



Wildlife Conservation Network

LION FOOTPRINT FORUM FINAL REPORT

*Reducing the Cost
and Unlocking the Value of Coexistence*

VICTORIA FALLS, ZIMBABWE

July 1 - 3

2025

wildnet.org/wildlife-fund/lion-recovery-fund



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The **2025 Lion Footprint Forum**, held between July 1st and 3rd, addressed human-lion coexistence under the theme: “Reducing the Cost and Unlocking the Value of Coexistence.” This convening, a follow-up from the 2019 Lion Footprint Forum, was hosted by Wildlife Conservation Network’s (WCN) Lion Recovery Fund (LRF) with support generously provided by Disney Conservation Fund. The Forum was collaboratively planned with WWF’s Living with Big Cats Initiative, with expert facilitation and meeting design provided by Maliasili.

The gathering brought together 95 participants from conservation organisations and government agencies across 17 African countries to discuss human-lion coexistence, conservation strategies, incentives, and collaborative approaches. The 2025 Lion Footprint Forum focused on sharing ideas on two key components of coexistence:

1. **Reducing the costs of human-lion conflict** by evaluating successful approaches to identify effective methods for different landscapes and exploring how government involvement can help share the responsibility for managing conflict.
2. **Creating incentives for coexistence** by exploring ‘performance-payment’ models and discussing their effectiveness, risks, and potential improvements. The possibility of leveraging the emerging biodiversity credits market was also considered.

Participants shared insights on effective practices, challenges, and emerging opportunities, highlighting the interplay between ecological, social, and economic dimensions in lion conservation. Discussions centred on:

A. Reducing human-lion conflict through improved livestock management, herding practices, and adaptive land-use planning.

B. Incentive mechanisms to promote coexistence, including employment programmes, wildlife-friendly enterprises, carbon credits, and direct community benefits.

C. Case studies illustrating both successes and challenges in lion conflict management, highlighting the importance of community ownership and participation, adaptive strategies, and technology integration.

D. Collaboration and coordination, emphasising transparent communication, trust-building, and the need for structured frameworks such as Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs).

E. Regional mapping exercises identifying gaps, priorities, and opportunities for transboundary lion conservation across Africa.

F. Alignment of best practices to share experiences gained from varied contexts across Africa, and prevent scarce funding from being wasted on 'reinventing the wheel'.

G. Identification of the best metrics with which to measure impact. Meeting attendees brainstormed on metrics of success for coexistence projects, in alignment with the recent announcement of a human-wildlife-conflict (HWC) global indicator integrated into the Convention on Biological Diversity Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) monitoring framework, which will give non-governmental organisation (NGOs) and governments a chance to align their existing efforts towards meeting the targets of the GBF.

H. Fostering collaboration by diverse groups that work on coexistence, including representatives from both governments and NGOs. Ideas discussed included avenues for collaboration to help expand the footprint of the different projects represented at the Forum and how to best enhance idea-sharing by providing a platform for participation by both long-term conservation actors and emerging ones as well as seek options for developing cross-site visitation programmes to facilitate learning and sharing of experiences.

I. Working at scale through collaborative approaches to scaling coexistence practices emphasises that large-scale, collective projects are more likely to attract significant funding than isolated studies.



Disney's release of *Mufasa* highlights the cultural influence of *The Lion King* franchise in advancing lion conservation awareness.

Pre-Forum Surveys

Surveying participants in advance of the meeting was key to informing the sessions. The Lion Recovery Fund partnered with a team from the **Emerging Wildlife Conservation Leaders (EWCL) programme**, which conducted an online pre-convening survey and telephonic interviews to gather information on the successes, challenges, and opportunities for managing human-lion conflict and promoting coexistence. This survey ensured sessions around these topics at the convening were relevant and tailored to participants' needs and interests. The results were shared and discussed during the convening through two working sessions, which are included below, along with all the survey and interview results.

DAY 1: REDUCING THE COST OF LIVING WITH LIONS

Scene Setting: Survey Results

The EWCL team presented the results from their survey on conflict management approaches. Breakout groups then discussed what surprised them about the results, whether anything was missing or not included, and if there was anything misrepresented.

Overall, 47 responses were collected out of the 69 lion practitioners to whom the survey was distributed. Post-Forum, the survey was redistributed, and another seven responses were added to the total count for 54 survey responses in total. Nine live interviews were conducted with wildlife authority officials' representatives from lion-range countries, and their responses were integrated post-Forum due to the interviews being incomplete at the time of the convening. (See more details, Appendix I).

