



## OPEN LETTER

To the Mayor Mr Thomas Westphal

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Dear Thomas Westphal and Barbara Brunsing, Lord Mayor and Second Mayor of the City of Dortmund,

### **AN AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE ON THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF THE COLONIAL-STYLED COMMERCIALISATION OF ENDANGERED WILDLIFE SPECIES ADVERTISED AT 'JAGD & HUND' HUNTING FAIR IN DORTMUND, GERMANY**

The Wildlife Animal Protection Forum South Africa ([WAPFSA](http://www.wapf-sa.org)), supported by a number of African and International NGOs and renowned individuals and experts, express their concerns regarding trophy hunting offers at the upcoming 'Jagd & Hund'.

WAPFSA is a community of diverse South African-based organisations that share certain values, knowledge and objectives and that collectively comprise a body of expertise from different sectors including but not limited to scientific, environmental, legal, welfare, rights, social justice, indigenous and public advocacy backgrounds.

The undersigned organisations and community representatives who are widely supported by wildlife conservationists across the African continent and beyond would like to take this opportunity to share our African perspective on the negative impacts of the commercialisation, advertisement and sale of trophy hunts of African endangered and protected species with you.

This open communication has been penned in light of the 41<sup>st</sup> annual ‘*Jagd & Hund*’ Hunting Show, which is advertised as Europe largest hunting exhibition to be held in Dortmund’s Westfalenhallen from the 24<sup>th</sup> January to the 29<sup>th</sup> of January 2023.

Barely a month ago delegates at the CoP15 Biodiversity Summit, which was held in Canada, made a major conservation commitment to try to halt the loss of hundreds of thousands of plants and animals, with a hope to turn the tide on the ongoing extinction crises. The persistent removal of species through trophy hunting can have profound impacts on species extinction risk and selection within populations and can have broader negative consequences for other species and ecosystem processes.

Countries across Europe have acknowledged the fact that trophy hunting has little connection with conservation, on the 13<sup>th</sup> of December 2022 the Finnish Parliament approved a new nature conservation law that includes the banning of imports of hunting trophies from endangered species. The Finnish Nature Conservation Act will enter into force on the 1<sup>st</sup> of June 2023. In 2015 France specifically banned the import of lion trophies. In 2016 the Netherlands banned the import of hunting trophies of over 200 hundred species. In March 2022 the Belgium Parliament adopted a resolution urging the government to immediately end the authorisation of trophy import permits for certain threatened and endangered species. On the 15<sup>th</sup> of June 2022, [Henry Smith MP](#) introduced a landmark bill to Parliament to ban British hunters from bringing ‘trophies of endangered and vulnerable animals into Britain. The Hunting Trophies (Import Prohibition) Bill would be the strongest of its kind in the world and has the backing of the Government as well as from UK wildlife and animal welfare groups. A recent poll found that 86% of voters support a ban. On Friday 25<sup>th</sup> of November, the Bill passed a second reading in the House of Commons.

In sharp contradiction to the universal CoP15 December 2022 commitment to the environment, the ‘*Jagd & Hund*’ exhibition advertises “sport” trophy hunting, where wealthy individuals can [purchase the right to hunt](#) down and kill the biggest and strongest of animal species in Africa. These actions, we believe, undermine conservation and eco-tourism development efforts in Africa.

Dortmund is well-known as the City of Science, the motto is “One City, a Lot of Knowledge,” with seven universities, and nineteen non-university research institutes including institutions such as the Leibniz Association, the Max Plank Society, and the Fraunhofer Society.

Scientists tell us that removing male mammals from their populations can [increase the risks of species extinction](#). By selecting the most impressive, the largest, most likely rare animal, mainly male, that is possibly

the strongest and fittest in order to become the best trophy (largest tusks and thickest manes), trophy hunters affect reproductivity [weakening](#) populations' genetic health and variation, dislocating the surviving members of the group's social structure, [disrupting bonds and behaviours](#).

