



Species-specific conservation in Ethiopia: Cheetah and African Wild Dog

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1. Introduction - Distribution

- ▶ It is evident that Ethiopia, plays an important role in the distribution pattern of Cheetah and African wild dog.

Population Estimate = 500

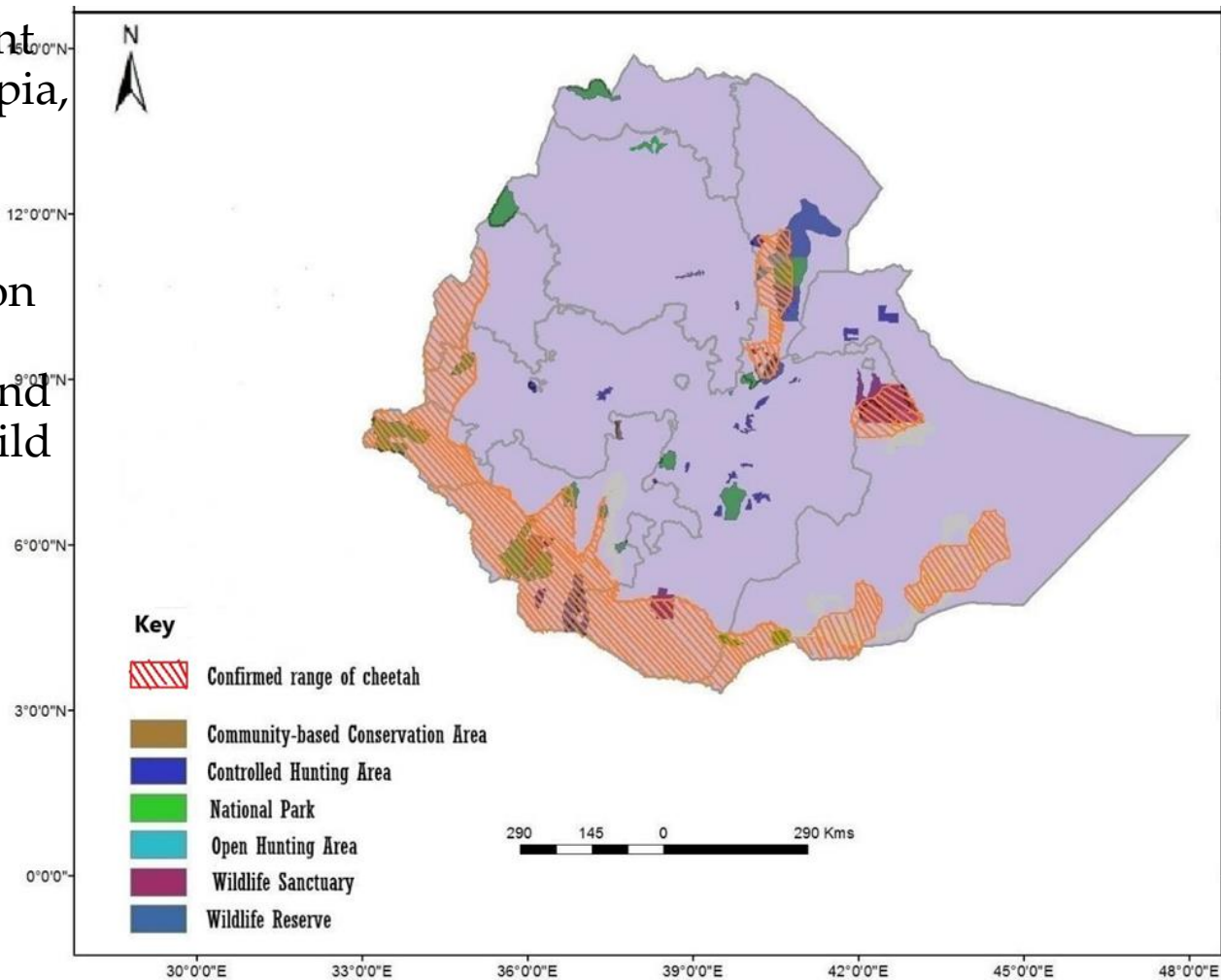


Figure 1. Present Conformed Distribution of Cheetah (*Acinonyx Jubatus*) in Ethiopia (based on the 2022 review)