Countries where respondents reported working in the last five years.

- 17 countries represented
- Highest number from Tanzania (25.9%)
- Second highest from Zambia (22.2%)
- Regional representation listed by strongest representation: (list from the [African Union](#))
- Southern (Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe) (52%)
- Eastern (Kenya, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda) (36%)
- Central (Cameroon, Central African Republic, Gabon) (8%)
- Western (Côte d'Ivoire, Sénégal) (4%)

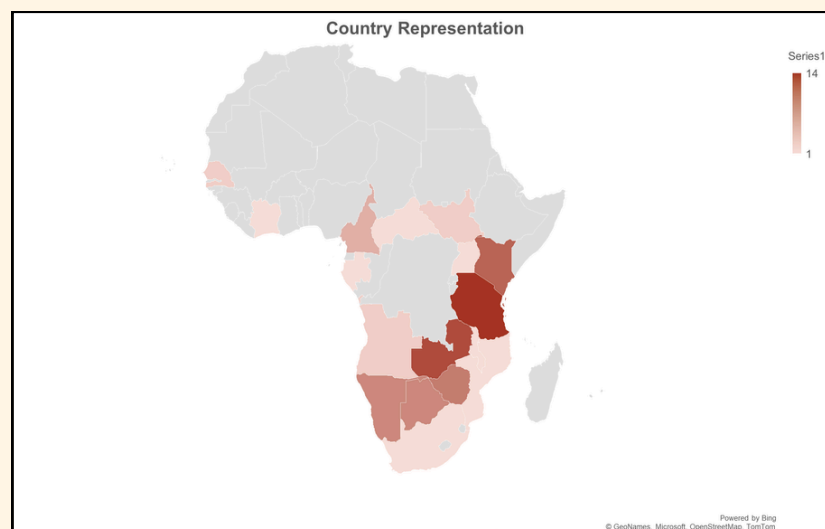
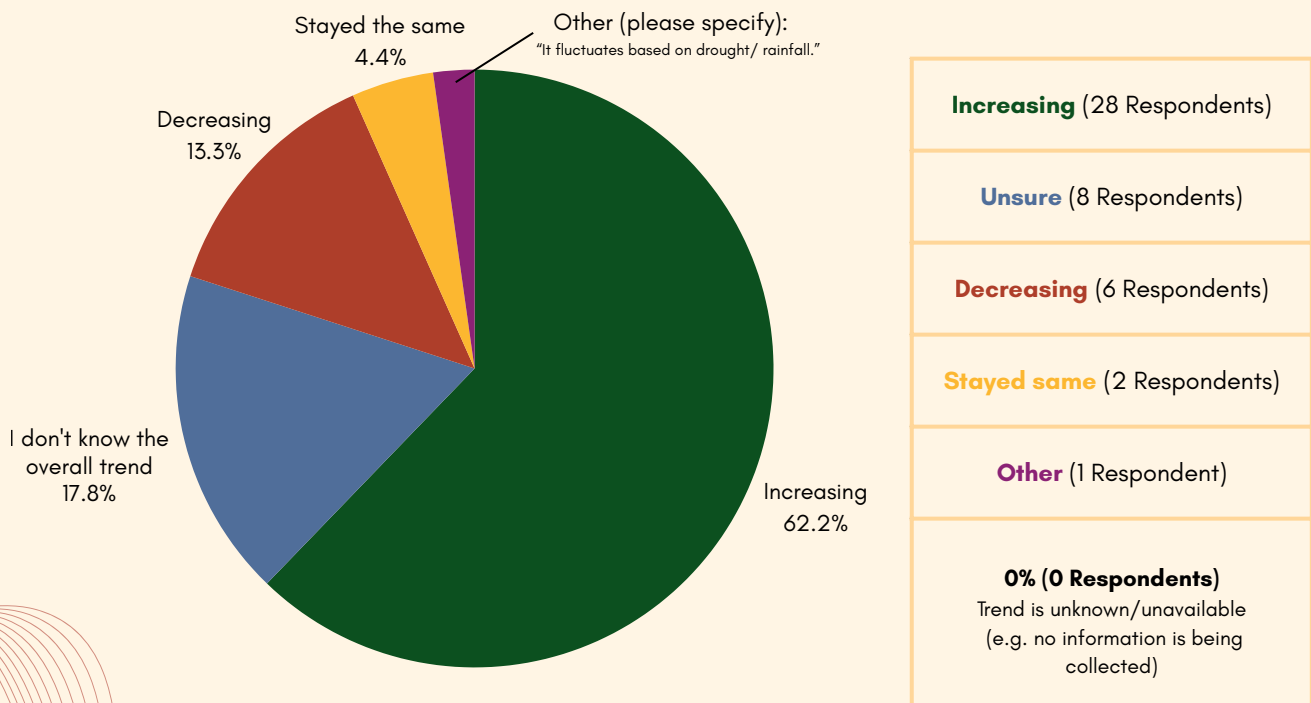