"Hunting Africa, Trophy Hunting, Neocolonialism and Land" is an investigative [report](#) written by Professor Sian Sullivan, in which she confirms Safari Club International World Hunting Award Field Journal dedicates more pages to Africa than any other continent. *"These figures clearly show the dependence of the trophy hunting industry on securing access to Africa's hunting grounds. Given that the hunting industry claims to African lands requires removal of African peoples and constraints on local production practices, it arguably promotes and extends colonial patterns of enclosure."*

[Trophy hunting is rooted in colonial modes of extraction](#) that perpetuate notions of abuse, subjugation, control and inequality, including gender inequality. Dr Muchazondida Mkono's research<sup>1</sup> has found that trophy hunting is an objectionable consequence of a complex historical and postcolonial association. Africans have a deep resentment towards what is viewed as the neo-colonial character of trophy hunting, in the way it privileges Western elites in accessing Africa's wildlife.

Proponents of trophy hunting argue that trophy hunting provides vast economic opportunities for local communities whereas, in truth, the economic benefits of big game hunting are wildly exaggerated and pale in comparison to the economic possibilities of eco-tourism. According to a 2013 study by [Economists at Large](#), only 3% of the revenue generated by trophy hunting remains with local communities in Africa. In addition, hunting quotas are often set according to economic interests and market demand rather than population abundance and are not based on scientific data or standards.

In reality, trophy hunting is an elitist hobby for millionaires and billionaires who pay huge fees to kill large exotic and rare animals. Cash-strapped and corrupt governments in developing countries allow the colonialist sport to continue. According to a [Report](#) by Good Governance Africa, compared with tourism, trophy hunting provides very little benefit. The Report also questions whether the legally sanctioned killing of wild animals can be reasonably tolerated.

When there is a conflict between humans and large wildlife in Africa, this conflict is managed in fruitless ways that only have the purpose to generate revenue within the strict elite circle of the trophy hunting industry, without solving the conflict issue. Alternative, science-based, non-invasive, cost-effective methods are scraped out because of the constructed idea that trophy hunting has to be part of any conservation protocol.

Projects that offer optimal alternatives to trophy hunting, in terms of improving the livelihoods of local communities, based on regenerative, climate-resilient practices and alternative conservation activities that reject and avoid violence, subjugation and extraction in favour of more ecologically sustainable and dignifying activities do exist in countries in Africa, including [Tanzania](#), South Africa, Namibia, [Malawi](#), [Zimbabwe](#), [Zambia](#), Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Lesotho, [Angola](#), Botswana, Eswatini, and Madagascar.

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<sup>1</sup> Mucha Mkono (2019) Neo-colonialism and greed: Africans' views on trophy hunting in social media, Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 27:5, 689-704, DOI: [10.1080/09669582.2019.1604719](https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2019.1604719)

These practices promote fair share and equity, women and youth empowerment and self-sufficiency and focus on improving farming productivity and food security via climate-smart agricultural practices but also economic development and wildlife coexistence and resilience. We are aware that these activities struggle to flourish because of the competition with extractive, immediate-reward models and sectors which are plagued with corruption and nepotism as the hunting sector.

Most African exhibitors at the 'Jagd & Hund' show are from [Namibia](#) and [South Africa](#).

In Namibia, more than 95% of trophy hunts are conducted on private land and only about 2 per cent in communal conservancies.<sup>2</sup> Hardly any financial revenue is derived from trophy hunting in these communities.

Governments are not interested in monitoring if revenues are allocated fairly. Furthermore, many locals even feel excluded from the benefits their wildlife offers, since trophy hunting is a privilege of wealthy foreign tourists, while they themselves are mostly prohibited to hunt for subsistence. So instead of promoting economic independency and ensuring the livelihoods of local communities, trophy hunting deepens inequality and consolidates social injustice. This is a lose-lose situation, where local communities are trapped in a financially disadvantaged situation and are losing their valuable wildlife and biodiversity – which is, in turn, key for sustainable and more profitable non-consumptive alternatives.

