

Lion Conservation Status

Findings of CMS Review of IUCN Regional Lion Strategies

Urs Breitenmoser, Tabea Lanz & Christine Breitenmoser-Würsten

IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Group



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Lion Conservation Status

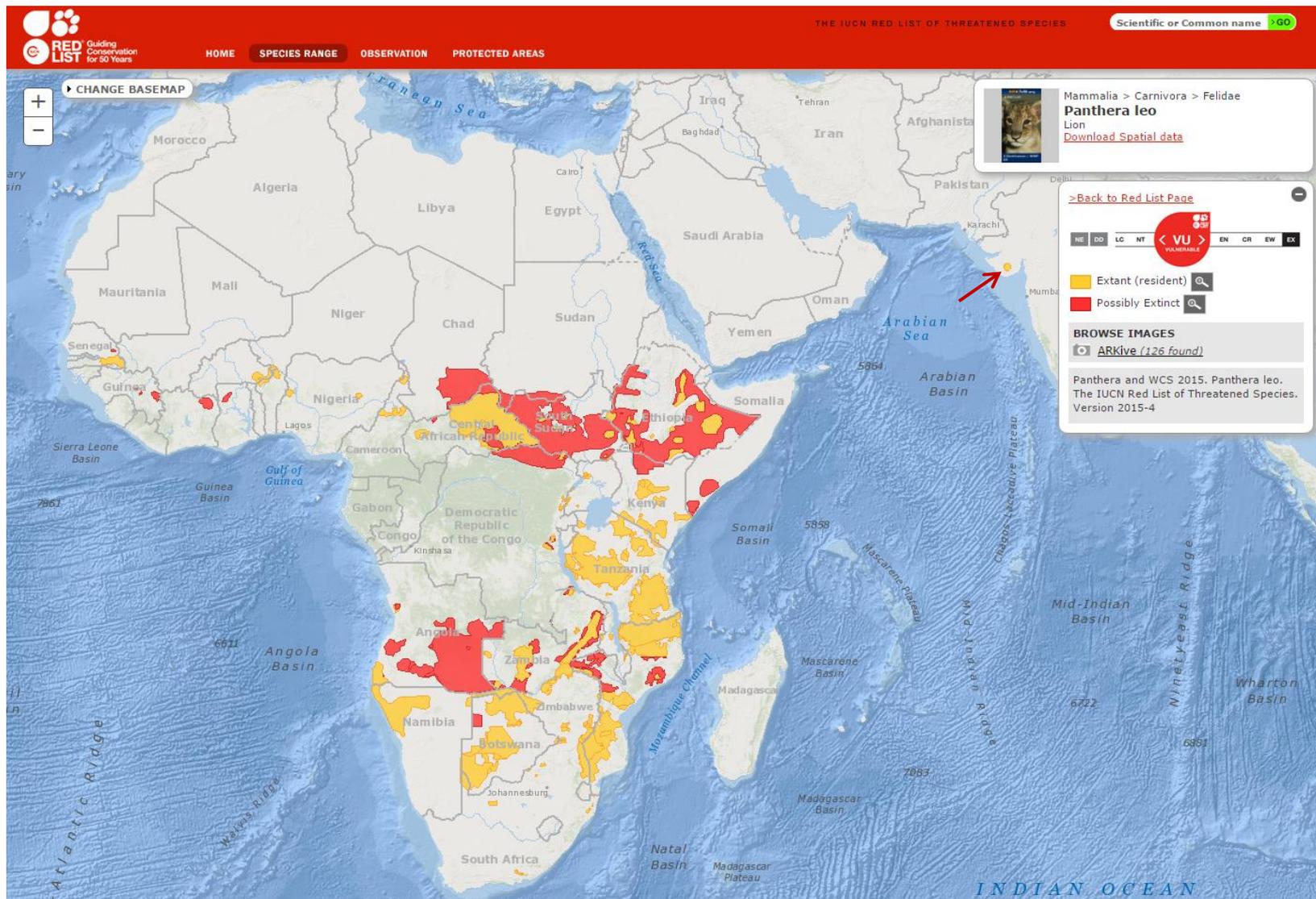
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1. Lion Conservation Status – IUCN Red List assessment
 2. Regional differences in lion conservation status
 3. CMS Review of IUCN Regional Lion Strategies

1. Lion Conservation Status – IUCN Red List assessment 2015



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Panthera leo

<http://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2015-4.RLTS.T15951A79929984.en>

