease) have until recently been a refuge for lion (most large national parks were created in tsetse areas) but recent prophylactics and fly eradication programmes (with other environmental impacts) now permit growing numbers of cattle to enter these previously hostile environments. One major reason for the lions' decline is that as agriculture spreads, they are squeezed into small and isolated tracts of land. Lions need huge areas to hunt - between 20 and 200 square kilometres for a single male - so even a national park of several hundred square kilometres cannot support a large population, while lions that stray over the borders come up against local people and their livestock (BBC).

All wild cats receive some protection under the Convention on Trade in Endangered Species CITES. Within the National parks, lion populations tend to be very stable, but outside they fluctuate with food supplies and human intervention. Because these large prides live in open savannas, they serve as easy targets for poachers and hunters. In some sanctuaries, tourists come to observe these beasts' behaviors, and within such confines their survival is not endangered.

There are only three parts of Africa that contain populations of 2000 lions or more. The Serengeti-Mara, the Okavango-Chobe-Hwange complex, and the Kruger National Park and its neighbours. Elsewhere, populations are fragmented and therefore vulnerable. The long term future of the lion cannot be considered secure in these areas, without human intervention to monitor and regulate population genetics. For lions in Africa there are many dangers threatening their existence. CITES has placed the lion under a protective status. In a number of countries such as Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Mali, Mozambique, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zaïre, Zambia, Zimbabwe hunting of the lion is restricted to "problem/dangerous" animals. Trophy Hunting Permitted: In Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe it is restricted to trophy hunting that is strictly controlled. In Angola, Cameroon,

Congo, Gabon, Ghana, Malawi, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, hunting of the lion is prohibited. There is no legal protection in Burundi, Guinea Bissau, Lesotho, Namibia, Swaziland, South Africa, Chad, Djibouti, Guinea 140 (IUCN Environmental Law Centre 1986) Unfortunately the greatest of these dangers is man himself.

Furthermore, during periods of drought the survival of cubs is limited due to the shortage of food. Loss of habitat to population growth and agricultural expansion as well as hunting and poisoning by livestock ranchers. Because of its man-eating activities and threat to livestock, the lion has been roundly condemned as vermin. Guggisberg (1975: 293) observes that

opponents of conservation . . . are busily digging up factual records, overblown jungle tales, and spurious statistics in order to make the lion . . . as a man-devouring monster threatening the very existence of . . . African populations. They are of course barking up the wrong tree, for the worst enemy of man is after all, man himself. Irresponsible motorists alone run up a higher annual tally than lions . . . ever attained . . . while admitting the occurrence of man-eating, exaggerations.

Cynthia Moss ((1975: 235-6)) also supports these feelings.

Conservation of lions is a pressing issue (Adams and Shane, 1992; Lamarque et al, 2009). Lions are highly sought after by tourists wishing to view, photograph and/or kill these animals as sport. To ensure long term survival of the lions, requires targeting areas that are key landscapes and where the lions are most imperiled. African governments have to tread a fine line between responding to the demands of citizens for protection and for more land for settlement, agriculture and other economic activities and their own conservation priorities determined to a large extent by the revenues generated by hunting –for- tourism. At its meeting of the General Assembly and the technical meetings held in June 1960 in Warsaw and Cracow, Poland, the IUCN concluded that the acceleration of destruction of wild fauna, flora and habitat in Africa - without any adequate regard for its values as a continuing economic and cultural resource - was the most urgent conservation problem of the present theme. They went on to observe that "wildlife in Africa is most neglected but potentially one of the most valuable renewable natural resources and one that could be most wisely utilized for the benefit of countries so fortunate to possess it" . 142 In order to protect game on the endangered list, many Governments have now passed legislation to protect game. Jean Bothma reported that to save the lion in Kenya, it became evident that "unless there was some kind of lawful protection, the number of lions would decrease so rapidly that they would be in

danger of extinction. The lions were, in the colonial period, "made royal game" (Owens, 1984; Schaller, 1972; Bothma, 1966: 48). Other observers have made similar comments and observations. Following this line of argument, many conservationists have recommended the following which I also subscribe to:

