

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA

Fifth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties

Buenos Aires (Argentina), 22 April to 3 May 1985

Interpretation and Implementation of the Convention

Trade in Leopard Skins

SUPPORTING STATEMENT FROM ZAMBIA

The leopard (Panthera pardus) occurs throughout Zambia. It is most abundant in the 19 National Parks of Zambia where it is totally protected (Ansel, 1978). In Game Management and Open Areas, populations have remained stable, even in areas of settlement where it's secretive nature allows it to remain inconspicuous.

Under the National Parks and Wildlife Act Cap. 316 of the laws of Zambia, the leopard is classified as a game animal and can only be hunted under a game licence issued by the competent Management Authority of Zambia. An annual quota is laid down and no more supplementary licences for leopard can be issued when the quota is exhausted. A supplementary licence fee for leopard is US\$ 1000 for overseas clients and K 1000 (about US\$ 400) for local hunters. This fee is intended to attract only genuine and serious trophy hunters.

The leopard defies censusing by conventional methods, but the frequency of sightings and of sound records, including the success rate of sport hunters in Game Management Areas, indicates that it is common (Naylor et al., 1973).

Reports on record of sightings by professional hunters in Game Management Areas indicate that the leopard is abundant. Cooper (1984) hunting in the Bangweulu Game Management Area reports that both lion and leopard spoors were seen daily.

In September 1984, while hunting in Luano Game Management Area, Cooper had an estimated count of 100 leopards from sightings and calls in a hunting block of approximately 650 km².

The leopard occurs in all Game Management Areas of Zambia, where its hunting is allowed. Mukanda (1977) estimated a density of 1 leopard/5 km² in the Luangwa Valley Game Management Area and 1 leopard/5.5 in the Lunga-Luswishi Game Management Area. At the lower density and assuming that densities apply to National Parks and Game Management Areas, the estimated leopard population for Zambia would be well above 40,000. This estimate excludes those occurring in open areas, and has been arrived at thus:

Category of land	Area in km ²	Population estimate
19 National Parks	63,542	12,000
33 Game Mangement Areas	163,000	35,000
Total estimated population		47,000

Allowing a 1% take off, the annual quota roughly works out to be 470 leopards.

In Zambia, recreation hunting has remained popular among overseas clients inspite of a five year ban on hunting of elephants since 1982. This popularity stems from the quality of hunting which has remained relatively high for a long time for the more preferred species such as leopard, lion, buffalo, etc. indicating that the population trends of these species have remained stable at relatively the same hunting pressure. Table 1 shows hunters success rates for leopard between 1979 and 1983.

Annually, Zambia receives an average of 250 overseas hunting clients. It is becoming increasingly difficult, since the introduction of the quota system, to convince these clients that only 80 may be allowed to hunt leopard as Zambia's export quota under the Convention is only 80, although the leopard is common in the country. In the long run, this will tend to divert overseas clients to other countries, where if they can not hunt leopard, they can at least happily hunt elephant, whose hunting is banned in Zambia. This will leave Zambia totally uncompetitive in terms of sport hunting, since it will have only a few species to offer.

Zambia receives an average of US\$ 1.2 million annually from hunting by overseas clients. Should these clients decide to hunt elsewhere because Zambia can offer them neither elephant nor leopard, it will deprive the country of the much needed foreign exchange to supplement the dwindling foreign reserves and leaders may lose faith in some of our conservation policies.

Hunting companies are required by contract to contribute to the conservation of wildlife in Zambia. Each company is required to provide a 4-wheel drive vehicle for anti-poaching to the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Service in each hunting block it operates. Hunting companies may not view our conservation efforts in the right perspective if every time all we seem to come up with are restrictions on what their clients may hunt, without advancing genuine management reasons.

Zambia remains committed to the spirit of the Convention, and recognizes that international co-operation is essential for the protection of certain species of wild fauna and flora against over-exploitation through international trade, but also realises that in upholding this spirit and the provisions of the Convention, a sense of reasonableness has to be seen to prevail and continue to be the guiding factor in the achievement of our desired goals.

Zambia is seeking an increased quota for leopard from 80 to 300 to maintain and encourage sport hunting which has proved popular among overseas hunters. It has also been a source of foreign exchange for the country as well as a source of employment for the local people. The figure of 300 has been arrived at by taking into account the number of overseas clients Zambia annually receives, the number of people permanently leaving Zambia who might wish to

take leopard skins as part of their personal household acquisitions as well as the estimated leopard population in the country to which 300 is less than 1% of the estimated population.

Table 1: Hunters per cent of success rates for leopard harvest between 1979 and 1983

Year	Number of Leopards Harvested	Annual Quota	% Success Rate
1979	218	275	79.3
1980	210	263	79.8
1981	270	337	80
1982	194	210	92
1983	150	198	75

Average hunters success rate between 1979 and 1983 = 81%

Literature Cited

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