

Spatially Explicit Conservation Action Plan for the Northern Lion in Africa (SECAP) Revision Report, November 2023

S Roy & R Buerki
November 2023

The Spatially Explicit Strategic Action Plan for the Recovery of the Northern Lion in Africa 2023-2027 – [Part A: Technical and Scientific Review](#) (SECAP-A) has been submitted as an Information Document

and

The Spatially Explicit Strategic Action Plan for the Recovery of the Northern Lion in Africa 2023-2027 – [Part B: Spatially Explicit Conservation Action Plan](#) (SECAP-B, see pages) has been submitted as an Annex to a Meeting Document to the Second Meeting of the Range States of the Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative (ACI) (1 to 4 May 2023 in Entebbe, Uganda). The SECAP was discussed at the meeting and further comments were collected from the Range States after the meeting. The following is the report on the revision of SECAP-A and SECAP-B.

CONTENTS

1.0 Changes made to SECAP PART A	3
1.1 The main areas of change	3
1.2 Changes of substance	3
1.3 Changes of wording	3
1.4 Changes in facts and figures	3
1.5 Corrections.....	3
1.6 Changes not implemented.....	3
2.0 Changes made to SECAP PART B.....	4
2.1 The main areas of change	4
2.2 Changes of substance	4
2.3 Changes of wording	4
2.4 Changes in facts and figures	4
2.5 Corrections.....	4
2.6 Changes not implemented.....	5
3.0 Appendix – Response Table	6

1.0 Changes made to SECAP PART A

1.1 The main areas of change

Part A of the SECAP is intended to form an information document, its content has mostly been agreed and accepted in principle by the Range Countries. As such it is not expected that many revisions or amendments will be needed. The few changes requested, and our response to the requests have been outlined below. They mainly relate to minor changes in facts and figures suggested by expert reviewers.

1.2 Changes of substance

There are no changes of substance recommended or implemented in the text.

1.3 Changes of wording

Incorrect sentences relating to a description of African Parks' operations in Pendjari have been removed.

1.4 Changes in facts and figures

The following changes have been implemented

- The site Tamou Total has been included alongside W, Arly and Pendjari as recommended by Niger.
- The descriptor of the Garamba population was amended to extant as recommended by an expert reviewer.
- Text has been amended to reflect surveys of Badingilo and Boma as recommended by an expert reviewer, together with an amendment to the description of the corridors between them and the levels of protection they are given.
- Incorrect map captions have been corrected to accurately reflect the figure, with Garamba being removed, as suggested by an expert reviewer.

1.5 Corrections

The changes relating to corrections of the text have been implemented as follows:

- Spelling and grammar has been changed where highlighted.

1.6 Changes not implemented

Some changes suggested have not been implemented as described below;

- Comments from an expert reviewer disputing description of methods, their efficacy and cost-effectiveness have not resulted in change, as they are presented as part of a suite of survey methods.
- No response has been made to comments on the use of numbers of publications as an accurate reflection on lion management effort, as suggested by expert review.

2.0 Changes made to SECAP PART B

2.1 The main areas of change

The following changes have been made to the SECAP Part B in response to comments received from range countries and experts.

2.2 Changes of substance

The main changes of substances were made by Ethiopia bringing our attention to the following:

- The need for more detailed genetic studies to better understand the spatial delineation of the different subspecies and hybrid zones, and to ascertain the provenance of captive individuals. These would then better inform national and local action plans.
- Greater focus was given to corridors and habitats that connect forest patches.

2.3 Changes of wording

- In line with recommendations from Ethiopia, wording to reflect the need for increased capacity building has been included in the text.
- Reference to national assessments and Red Lists have been included in the text as recommended by Ethiopia.

2.4 Changes in facts and figures

The main changes in terms of updated or corrected facts and figures suggested were as follows:

- More up-to-date references inserted in the text with updated numbers where appropriate as suggested by Ethiopia. This includes any relevant information in a recent paper by Gebretensae & Kebede.
- The site Tamou Total has been included alongside W, Arly and Pendjari as recommended by Niger.
- The descriptor of the Garamba population was amended to extant as recommended by an expert reviewer.