Figure 1. Gradient map of responses to the participant survey, by country.

The top five primary drivers of human-lion conflict.

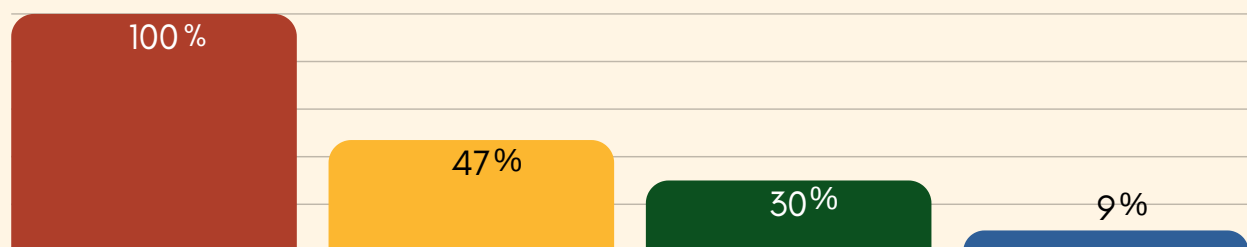
Driver	Impact Level
Increase of people and livestock near wildlife areas 62% (29 respondents)	62% list this as high impact 11% list this as a medium impact
Expansion of settlements into lion habitat 47% (22 respondents)	47% list this as high impact 17% list this as medium impact
Livestock are housed, but the enclosures are inadequate (e.g. weak fencing, poor maintenance) 47% (20 respondents)	37% list this as high impact 15% list this as medium impact
Livestock are not herded 32% (15 respondents)	28% list this as high impact 4% list this as a medium impact
Increase in livestock populations 28% (13 respondents)	24% list this as high impact 4% list this as medium impact

Overall trend of human-lion conflict over the last five years.



The most commonly occurring negative impacts on people from conflict with lions.

- Livestock injury or death (47 resp.)
- Changes in tolerance or attitudes towards wildlife (22 resp.)
- Human injury or death (14 resp.)
- Non-physical human health impacts (4 resp.)



***Note:** Participants were allowed to select multiple answers. 100% of respondents selected the answer, "Livestock injury or death".

Lessons learned from conflict approaches that could benefit others in the lion conservation community

- **Well-built or mobile livestock enclosures are very effective to reduce depredation**
 - Should provide community training on their use and assembly
 - *Commiphora* trees useful for reinforcing traditional enclosures
 - Building enclosures must be done with beneficiaries' contribution to ensure ownership/sustainability
- **Land use planning must be incorporated into conflict management**
 - Provide clear areas for development to help prevent conflict from occurring
- **Community involvement and engagement is essential to secure lions**
 - Empathise with communities about the challenges of living with lions
 - Co-design and implement conflict approaches in collaboration with communities
 - Example: Community camera-trapping programmes and the establishment of Community Guardians or Peace Advocates
 - Must address livelihoods
 - Build capacity to deal with conflict

- **Need to understand lion behaviour**
 - Communities lack awareness of lion behaviours
 - Lions can become habituated to chase livestock during the wet season due to additional coverage
- **Collaring lions for lion alert systems and community response teams are beneficial to reduce conflict.**
- **Communication and transparency from government/non-government entities towards communities when planning or implementing approaches is essential for community buy-in.**

Top five most effective approaches to reduce human-lion conflict.

Building permanent lion-proof enclosures	47% (22 Respondents)
Ensuring livestock are enclosed at night	36% (17 Respondents)
Engaging communities about the value of wildlife	34% (16 Respondents)
Early alert warning systems	32% (15 Respondents)
Building mobile lion-proof enclosures	28% (13 Respondents)

Top five greatest barriers to implement conflict management approaches.

