

LION PILOT POPULATION PROJECT PROPOSAL KATAVI-RUKWA-LUKWATI ECOSYSTEM

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SUMMARY

The lion is one of the most important animals to the safari hunting industry and Tanzania probably has the largest population in Africa. Recently there has been concern about the sustainability of lion hunting and a proposal to uplist the lion to Appendix I was tabled at the 2004 CITES meeting. This proposal was withdrawn but it is likely that this will again be tabled at the next CITES meeting in 2006. Tanzania must be in a position to counter threats to the viability of the safari hunting industry and its position must be strengthened by research and relevant data.

The Katavi-Rukwa-Lukwati ecosystem is an important wildlife area in south-western Tanzania and comprises national parks, game reserves, game controlled areas, forest reserves and open areas. Much of the area is used for safari hunting but the core of the area – the Katavi National Park – is under strict protection.

The Proposal

This proposal seeks to establish baseline data for the lion population in the Katavi-Rukwa-Lukwati ecosystem by comparing the non-hunted National Park (Katavi) with the hunted game reserves (Rukwa and Lukwati). Essentially a pilot project of three months duration, the research will focus on estimates of lion populations for both types of protected area.

The proposed methodology proposed is both “indirect” and “direct”. The indirect methodology focuses on the use systematic placement of **calling stations** coupled with a photographic identification to estimate population size. The calling station data will be supplemented with spoor records, roaring counts, remote photography, hunting records, etc.

The “direct” methodology component involves the use of **radio telemetry**. Collars will be fitted to four males and two females, both pride males and nomads (in the case of males). The collars will be programmed to detach at the end of the project so that the data sets can be downloaded but fixes will be taken during the life of the project (at least 30 per animal) as a backup. The telemetry data will provide data on home ranges and movements through the ecosystem, and on possible movement between the national park and hunting areas. Although very important data in its own right, its main purpose here will be to supplement and improve the estimates obtained through the use of calling stations.

The Cost

Item	Cost	Item	Cost
Calling station equipment	550	Air Tickets	3 200
Telemetry equipment and sedation	12 500	Honorarium	6 000
Sundries, Contingencies	1 500	GIS Mapping	1 000
Fuel, vehicle use	2 500	TAWIRI	2 100
Food/Lodging	2 000	COSTECH	650
Visa	500	TOTAL	US \$32,500