- i. Legislations on the control of vermin and predators should be reviewed and amended to require that before ranchers destroy predators like lions, they must show proof that they are physically threatened or that they have lost stock. Where this evidence exists, the destruction of the predator or predators should be based on the government authority and not the rancher. Once destroyed the remains should be collected for data;
- ii. Reduced lion poaching and retribution killing;
- iii. Create a greater local awareness and interest in conservation and vastly increased knowledge about lions and other carnivores.
- iv. Governments should strictly enforce laws against baiting and trapping of lions which result in the indiscriminate killing and maiming of "innocent" lions that are not a threat or danger to human beings or livestock;
- v. Government should strengthen laws against illegal hunting (call it poaching) of lions. To succeed in this area, governments need to increase the numbers of well-armed personnel existing or new laws;
- vi. Governments should provide, improve and increase the numbers of water holes or drinking places within the parks to ensure that animals, including lions do not stray out. This is extremely important in countries where water is scarce or where there are frequent droughts;
- vii. Tourist facilities should be provided to allow tourists to watch lions and other animals in their natural state; In Tanzania, lions are hunted under a 21-day safari package. Hunters pay \$9,800 in government fees for the opportunity. An average of about 200 lions are shot a year, generating about \$1,960,000 in revenue. Money is also spent on camp fees, wages, local goods and transportation. And hunters almost always come to hunt more than one species, though the lion is often the most coveted trophy sought. All told, trophy hunting generated roughly \$75 million for Tanzania's economy from 2008 to 2011. The money helps support 26 game reserves and a growing number of wildlife management areas owned and operated by local

communities as well as the building of roads, schools, hospitals and other infrastructure — all of which are important as Tanzania continues to develop as a peaceful and thriving democracy (Alexander N. Songorwa, 2013)

viii. Government should closely monitor the spread of disease among wild life and devise measures to treat and eradicate such outbreaks (IUCN Environmental Law Centre 1986). *ix*

*ix.*Based on declining density figures of the populations of lions, hunting quotas should be reduced either by half or one-quarter and the fees paid for lion-hunting licences should be increased to levels which only a few can afford. In this case only professional hunters should be allowed. Where the numbers are found to be low or threatened, the Government should, like what the Government of the Republic of Zambia, ban and protect the lions from total destruction because there was more value in game viewing tourism than in shooting for trophies. Zambia's move follows neighbouring Botswana's decision to ban all sport hunting from 2014 as it also works to promote itself as a game viewing destination. Wildlife-rich Kenya set this trend when it halted trophy and sport hunting decades ago ((9 January, 2013; Sunday Times On Line, 13 January 2013; Mail and Guardian of South Africa, 11 January 2013.);

x Extra care should be taken to avoid shooting young or pregnant lions. Government should ensure that there the population is carefully balanced to protect the lions;

xi. Tourists should be encouraged to photograph rather than shoot the lions; and initiate a number of programs to alleviate threats to lions; and

xii, Lions are a major trophy for hunters. Despite their well-documented decline, there is still a considerable trophy hunting effort. Since the last-published decline in lion numbers on the continent were made public in 2002-2004, over 4,400 lions have been exported as trophies. As such trophies are largely male lions, the effect of this commercial activity has greatly impacted both overall lion numbers and the ability for remaining lions to reproduce. To protect lions, trophy hunting must cease and be replaced by photojournalism