Scope: *Global*

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Assessment Information [\[top\]](#)

Red List Category & Criteria:	Vulnerable A2abcd ver 3.1
Year Published:	2015
Date Assessed:	2014-06-17
Assessor(s):	Bauer, H., Packer, C., Funston, P.F., Henschel, P. & Nowell, K.
Reviewer(s):	Hunter, L., Hoffmann, M., Breitenmoser-Würsten, C. & Breitenmoser, U.
Contributor(s):	Bauer, H., Becker, M., Begg, C., Bertola, L., Chapron, G., Croes, B., Dricuru, M., Funston, P.F., Groom, R., Henschel, P., Hunter, L., Loveridge, A., Macdonald, D., Packer, C., Petracca, L., Robinson, H., Tende, T., Tumenta, P.F., Venktraman, M., White, P.A. & Winterbach, C.



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Vulnerable A2abcd

A2 = population size reduction,
not ceased or not reversible

a = direct observation

b = index of abundance

c = Decline in AOO or EOO or habitat quality

d = levels of exploitation



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Justification:



The Lion population is inferred to have undergone a reduction of approximately **43% over the past 21 years** (approximately three Lion generations, 1993-2014).

We infer a decline of 43% based on time trend analysis of **census data for 47 relatively well monitored Lion subpopulations**. These subpopulations approximately totalled an estimated 7,500 Lions in 2014 and comprise a substantial portion of the total species population, so that we feel confident in applying observed trends to the species as a whole as well as on a regional basis.

The overall classification of the Lion as **Vulnerable masks a dichotomy**: we observe that sample Lion subpopulations **increased by 12% in four southern African countries** (Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe) and in India, while an **observed decline of 60% in sample subpopulations outside these countries** is inferred for the remainder of its African range. In other words, in the majority of its range the Lion meets the A2 criterion for Endangered with the inferred rate of decline over 50% in three generations, but this trend is numerically mitigated by a small number of subpopulations in a restricted geographical range.



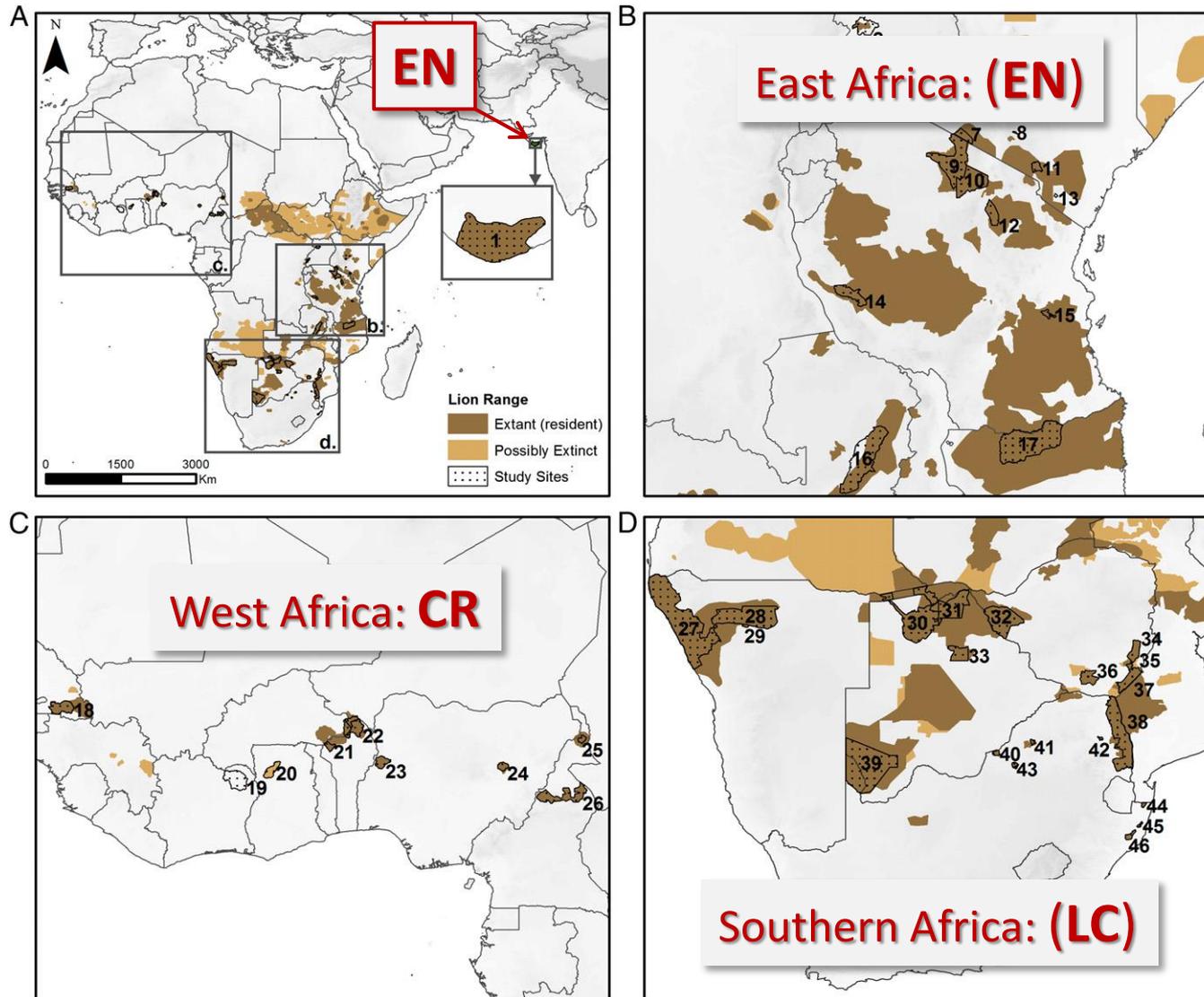
2. Regional differences in lion conservation status