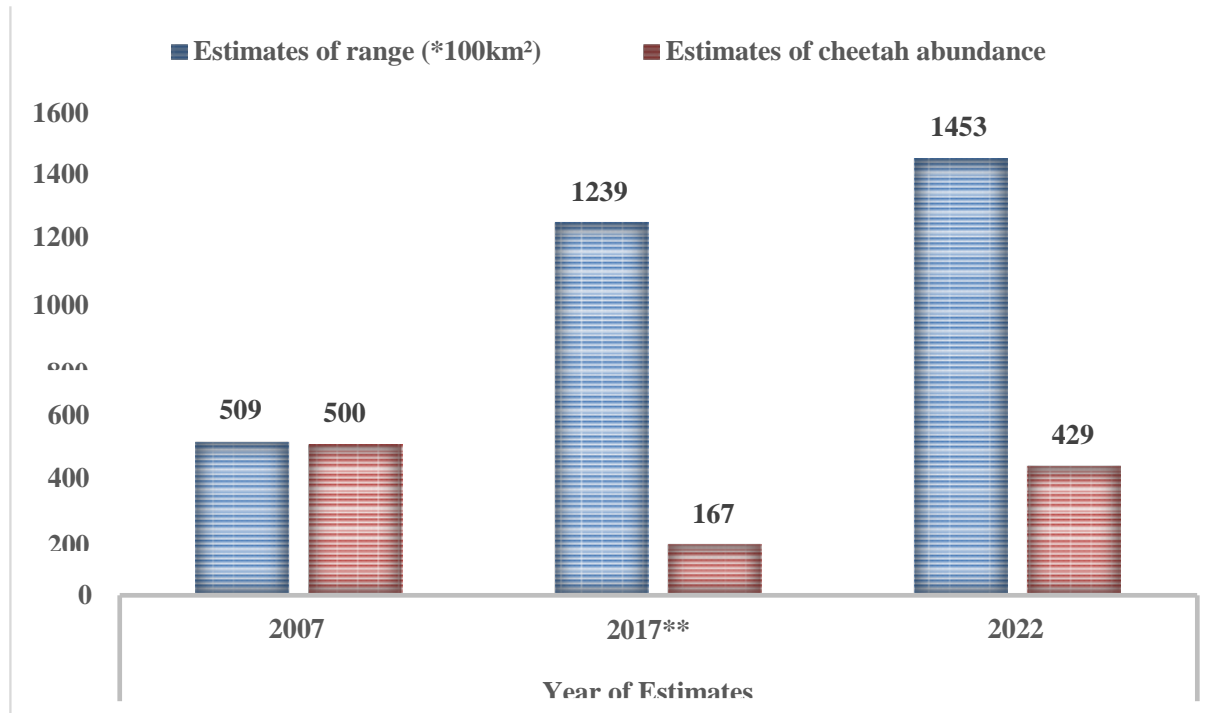


Figure 2. Estimates of cheetah range and abundance by IUCN SSC (2007), Durant et al. (2017), and the current estimate.

** For 2017, only 50% of the estimated population and habitat were considered in the case of Ethiopia/Kenya/South Sudan ranges.