Conclusion

Estimating the size of the African Lion population is an ambitious exercise involving many uncertainties. Large carnivores such as lions, are among the most problematical animals to count and conserve because their range habitations and feeding habits inevitably bring them into conflict with humans. At the same time, their wide ranging movements and need for substantial prey populations require very large areas, and thus only the big protected managed landscapes and areas provide relative long term security for viable populations. Elsewhere, we will either learn to live with lions or we will lose them. Traditional livestock husbandry methods effectively protect livestock from lions, and data on the socioeconomic and ecological circumstances that lead to man-eating gives us confidence that proper management can minimize attacks on people. However, bows and arrows, spears, bullets, traps-using wires, and poison are ways cheaper and easier solutions than managing livestock, lions or growing rural human populations. Thus, rural people must perceive lions as vermin to be killed on sight: The benefits of killing lions outweigh the costs. In all areas where there is lion-human conflict, effective lion conservation must combine effective management of risks with development of viable wildlife-based economies that could or would improve the lives of rural Africans. Traditional peoples and wildlife managers have most of the techniques necessary to manage depredation of lions. But the greater challenge of managing ecologically sustainable rural development and human –lion conflicts, lie in the realm of developing and implementing viable and sustainable management policies of wild life. The most promising solutions to such conflict may involve assisting local residents in making their day-to-day activities safer. These include the legal machinery to protect both humans and wildlife, balancing the needs and safety of local communities with lion conservation effort, sensitization of the local communities, minimization of perceived dangers, maximization of economic benefits, appreciation of local traditions towards wild life, and political power. In addition, improving the speed and thoroughness of the responses by district game officers would greatly reduce the likelihood that the same lion or lions would kill numerous people before being caught and killed. Lastly, in order to maintain viable lion populations that do not pose a constant threat to neighbouring villages, efforts to conserve habitat and increase midsized lion prey are critical. Unless lions have alternative sources of food, they will continue to turn towards humans as an easy source of prey. It is only with a combined effort that takes into account improving human safety, rapid response to attacks,

and habitat health that man-eating outbreaks in southeastern Tanzania will be prevented. Without such effort, there is a risk of complete extermination of lions from these areas.

From the discussion above, we can conclude that the status of the lion remains high. The lion which is praised for its beauty, majesty and strength is seen in different terms by different people. It features prominently in folklore and fables in which it is featured as the “King of Beasts”, It is admired for its hunting skills and strategies which enables it to kill a wide variety of animals. In this case, it contributes immensely to the balance of nature. At the same time, it is a major attraction in the Game Reserves and Game Management Areas. Lions are particularly important because they draw visitors from throughout the world — visitors who support our tourism industry and economy. Many of these visitors only take pictures. But others pay thousands of dollars to pursue lions with rifles and take home trophies from what is often a once-in-a-lifetime hunt. Those hunters spend 10 to 25 times more than regular tourists and travel to (and spend money in) remote areas rarely visited by photographic tourists. It is one species that most tourists want to see and pay heavy license fees to hunt it for sport (Lamarque et al, 2009). It brings in foreign exchange, helping to create jobs, and bringing various forms of development to the tourist destinations

At the same time, the plight of the lion is high. It is disliked and feared because of its attacks on man and livestock which, sometimes, becomes notorious and a menace. It is hunted, sometimes, mercilessly to protect human beings and livestock or hunted for sport to build up a personal ego. In some cases, its carcass provided the skin and the mane for the royalty. The other parts are used for different purposes or even exported to industrialized countries.. . The lion has a contradictory image makes it loved and admired and at the same time, it is hated and despised. It is the only animal that enjoys these contradictory characteristics.

The realization of the importance of tourism has made the lion all the more important. The potential of tourism is enormous and need only to be harnessed and developed. More important, the lion should not be allowed to be an extinct species. It has more to contribute to our nation. Above all, governments must ensure that the habitat is not shrunk to a point where the lion will become a danger to human beings and livestock. This is why the recent creation of the huge Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park, spanning the borders of South Africa, Mozambique and Zimbabwe, is the largest and most ambitious effort in Africa to combine conservation, environmental protection, tourism and economic

development is a welcome development to the survival of the lion and other wildlife. This park, with an area of 3.5 million hectares incorporating what is today Mozambique's Limpopo National Park and the Gonarezhou National Park in Zimbabwe and South Africa's Kruger National Park is the world's largest game park. It is the hope of this author that similar developments will take place in other parts of Africa to protect wildlife and promote tourism. It is also the author that conservations will draw the attention of governments to this important project: to save the lions for their own sake, for the sake of tourism and for the children to come.

Note to the reader

A shorter version of this paper was given as a Keynote Address to the Annual Meeting of the American Society for Environmental History on the theme “Frontiers in Environmental History: Main Streaming the “Marginal”, Providence Biltmore, Rhode Island, USA, March 26 – 30, 2003. I wish to thank the participants for their comments and suggestions. On 29 May 2013, the paper was further discussed in a seminar hosted by Department of History seminar, University of Zambia I am very grateful for the comments made by the participants.

Dedication

This paper is dedicated to Mr. Kenneth Mubili who introduced me to the importance and beauty of wildlife in Mansa,

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