Lack of sufficient funding to implement and sustain management strategies	77% (33 Respondents)	What is needed to address this barrier? Long term funding, diverse funding sources, funding collaboration and partnership
Size or remoteness of the area	58% (25 Respondents)	What is needed to address this barrier? Enhanced communication, rapid response vehicles, transportation, more staff
Community unwilling to restrict livestock from the wildlife area	42% (18 Respondents)	What is needed to address this barrier? More education to herders, government fines, non-financial incentives or support systems
Lack of community willingness to monitor roaming livestock	28% (12 Respondents)	What is needed to address this barrier? More frequent community engagement, Herding 4 Health programmes
There are not enough staff	23% (10 Respondents)	What is needed to address this barrier? Need more trained staff, greater budget for hiring, local community recruitment

Conflict management approaches and their return on investment.

Top 5 approaches with the highest return on investment:

1. Building permanent lion-proof enclosures (61%; 25 respondents)
2. Ensuring livestock are enclosed at night (51%; 21 respondents)
3. Engaging pastoralists about living with lions (42%; 17 respondents)
4. Engaging communities about the value of wildlife (39%; 16 respondents)
5. Early alert warning systems (37%; 15 respondents)

Top 5 approaches with the lowest return on investment:

- **1.** Capture and translocation of lions killing livestock (22%; 9 respondents)
- **2.** Reinforcing traditional enclosures (15%; 6 respondents)
- **3.** Lethal control of lions killing livestock (20%; 8 respondents)
- **4.** Using loud noises or other deterrents at enclosures 12%; 5 respondents)
- **5.** Communal herding (12%; 5 respondents)

Breakout Group Discussions: Key Takeaways

- 1.** Understanding the nature of lion conflict: There was an emphasis from the breakout groups on the necessity of distinguishing between direct lion attacks and broader forms of lion conflict, recognising that conflict can occur even in the absence of livestock or human casualties. They highlighted that the number of incidents is not always an indicator of their overall impact, as infrequent but severe events, such as the loss of human life, can have far-reaching consequences. The group also discussed kraaling (the practice of enclosing livestock) as a potential method to reduce direct attacks, while noting that its broader effect on lion conflict requires further investigation.
- 2.** The role of herding and community practices: Herding practices were identified as critical, yet often overlooked, in reducing conflict between lions and livestock. In the EWCL survey, herding practices ranked within the top five primary drivers of human–lion conflict, though was expected to be higher by discussion group participants. In Southern Africa, because lions are not state-owned, livestock owners bear primary responsibility for protecting their animals, leading to diverse approaches to protection and compensation. Around Kafue, poor herding correlates with increased livestock losses, whereas in areas such as Victoria Falls, farmers often prioritise crop protection during the rainy season and allow livestock to roam in the dry season. In some parts of Africa, such as parts of Botswana, cattle are not herded and left to graze alone which renders them vulnerable to depredation. In many other parts of Africa, herding duties are left to children, who are not effective at deterring predators.
- 3.** The true value of livestock compared to crops is sometimes underestimated, despite livestock being vital for food security in regions like Zimbabwe and as a store of wealth. Changing demographics, especially near protected areas in Tanzania, have brought in new livestock owners to the lands around protected areas, with less experience managing lion-related risks and low tolerance for predators. Many livestock owners live far from their animals and employ hired herders, with increasing population and livestock numbers exacerbating these challenges. In Namibia’s northwest region, herding and kraaling are effective at reducing losses, but in the northeast, where crop farming is prioritised, the risk of conflict rises as herders become distracted during the peak farming season.
- 4.** Effectiveness and adoption of livestock protection interventions: Mobile enclosures (bomas) have shown success in protecting livestock, particularly for herders who move with their animals. In South Luangwa, recommendations for farmers to sell livestock to fund improved enclosures are often met with resistance. Sustained adoption of interventions like mobile bomas remains a challenge, with questions around long-term community engagement and organisational support. In Zimbabwe, after several years, farmers are beginning to adapt their practices in response to ongoing challenges. Effective land use planning was identified as essential, as poor planning can undermine many mitigation efforts. The group stressed that underlying drivers of conflict, such as changing cultural attitudes towards herding (particularly as children attend school and fewer

people herd), must be addressed. Personal safety often takes precedence, especially when hired herders unfamiliar with the area or local wildlife are responsible for livestock protection.