2.5 Corrections

Text based corrections have been implemented as recommended by expert reviewers these include

- Corrections in the names of organisations;
- Minor grammatical changes in the text.

2.6 Changes not implemented

Some changes suggested have not been implemented as;

- the changes required modifications to wording and texts that have already been formally accepted as part of the CITES CMS ACI, as;
 - pre-formulated goals and objectives;
 - pre-formulated text in the Programme of Work.
- Phrases and wording that refer specifically to sub-regions that exceed the spatial scope of the particular passage of the plan.

Details on all comments and changes are presented in the response table below (Appendix).

3.0 Appendix – Response Table

Part A

Comment origin	comment	Our response
Angela Gaylard	P15 & P52 – the statement that “However, because these techniques are costly and time-consuming index-based approaches, typically track surveys or call-up surveys are the most frequently used methods to estimate lion density and are still recommended in lion management guidelines.” is patently false, given the outcomes of the lion monitoring workshop – not sure how this snuck in here.	It is indeed true that in many instances index-based surveys are still usefully conducted to estimate lion abundance. It is also true that index-based survey methods are still part of the list of recommended methods to survey lions. The wording in the report does not suggest that they are the methods of choice but are indeed still part of the list of recommended methods.
	P 29 not sure why [33] Garamba and Lantoto NPs and hunting zones is indicated as “possibly extant” – I can’t speak for Lantoto, but Garamba NP and associated hunting zones definitely have lions, and we reported as such during the development of this plan.	Changed to Extant
	P40&41 – using number of publications is an inappropriate metric for measuring levels of lion management effort	No change made.
	P42 doesn’t include the Garamba Complex (Garamba NP and surrounding hunting domains)	Removed from the caption.
	P49, 5.3 – “institutional” is spelled incorrectly	The spelling of the word institutions has been corrected.
	P70 & P71 – Incorrect statements that AP no longer has presence in W National Park since 2022	Sentence changed to “Furthermore, as of 2022, African Parks is largely restricted in terms of operations to a secure zone inside Pendjari National Park (see Fig. A6).” On Page 70 and sentence on Page 71 has been removed.
	P96 – AP is mandated to manage the corridors between Boma and Badingilo	Sentence changed to indicate that this corridor is not unprotected.
	P99 – may be worth mentioning that AP now has delegated management mandate for Boma, Badingilo and the corridors between them (since 2022)	Added to corridors to the sentence.
Niger	we must take into account the Tamou Total Wildlife Reserve, which is just adjacent to the WAP. There are lion sightings there all the time. Moreover, all human/lion conflicts take place in this reserve	Changed to “W, Arly and Pendjari NPs and hunting areas, and adjacent Tamou Total Wildlife Reserve” in Table 1.1