Significance

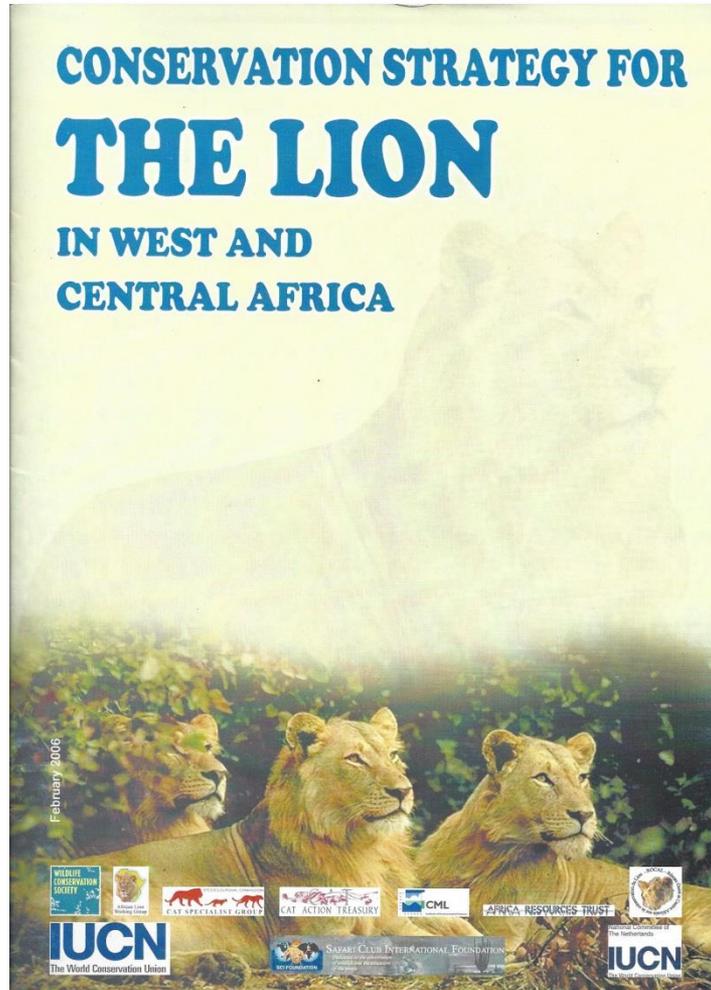
At a regional scale, lion populations in West, Central, and East Africa are likely to suffer a projected 50% decline over the next two decades, whereas lion populations are only increasing in southern Africa. Many lion populations are either now gone or expected to disappear within the next few decades to the extent that the intensively managed populations in southern Africa may soon supersede the iconic savannah landscapes in East Africa as the most successful sites for lion conservation. The rapid disappearance of lions suggests a major trophic downgrading of African ecosystems with the lion no longer playing a pivotal role as apex predator.



