

Transfer of the population of Leopard *Panthera pardus* in Uganda from Appendix I to Appendix II.

with an annotation that reads:

- 1) For the exclusive purpose of sport hunting for trophies and skins for personal use, to be exported as personal effects; and
- 2) With an export quota of 50 Leopards for the whole country.

Proponent: Uganda.

Summary: The Leopard *Panthera pardus* occurs widely in Asia, the Middle East and Africa, including Uganda. The species as a whole is currently classified as Least Concern by IUCN (assessed 2002).

An up-to-date Leopard population estimate and trend in population are not available for Uganda. In 1987 the population in Uganda was estimated at 4 292 (range 2 361–7 854, 95% confidence limits), based on a model relating Leopard densities to habitat extent and rainfall, applied across sub-Saharan Africa. This model is now believed to have overestimated Leopard densities in some cases, particularly in tropical moist forests, which comprise at least a portion of Leopard habitat in Uganda. The species is said still to occur widely in Uganda, but recent camera-trap surveys failed to find evidence of Leopards in a number of forested sites still officially considered to be Leopard habitat. Although the Leopard can thrive in altered natural habitats, conversion of wild lands for agriculture has brought the species into escalating conflict with people and, in general, population densities outside protected areas are much lower than those within. Agriculture has also fragmented Leopard habitats. Within Uganda, threats to Leopards increased in 2000 when the government launched a Plan for the Modernisation of Agriculture to convert current subsistence farming (on which 80% of Ugandans depend) to commercial agriculture. Recently, further Government plans were announced to degazette some protected rainforests for commercial agriculture. If implemented, these would be likely to reduce further the suitability of Leopard habitats and possibly bring Leopards into increased conflict with people. The quota of 50 Leopards a year that is proposed for Uganda is intended as a precautionary combined animal control and sport hunting based figure. The aim is to generate economic benefits that would motivate communities, game ranchers and local governments to protect Leopards instead of treating them as vermin.

The proponents consider that sport hunting would add a sufficiently high economic value to the Leopard to change the attitudes of rural people who currently regard it as a threat to their livelihoods. They note that in Uganda all wildlife utilisation, including sport hunting, is subject to licensing laws, with legislative measures in place to allow for penalisation of anyone engaged in illegal wildlife trade. They state that skin exports would be controlled by tagging and that the Uganda Wildlife Authority is able to determine trends in exploitation, carry out non-detriment findings and can respond in time if monitoring of Leopards reveals that sport hunting is detrimental to the species' survival in the wild. However, it has been suggested that there is currently insufficient information to determine a sustainable off-take of Leopards in Uganda and that it is possible that an annual quota of 50 may be too high.

The Leopard has been included in CITES Appendix I since 1975. Since CoP 4, a system has been in place for exporting Leopards under quota from some other African countries for primarily non-commercial purposes. At present such exports are under Resolution Conf. 10.14 (Rev. CoP 13) (Quotas for Leopard hunting trophies and skins for personal use). Countries concerned and their quotas are: Botswana (130); Central African Republic (40); Ethiopia (500); Kenya (80); Malawi (50); Mozambique (60); Namibia (250); South Africa (150); United Republic of Tanzania (500); Zambia (300); Zimbabwe (500). CITES trade data indicate that in the past few years these countries have generally exported considerably fewer specimens than allowed for in their quotas.

Uganda seeks to transfer its population of Leopard from Appendix I to Appendix II subject to an annual quota of 50 animals obtained from sport hunting, for trophies and skins for personal use to be exported as personal effects.

Analysis: To be transferred to Appendix II the Ugandan population of the Leopard should no longer meet the criteria for inclusion in Appendix I set out in Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP.13). Although its range may have contracted in Uganda, it does not appear to have a restricted area of distribution. There is no quantitative information on current trends in Leopard numbers in Uganda. The population is inferred to have declined through decreasing availability of habitat and prey and increased mortality as a result of

conflicts with humans although it is not clear that any rate of decline would be within the general guidelines suggested in Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP.13) (50% within three generations or ten years, whichever is the longest). However, it is possible that the Leopard in Uganda has a small population according to the guidelines in Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP.13) (5 000 or fewer) and that this population is declining. The Ugandan population of Leopard may therefore still meet the criteria for inclusion in Appendix I.

The proposed export quota is considered by the proponents to be precautionary, but no basis for its derivation is provided.

Annex 3 of Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP 13) states that listing of species in more than one Appendix should be avoided in general. When split-listing does occur, this should generally be on the basis of national or continental populations, rather than subspecies.

It appears that retaining the Ugandan population of the Leopard in Appendix I and applying for an export quota under Resolution Conf.10.14 (Rev. CoP.13) or any successor would essentially have the same effect as the present proposal. Such an approach would be consistent with current treatment of national populations of eleven other Leopard range States.