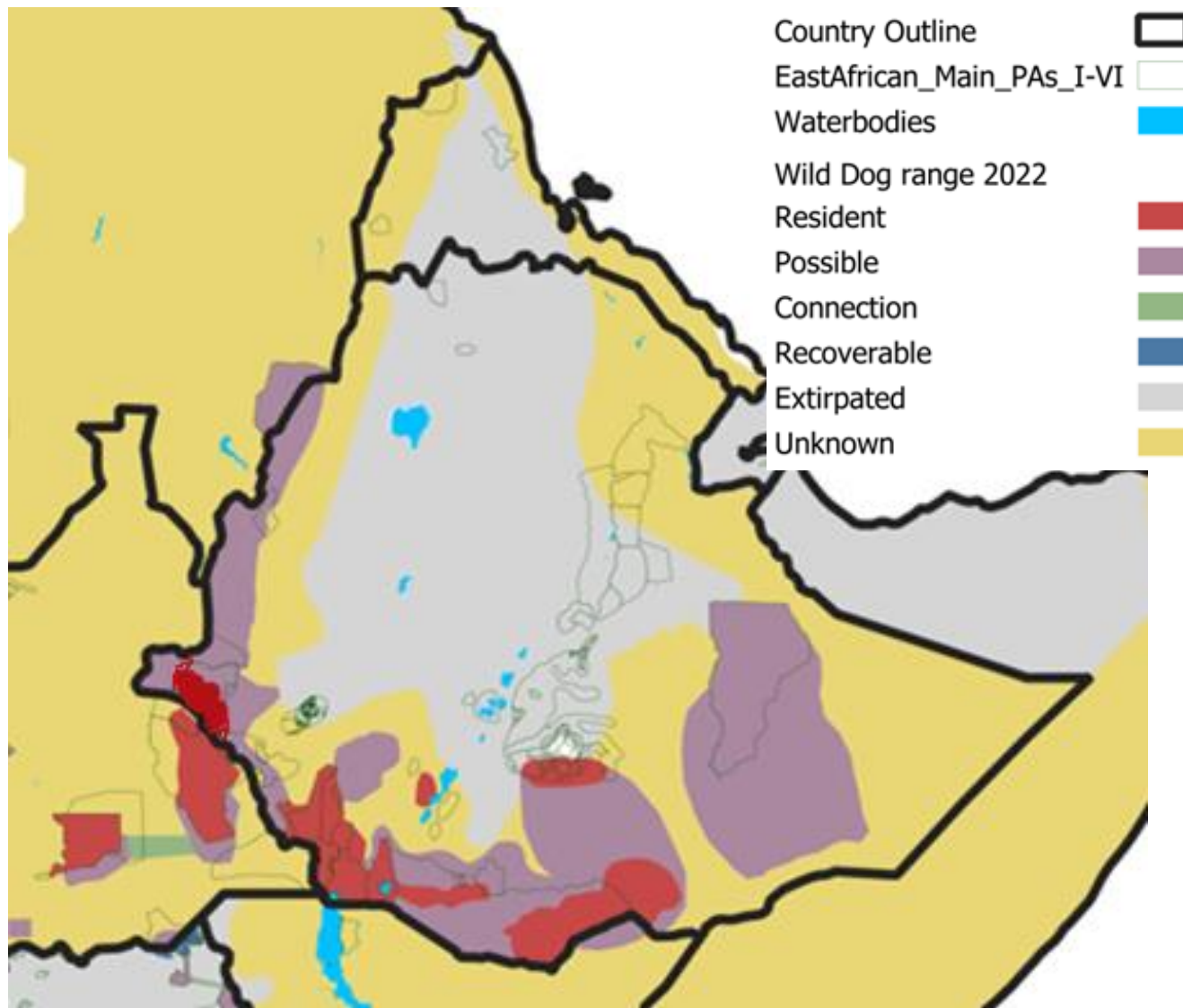


Figure 3. Distribution of African wild dog (*Lycaon pictus*) in Ethiopia (RWCP for Cheetah and AWD, 2022; Enawgaw, 2013); Perscomm)

2. Potential Threats

Cheetah

- ▶ Overall, the incidence and extent of the threats to cheetahs in Ethiopia are increasing and changing over time.
- ▶ Evaluation of threats conducted during the development of the national conservation action plan shows that habitat loss and fragmentation together represent the over-arching threat to cheetah populations in Ethiopia, which contribute to several of the other proximate threats.
- ▶ Cheetahs are also threatened by conflict with livestock herders, reduced prey scarcity, and illegal live trade.
- ▶ Cheetahs are killed to use their skins for traditional ceremonies, especially in the southern part of Ethiopia where dozens of skins were counted across two years ceremonies of the Daasanach community.
- ▶ Since the recent past, illegal trade in cheetahs, which is mainly driven by the demand for exotic pets in the Middle East, has been identified as a potential threat to cheetah populations in Ethiopia, and this threat is increasing over time.

Potential Threats Ctd...

- ▶ Recent studies clearly show that Somaliland and Ethiopia are the primary sources and transit areas for smuggling cheetahs to the Arabian Peninsula.
- ▶ The number of illegally trafficked live cheetahs in Ethiopia for ten years (2005-2015) was 103 (Tricorache and Stiles, 2021).
- ▶ An estimated 98 cheetah cubs were smuggled from Ethiopia to the Middle East in 2016 (Tessema, 2017).
- ▶ In 2020, at least four cheetahs/month were smuggled to the Gulf nations (BBC, 2020).
- ▶ About 697 Illegal cheetah trade incidents along the Ethiopia-Somalia/Somaliland were recorded between 2010-19, (IWT, 2020).

Potential Threats Ctd...

African wild dog

The potential threats to African wild dog include:

- ▶ Loss and fragmentation of habitat together represent the overarching threat to both cheetah and wild dogs;
- ▶ Conflict with livestock farmers;
- ▶ Prey loss; and
- ▶ Infectious disease.

3. Conservation Action

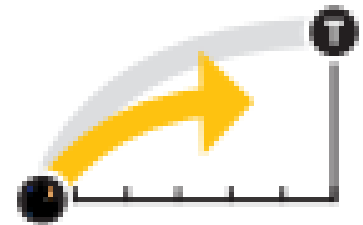
Cheetah

- ▶ Cheetahs are protected by national law and even licensed hunting of this species is not allowed in Ethiopia.
- ▶ Moreover, a national action plan for the conservation of cheetahs and African wild dogs was endorsed in 2012.
- ▶ However, like the case of other species-specific action plans, there have been considerable limitations in delivering the outputs to meet the objectives of the action plan.