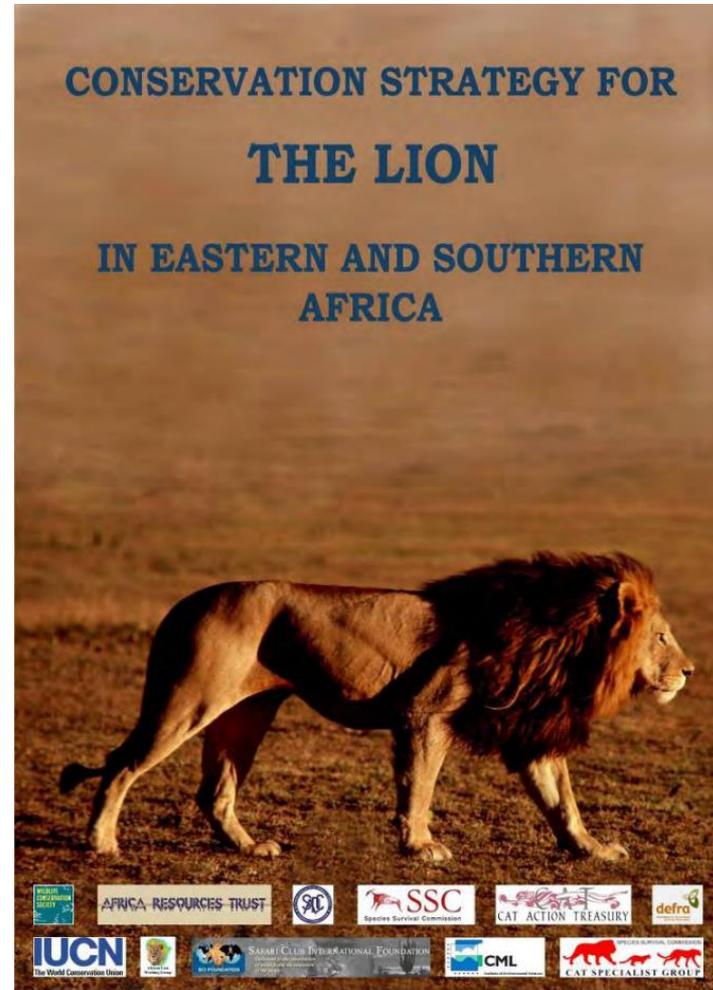
2. Regional differences in lion conservation status



3. CMS Review of IUCN Regional Lion Strategies



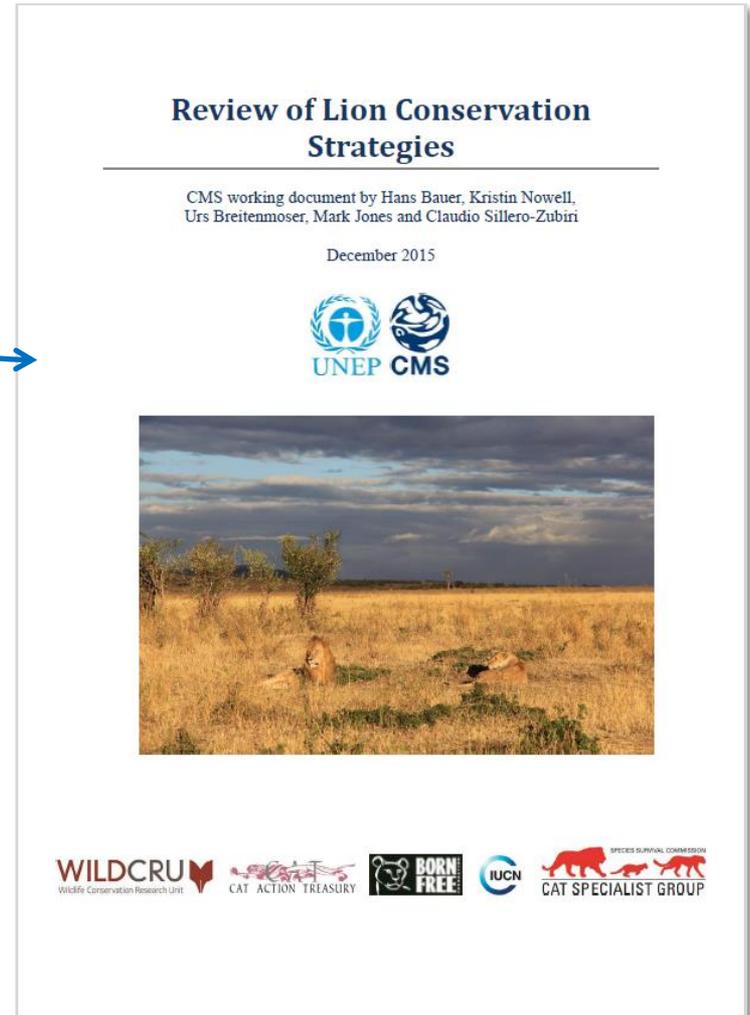
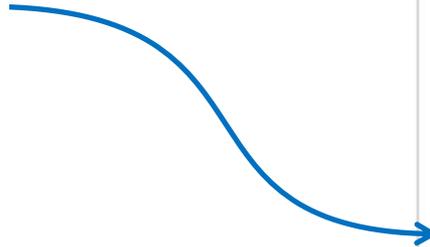
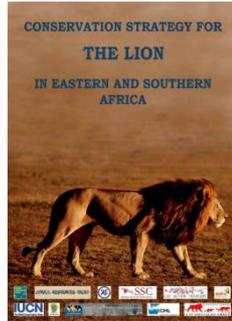
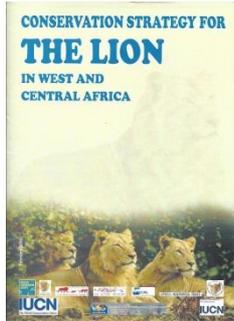
February 2006



