

Each year, there are reports of foreign hunters killing 655 wild lions, averaging almost two lions a day<sup>1</sup>. An Oxford Study conducted in Hwange National Park in Africa discovered that thirty-four of the sixty-four lions they had tracked using GPS tags had died, twenty-four of which were shot by hunters<sup>1</sup>. It was estimated that a century ago there was a population of 200,000 or more lions roaming the African savannah. The most recent count conducted in 2012 found that there are now only 32,000 wild lions left in Africa. In the United States, wild lions in Africa are now considered “threatened” under the US Endangered Species Act.

Lions are not the only large animals that have become threatened or endangered due in part to hunting. Elephants and rhinoceroses are hunted by poachers for their ivory tusks and horns. A trusted National Geographic study found that 100,000 African Elephants had been killed by poachers in a span of three years<sup>2</sup>. This comes out to one in every twelve elephants in Africa. Poachers have also caused the African White Rhino to become all but extinct. As of 2016 there is only one African White Rhino left in the world (a male). Other hunted big game species include leopards, giraffes, water buffalo, and many more.

Despite the fact that the ivory trade was banned in Africa in 1990<sup>3</sup> and by China in 2017, efforts to curb poaching and illegal hunting have proven for the most part unsuccessful for the often under equipped national governments of Africa. A Yale study showed that as African

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[http://www.slate.com/articles/health\\_and\\_science/science/2015/07/lion\\_hunting\\_statistics\\_foreigners\\_in\\_africa\\_like\\_walter\\_palmer\\_take\\_home.html](http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/science/2015/07/lion_hunting_statistics_foreigners_in_africa_like_walter_palmer_take_home.html)

<sup>2</sup> <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2014/08/140818-elephants-africa-poaching-cites-census/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.herald.co.zw/international-rhino-horn-trade-ban-failing-to-stop-poaching/>

governments arm themselves to respond to poachers, so poachers have militarized to fight them<sup>4 5</sup>. Poachers have become adept at fighting and avoiding authorities.

Many African governments provide licenses to hunters and allow them to hunt big game for a price. Many oppose this sanctioned hunting of large animals, while others see it as a way to regulate hunting and protect animal populations. The hope is that revenues from trophy hunting will go to small villages in the area where poachers live, and the increased revenue for these villagers will convince them to stop poaching<sup>6</sup>.

As your country's representation to UNEP, you should propose resolutions to create innovative ways to hinder poaching. Consider whether an escalation of policing will work. Consider also whether allowing the killing of animals through big game hunting is an appropriate measure in the efforts to stop poaching. Your goal will be to work alongside the delegates of other countries to pass a well thought out plan to protect these endangered species. Consider the role that the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) plays in the world as well as the power of the United Nations as a whole. You may also want to consider whether your country has some native species of endangered animals and how regulation on hunting and actions against poaching will affect your country.

Best of luck,

Judah Stiefel

Chair, United Nations Environmental Programme

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<sup>4</sup> <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2014/08/140818-elephants-africa-poaching-cites-census/>

<sup>5</sup> [http://e360.yale.edu/features/the\\_war\\_on\\_african\\_poaching\\_is\\_militarization\\_fated\\_to\\_fail](http://e360.yale.edu/features/the_war_on_african_poaching_is_militarization_fated_to_fail)

<sup>6</sup> <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/11/151715-conservation-trophy-hunting-elephants-tusks-poaching-zimbabwe-namibia/>

Helpful Resources:

List of Currently Endangered Species-

[https://faunalytics.org/endangered/?gclid=CjwKCAjwu7LOBRBZEiwAQtfbGPxxm2Lt1bovNr0-tkzEWQP6MPnylxDNgXOzsilcaRkKRcWL4HNtSBoCpGkQAvD\\_BwE](https://faunalytics.org/endangered/?gclid=CjwKCAjwu7LOBRBZEiwAQtfbGPxxm2Lt1bovNr0-tkzEWQP6MPnylxDNgXOzsilcaRkKRcWL4HNtSBoCpGkQAvD_BwE)

African Hunting Fees- <http://www.africanskyhunting.co.za/pricelist.html>

UNEP Ecosystem Management- <http://www.unep.org/ecosystems/>