Supporting Statement (SS)	Additional information
<u>Taxonomy</u>	
<u>Range</u>	
Uganda.	<i>The species as a whole is widespread in Africa and Asia. UNEP-WCMC Species Database lists 74 range States and six possible range States.</i>
<u>IUCN Global Category</u>	
<i>Least Concern (Assessed in 2002, Criteria version 3.1).</i>	

Biological criteria for inclusion in Appendix 1

A) Small wild population

(i) Population or habitat decline; (ii) small sub-populations; (iii) one sub-population; (iv) large population fluctuations; (v) high vulnerability

The Leopard's secretive habits and wide-ranging distribution make it difficult to establish the actual population. A total of 27–36 individuals has been estimated in Lake Mburo National Park (370 km²) and the population in some other national parks is thought to be higher (no reference). Further survey work is being carried out.

In 1987 the population in Uganda was estimated at 4 292 (range 2 361-7 854, 95% confidence limits), based on a model relating Leopard densities to habitat extent and rainfall, applied across sub-Saharan Africa (Martin and de Meulenaer, 1988). This model is now believed to have overestimated Leopard densities in some cases, particularly in tropical moist forests (Jackson, 1989; Marker and Dickman, 2005), which comprise at least a portion of Leopard habitat in Uganda.

Hunter (2007) questions the estimate of 27–36 animals in Lake Mburo National Park given in the proposal.

The Leopard appears to be very successful in adapting to altered natural habitats and settled environments in the absence of intense persecution. However Leopard densities in these human-modified habitats are very likely to be reduced because of persecution (IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Group, 1996). Marker and Dickman (2005) looked at six studies and found that mean density of Leopards within protected areas was considerably higher than that outside.

Supporting Statement (SS)	Additional information
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B) Restricted area of distribution

(i) Fragmented or localised population; (ii) large fluctuations in distribution or sub-populations; (iii) high vulnerability; (iv) decrease in distribution, population, area or quality of habitat, or recruitment

The Leopard occurs widely in Uganda, in all Uganda's forested and savannah wildlife protected areas and habitats within the "cattle corridor" region; in addition to other savannah areas of the north, north-west and south.

Leopard habitat has been fragmented due to the establishment of modern livestock farms and crop cultivation.

There is little distribution data for Uganda. Camera-trap surveys conducted recently by the Wildlife Conservation Society in Uganda have failed to find evidence of Leopards in a number of forested sites (Rwenzori Mountains, Bwindi Impenetrable, and Kibale National Parks and Kasyoha-Kitomi and Kalinzu Forest reserves) still considered to be Leopard habitat by the government. Although there are no national figures available, it is almost certainly the case that Leopards have been extirpated from substantial areas in Uganda considered popularly or officially still to be Leopard habitat (Hunter, 2007).

C) Decline in number of wild individuals

(i) Ongoing or historic decline; (ii) inferred or projected decline

No information was located on trends in the numbers of wild Leopards in Uganda.

Trade criteria for inclusion in Appendix I

The species is or may be affected by trade

The Leopard has been included in Appendix I since 1975. Since CoP 4 a system has been in place for exporting Leopards under quota from some other African countries for primarily non-commercial purposes. At present such exports are under Resolution Conf. 10.14 (Rev. CoP 13) (Quotas for Leopard hunting trophies and skins for personal use). Countries concerned and their quotas are: Botswana (130); Central African Republic (40); Ethiopia (500); Kenya (80); Malawi (50); Mozambique (60); Namibia (250); South Africa (150); United Republic of Tanzania (500); Zambia (300); Zimbabwe (500). CITES trade data indicate that in the past few years these countries have generally exported considerably fewer specimens than allowed for in their quotas (around 1 700 in total were recorded in trade in 2005, out of a possible total of 2 560.

Under Resolution Conf. 10.14 (Rev. CoP 13), import permits can only be granted if the specimens of Appendix-I species with approved quotas are not to be used for primarily commercial purposes. Export permits can only be granted when a Scientific Authority of the state of export has advised that such an export would not be detrimental to the survival of the species.

Precautionary measures

CoP satisfied with: Annex 4, Res. Conf. 9.2 (Rev. CoP 13) Para A 2 c: An integral part of the amendment proposal is an export quota or other special measure approved by the Conference of the Parties, based on management measures described in the supporting statement of the amendment proposal, provided that effective enforcement controls are in place);

The proposed quota of 50 Leopards a year is a precautionary combined animal control and sport hunting based figure and intended as a management mitigation intervention.

The quota figure will be subject to review, both in Uganda and at the next CoP depending on the outcome of this proposal.