In July 2022, in a joint position [statement](#) on Trophy Hunting, 171 animal protection organisations, including 51 NGOs from Africa, asked for trophy hunting to be banned.

A recently published survey indicated that in South Africa the opposition to trophy hunting has increased from 64% in 2020 to 68% in 2022. The survey included data sourced from a diverse South African demographic across all provinces. The key findings from the IPSOS survey include:

- 68% of South Africans fully oppose or oppose to some extent the practice of trophy hunting—an increase from 56% in a similar 2018 survey.
- 65% of South Africans fully oppose or oppose to some extent the practice of canned lion hunting—an increase from 60% in a similar 2018 survey.
- 64% of South Africans disagree with the trophy hunting of elephants, rhinos, and leopards.
- 63% of South Africans disagree with the trophy hunting of lions.
- 66% of South Africans disagree with the trophy hunting of hippos.
- 60% of South Africans disagree with the trophy hunting of giraffes.
- Regarding the 2022 hunting and export quotas announced by the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) in February 2022, 63% oppose the quota for 150 elephants, 62% oppose the quota for 10 black rhinos, and 61% oppose the quota for 10 leopards.

*World Animal Protection* recently commissioned [research](#) into public attitudes towards trophy hunting, surveying 10,900 people from around the world, including international tourists from countries who most frequently visit Africa. The research confirmed that international tourists want to see wildlife-friendly experiences and an end to trophy hunting. Tourists want to see wildlife alive and thriving and protected in a humane and ethical manner.

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<sup>2</sup> C. MacLaren, J. Perche & A. Middleto, *The value of hunting for conservation in the context of the biodiversity economy*. REPORT - available at the link [2019-06-Hunting\\_report.pdf \(resmob.org\)](#)

A [study](#) by the World Travel & Tourism Council confirmed that wildlife is [worth more alive than dead](#). Another [study](#) of eight African countries by economists concluded that overall, tourism which relies heavily on wildlife contributed between 2.8% and 5.1% of GDP, and foreign trophy hunters made up less than 0.03% of the same GDP on average. Similarly, photo safaris, in comparison, allowed for sustainable, lucrative tourism activities without killing wildlife.

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature Ethics Specialist Group [wrote](#) to the German government to ask for an end to the practice of trophy hunting imports for ethical, ecological and legal reasons. Professor Klaus Bosselmann, chair of the aforementioned group, said: "Trophy hunting unnecessarily threatens the survival and genetic integrity of protected species in the midst of the current crisis of the sixth mass species extinction. It is overdue that Germany, as the largest importer of hunting trophies in the EU, takes action." Members of WAPFSA congratulate the German Ministry of the Environment, Steffi Lemke's, [announcement](#) of their intention to restrict the import of hunting trophies from protected species in Germany.

WAPFSA also welcomed the announcement by IEG Italian Exhibition Group SpA in 2022 to discontinue Italy's largest hunting fair in Vincenza in light of the fact that the event was incompatible with environmental values.

The Members of WAPFSA graciously urge you, in your esteemed position, to acknowledge our perspective and to consider, at the very least, the suspension of the advertisement, promotion and sale of trophy hunts of African endangered and protected species at the 'Jagd & Hund' event.

Yours faithfully,



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**ON BEHALF OF WAPFSA**

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**SIGNING MEMBERS OF THE WILDLIFE ANIMAL PROTECTION FORUM SOUTH AFRICA:**

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Megan Carr – Founder of Rhinos in Africa  
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Wynter Worsthorne - Founder, Animal Talk Africa, South Africa

**SIGNED BY THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS OF THE PRO ELEPHANT NETWORK:**

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Professor Dan Wylie - Poet, Author, Rhodes University, South Africa

**ENDORSED BY:**

Henry Smith – Member of Parliament for Crawley, United Kingdom  
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