December 2006



3. CMS Review of IUCN Regional Lion Strategies



Questions:

- How well are the Strategies implemented through National Action Plans?
- Are the **Threats** and Objectives of the Strategies still valid today?

→ *Afternoon presentation*



Implementation through NAPs

NAPs endorsed (8):

- Benin
- Cameroon
- Ethiopia
- Guinea
- Mozambique
- South Africa
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

NAPs drafted, not yet endorsed (3):

- Malawi
- Namibia
- Senegal

Integrated or transboundary lion NAPs/conservation plans (5):

- Kenya Lion and Spotted Hyena Conservation Plan
- Rwanda National Strategy and Action Plan for the Conservation of Biodiversity
- Tanzania Lion and Leopard Conservation Action Plan (TAWIRI, 2006) and Tanzania Carnivore Conservation Plan (TAWIRI, 2009)
- Uganda Large Carnivore Action Plan
- WAP Large Carnivore Action Plan (Benin, Burkina Faso, Niger)

→ List based on response to questionnaire and internet research;

→ Status of implementation not evaluated in report, only circumstantial evidence...



Review of Objectives

West Africa

1. To maintain habitat sufficient for the survival of the lion in West Africa.
2. To ensure a wild prey base sufficient for viable lion populations.
3. To make lion-human cohabitation sustainable.
4. To reduce the factors leading to loss of viability for lion populations.

Central Africa

1. To guarantee better conservation of habitats in lion range.
2. To reduce human-lion conflict.
3. To guarantee the availability of wild prey in all lion habitats.

(IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Group 2006a)

East and Southern Africa

1. To ensure effective conservation management of lions, their habitats and wild prey.
2. To minimize and, where possible, eliminate human-lion related conflicts.
3. To equitably distribute the costs and benefits of long-term lion management.
4. To develop and implement harmonious, comprehensive legal and institutional frameworks that provide for the expansion of wildlife-integrated land-use, lion conservation and associated socio-economic benefits in current and potential lion range.
5. To ensure that global policies better reflect the will and intent of regional and national sustainable use policies and practices.
6. To prevent illegal trade in lions and lion products while promoting and safeguarding sustainable legal trade.

(IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Group 2006b)



Review of Objectives

Compilation
(Cat SG 2007):

Combined for all of Africa

1. To conserve current populations of free ranging African lions.
2. To conserve current lion habitat and prey base.
3. To minimize human lion conflict.
4. To equitably distribute the costs and benefits of long-term lion management.
5. To have global, regional and national policies and legal frameworks provide for lion conservation and associated socio-economic benefits.
6. To promote institutional strengthening towards an enabling environment for lion conservation.

Proposed
(CMS 2015):

7. To minimize trade in lion bones and body parts.



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