The management of the quota will be in accordance with

Hunter (2007) notes that the supporting statement of the proposal argues that determining Leopard numbers is too lengthy, difficult and costly to establish, but asserts that these can be established with camera-trapping.

Supporting Statement (SS)	Additional information
<p>Resolution Conf. 10.14 and Article 3 (a-c) of the Convention. Skin exports will be monitored by tagging in Uganda.</p> <p>Sport hunting in Uganda is based on a strict code of conduct. Management of the pilot sport hunting project around Lake Mbuho National Park is based on a formal M.O.U. between the Uganda Wildlife Authority, local governments and local communities, and Game Trails (U) Ltd, a professional private hunting company. It is intended that this institutional framework be replicated and/or made available for Leopard hunting.</p> <p>There are effective legislation measures to penalise anyone engaged in illegal hunting of and/or trade in game. All wildlife utilisation, including sport hunting, is subject to licensing laws. The Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) has a Management Information System and is able to determine trends in exploitation, carry out non-detriment findings and respond in time if monitoring of Leopard sport hunting reveals that it is detrimental to the species' survival in the wild. Operational procedures for application and approval of wildlife use (including sport hunting) and procedures for monitoring/inspection of export or import wildlife consignments are all in place now. The key challenge to African governments is to add a sufficiently high economic value to the Leopard quickly enough to change the attitudes of rural people whose livelihoods are threatened by it.</p>	

Other information

Threats

Conflict with livestock farmers is the major threat to the survival of the Leopard in Uganda. Local communities have a negative attitude towards the Leopard. At the present time, problem Leopards in Uganda that kill livestock are in turn killed by local communities. The reports of damage by Leopards involving livestock are increasing and are widespread.

Around 80% of Ugandans depend on subsistence agriculture. In an attempt to address increased levels of poverty in rural areas, the Government is encouraging agricultural production. This has created demand for more land and is infringing on Leopard habitats.

Ray et al. (2005) note that loss of habitat and subsequent impacts on prey remain among the chief threats to the Leopard in Africa. Increasing habitat loss is associated with elevated conflict between Leopards and the interests of local people. This drives direct persecution which may lead to elimination of isolated populations.

The Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture (PMA) was launched in Uganda in December 2000. The PMA aims to change current subsistence agriculture to commercial agriculture (PMA Secretariat, 2001). In December 2006 the Ugandan Government has proposed two large agricultural schemes, one in an important protected rainforest, and another in a forest that buffers Lake Victoria, for palm oil plantations and sugar cane (Anon., 2007). In January 2007 the Ugandan Government proposed degazetting nine additional municipal forest reserves (Luggya and Mugerwa, 2007). The loss of protected rainforests and also the commercialisation of farming may be expected to threaten Leopards by further reducing the suitability of habitat and increasing the likelihood of persecution as Leopards come into conflict with people.

Conservation, management and legislation

In 2000 the Government piloted a sport hunting programme for ungulates in livestock rangelands surrounding Lake Mbuho National Park in an attempt to add value to wildlife after years of massive decline. The programme has increased populations of ungulates but Leopards have not benefited from this protection because the species is not included in the hunting quota.

The aim of the proposed sport-hunting quota for Leopard

Hunter (2007) notes that the number of Leopards killed around Lake Mbuho reported in the supporting statement (at least 19, although it is not clear which of these were killed by local people or government-led PAC efforts) appears high in relation to the reported loss of livestock (around 24 head per year in the region).

Supporting Statement (SS)	Additional information
<p>trophies and skins for personal use is to generate tangible economic benefits that would motivate communities, game ranchers and local government to protect Leopards instead of regarding them as vermin. The capacity of the Uganda Wildlife Authority to directly compensate farmers who have suffered losses from Leopard attacks on livestock is highly limited even though this is legally provided for. Evidence is provided that sport hunting would make Leopards more valuable than their being killed by farmers and not utilised (unreferenced).</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Similar species</u></p> <p><i>The Leopard population in Uganda is contiguous with populations in adjacent countries (Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Sudan, Tanzania and Rwanda).</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Captive breeding</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Other comments</u></p> <p><i>Hunter (2007) suggests granting a quota of 20 animals for Uganda, with rigorous monitoring instituted wherever hunting is introduced in the country.</i></p> <p><i>At CoP 12 some problems were identified for nationally reported export quotas for Appendix II species (CoP12 Doc. 50.2 Annex 2) and at the same meeting the Export Quota Working Group was set up. At CoP 13 it was decided that the Standing Committee should consider the issue of improvement of annual export quota management and report back at CoP 14 (12.72, Rev. CoP 13). It was also decided that the Export Quota Working Group should develop guidelines for the Parties on establishing, implementing, monitoring and reporting of quotas (13.66). These will be discussed under Agenda item 36 of CoP 14.</i></p>

Reviewers:

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