Part B

Comment origin	comment	Our response
Hans de longh	<p>Page 10 Table 1. the Leading institutions /authors are not correct or incomplete for the national strategies and action plans for Senegal, Cameroon and Benin</p> <p>For Cameroon; "Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife, Leo foundation, WildCRU, Panthera and CEDC</p> <p>For Benin CENAGREF, Leo foundation, WildCRU, Panthera</p> <p>Fo Senegal: Direction des Parcs nationaux, Leo foundation, WildCRU, Panthera and CEDC</p>	<p>Corrected directly in the text</p>
	<p>On page 14 mention is made of Bauer et (2015) as the last population estimate of lions in the Bénoué area. This is not correct: there's a more recent estimate; Bakker et al (2020)</p>	<p>Not implemented. We could only find changes in density estimate in this publication, but no actual population estimate for the area.</p>
RC -Ethiopia	<p>..It is however demanding to consider the samples collected for this study were representative ones. ✓ It is also important to note that previous study (e.g., Bruche et al. 2013) reported also that the Addis Ababa Zoo lions are distinct from Asian lions as well as all African lion populations for which comparative data were available. ✓ Thus, it appears to be pre-mature conclusion to consider that the trans-boundary and highland populations belong to the same hybrid subspecies, and it is imperative to suggest that further studies on the phylogenetics background of the North-East population needs to be undertaken as indicated under objective four of the draft SECAP.</p> <p>Page 8: "...Looking at the fourth phase, we need to focus on establishment of effective management of the protected areas which are currently the KLAs and attract the populations outside these areas as it will be difficult to re-integrate them with the cultivated landscapes."</p> <p>replace "..... valued by the people as a common heritage and part of the identity of the African continent" with ".....valued by the people as a common heritage and part of their identity"?</p> <p>the term 'participatory' could be added besides long-term, adequately-funded and science-based conservation programme.....</p>	<p>Page 12 added the text</p> <p>"However, it is recognised that further research is required to gain a greater understanding of the genetic delineations of the different subspecies before refining national and local action plans, using larger samples that are more representative of the different populations regionally. Genetic studies should encompass not only all the isolated wild populations, but also analysis from captive individuals including research into their origin. Broader genetic studies on lions are already ongoing, and such an analysis should be included therein."</p> <p>Page 8 added the sentence "In addition, the quality and integrity of existing KLAs and that of connecting habitats between them, needs to be improved in order to reduce wild animal movements into human dominated landscapes such as cultivated land."</p> <p>Not implemented, as this is the wording of the Vision defined in the CITES CMS ACI Programme of Work</p> <p>Not implemented, as this is the wording of the Goal defined in the CITES CMS ACI Programme of Work</p>

	We suggest that maintaining the metapopulation of Northern Lions (Objective three) needs to be applied to North-East Africa population too (It shouldn't be limited to Central Africa)	This has not been changed as this objective was written specifically for Central Africa, and the objectives have been broken down regionally.
	Table 2: Please also refer to recent publication on status of African lion in Ethiopia (Gebretensae and Kebede, 2022),	Done, except for Welmel-Genale where Bauer (pers. comm.) contradicts their finding, and for Dinder-Alitash where Mohammed et al. 2019 is based on a survey on the ground and not just extrapolated from densities
	Result 1.2: securing the capacity of key protected areas in the North-East Africa could be considered in addition to West and Central Africa as this is a significant pulling factor for the populations that have been dispersed along the largescale cultivation areas.	Objective 1 and consequently Result 1.2 addresses West and Central Africa. Strengthened reference to Objective 4 addressing the Overlap Zone and specifically added capacity building in Action 4.1.2 with a reference back to Result 1.2
	We also suggest that results and actions under objective 3 need to take into consideration the North-East population and the KLAS.	This has not been changed as this objective was written specifically for Central Africa, and the objectives have been broken down regionally.
	Under objective 4, result 4.1 or 4.2, it is better to consider developing national red listing for Lion at national level.	Changed to "Conservation of the local Lion populations is advanced through the development and implementation of National Action Plans in the entire Overlap Zone, based on national assessments and redlists."
Niger	we must take into account the Tamou Total Wildlife Reserve, which is just adjacent to the WAP. There are lion sightings there all the time. Moreover, all human/lion conflicts take place in this reserve	Changed to "W, Arly and Pendjari NPs and hunting areas, and adjacent Tamou Total Wildlife Reserve" in Table 2 Also changed Assess Lion population status and impacts of recent security challenges in the WAP complex [14] and secure funding to address challenges, or to secure some of these Lions at other Key Lion Areas, including adjacent areas such as Tamou Total Wildlife Reserve in Action 2.3.4
Angela Gaylard	Objective 3: I don't agree that the West or Central African northern lion populations current represent a "metapopulation". That may be the desire of the plan, but at the moment they are simply individual populations of northern lions	Changed from "maintain the metapopulation" to "maintain a metapopulation"
	p. 14 not sure why [33] Garamba and Lantoto NPs and hunting zones is indicated as "possibly extant" – I can't speak for Lantoto, but Garamba NP and associated hunting zones definitely have lions, and we reported as such during the development of this plan.	Changed to Extant

	There are still a few grammar and spelling errors.	Changed what we found, but the comment is only a general statement and does not refer to specific parts of the text
	the use of "Spatially Explicit" in the title is superfluous – all Action Plans have a spatial element	Not implemented