To look at the progress of targets under each objectives:

Objective1: On one hand, develop and implement strategies to promote coexistence and on the other hand, manage conflict between people and cheetah and wild dogs in Ethiopia.

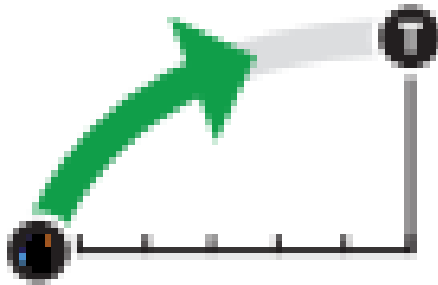
- Progress towards target but at an insufficient rate



Conservation Action Ctd...

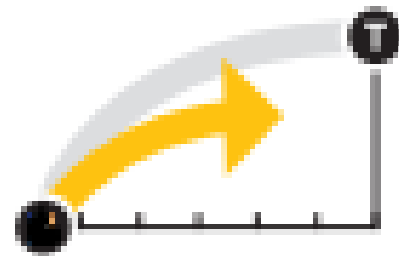
Objective 2: Improve knowledge on cheetah and wild dog populations and provide relevant stakeholders and managers with scientific and timely information.

- On track to achieve target



Objective 3: Strengthen capacity to conserve cheetah and wild dogs.

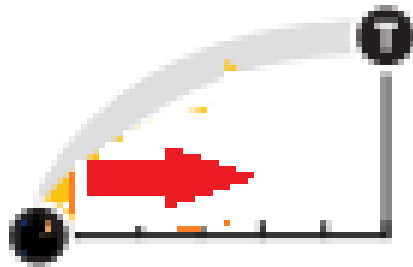
- Progress towards target but at an insufficient rate.



Conservation Action Ctd...

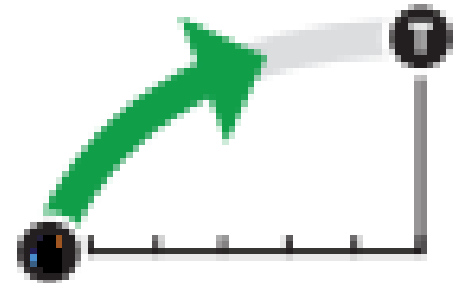
Objective 4: Mainstream cheetah and wild dog conservation in land use planning and its implementation

- Limited progress towards target at insufficient rate.



Objective 5: Encourage networking and collaboration within the country and with neighbouring countries in cheetah and wild dog conservation

- Progress towards target but at an insufficient rate.



3. Existing Collaborations to Implement the National Action Plan

- ▶ One of the main regional platforms is HAWEN
- ▶ Horn of Africa Wildlife Enforcement Network (HAWEN) was established by member states of the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD) in 2017.
- ▶ It is currently operating from Secretariat in Djibouti and has full support of other collaborators such as AU, USA, EU, etc...
- ▶ Member States of IGAD have acknowledged HAWEN as the anti-trafficking framework that will enable cooperation, governance, and capacity-building in the region to fight IWT.
- ▶ The HAWEN is expected to act as a focal point for relations with other WENs and partner organizations including the partners in the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCCWC).
- ▶ It will also support implementation of the African Strategy on combating illegal exploitation and illegal trade in wild fauna and flora in Africa, adopted by the African Union in 2015, within the IGAD region.

Collaborations Ctd...

- ▶ Member states are signing MoUs under the framework of HAWEN.
- ▶ In general, HAWEN is expected to play crucial role in the IWT prone region and there is increased cooperation regionally and globally, following establishment of HAWEN.
- ▶ There have also been trans-boundary collaborations with Kenya, Somaliland/Somalia etc...in combating IWT in general & IT of big cats in particular.

- ▶ Continued Global collaborations have been made with CITES secretariat, INTERPOL and other MEAs concerned offices.

- ▶ Potential partners include:
 - ✓ Born Free Foundation (BF) - in rescuing and management illegally captured wild animals;
 - ✓ International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) – in awareness creation and strengthening trans-boundary law enforcement along the Ethio-Kenya border;

Collaborations Ctd...

- ▶ TRAFFIC - in extension of TWIX system); and
- ▶ Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) - exchange of scientific information on IT of Cheetah and establishment of Cheetah rescuing center at Somaliland.
- ▶ Range-wide Carnivores Conservation Planning (RWCP) – in development of Regional and National action plan.

Challenges:

- Lack of funding;
- Insufficient inter-agency collaboration in combating illegal trade;
- Lack of up-to-date data and inconsistency among our reporting approaches; and
- Lack of integration among the existing initiatives.

Thank you