- 5.** Regional differences and the importance of community perspectives: The group discussions highlighted the complexity of managing human-lion interactions across different regions. Key themes included the distinction between direct attacks and broader conflict, the variable impact of incidents, and the challenges in maintaining the effectiveness of interventions like kraaling and mobile enclosures. Herding practices, shifting demographics, and land use planning emerged as significant factors, with cultural and economic drivers influencing attitudes towards livestock protection. Community perspectives are essential, as uneven distribution of conservation benefits and externally controlled land-use decisions may lead communities to prioritise personal safety and livelihoods over lion conservation. In countries with large lion populations, conflict rates are higher, whereas in South Africa, fenced protected areas have demonstrated the effectiveness of physical barriers in reducing such conflicts.
- 6.** Funding and representation challenges: Some countries have introduced compensation schemes for human-wildlife conflict. However, long-term funding for compensation schemes is limited, with few donors supporting these initiatives, making it difficult for communities to recover losses from lion-related incidents. The groups noted that community voices are often not genuinely integrated into decision-making; external stakeholders may claim to represent local interests but frequently serve their own agendas. As a result, communities bear the costs of conservation without equitable access to its benefits. There is a pressing need to make lion conservation economically beneficial to communities through fair and tangible incentives. In some countries, communities perceive that governments prioritise wildlife conservation over community needs, highlighting the importance of aligning conservation goals with local benefits. Cultural and traditional factors further complicate conservation efforts, especially when local perspectives are overlooked.
- 7.** Knowledge gaps and research needs: Several challenges and gaps were identified, including insufficient understanding of issues such as daytime predation and community tolerance levels. Survey findings highlighted areas for deeper, context-specific analysis and the value of distinguishing between pastoral and livestock systems. In response, the team incorporated government survey results, which were not initially included due to late responses, to ensure a more comprehensive and representative dataset. Additionally, some breakout group members stated that they had not completed the survey and requested that it be redistributed, which was also performed by EWCL, and those data were included in the final report. This expanded analysis helped capture diverse perspectives and contextual details, such as those related to lion translocation, for a fuller understanding of conservation dynamics.
- 8.** Recommendations for effective lion conservation: There was a recommendation to rephrase a question from the participant survey from “community education” to “community engagement” to convey a focus on unlocking tangible benefits of lions for communities rather than solely on education. The effectiveness of livestock management, visual and technological barriers, and examples from regions like Amboseli and Malawi were discussed, demonstrating mixed results in preventing conflict. Ongoing challenges include managing disease versus predation, bushmeat hunting trends, prey depletion, and the difficulties of translocating problem lions.

All groups agreed on the need for more nuanced, context-specific strategies, enhanced data collection, and increased emphasis on both community and government perspectives. For lion conservation to be truly effective, communities must have ownership of solutions, rather than relying solely on government or donor support, which can sometimes produce adverse outcomes. The session concluded by highlighting the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration, bringing together social science, business, and biology to address persistent challenges. Key ongoing concerns include project sustainability, the risk of mission drift, and the implications of trophy hunting, underscoring the overarching need for local empowerment, balanced stakeholder involvement, and context-driven approaches to ensure the long-term success of human-lion conflict management.

Case Clinics / Case Studies - Day 1

The Case Clinics provided an interactive platform for participants of the Lion Footprint Forum to engage in in-depth discussion of real-world conservation challenges and innovations, where they presented their own work or introduced specific issues for peer consultation and collective problem-solving. This approach encouraged collaboration and the exchange of diverse perspectives, contributing to a richer understanding of on-the-ground conservation practices.



Nicorll and Bongani (Victoria Falls Wildlife Trust) ***Lion Volley, Hwange West***

The team described a recurring human-lion conflict where lions are chased back and forth between resettled and traditional communities on opposite sides of a highway near Hwange National Park. Both communities use vuvuzelas to scare lions, resulting in the animals being trapped, stressed, and unable to establish stable territories. The situation is further complicated by excessive trophy hunting of lions, which disrupts pride structures and breeding opportunities, and by shrinking home ranges that increase conflict and threaten lion survival. Community representation is lacking in current management agreements, and the case highlights the urgent need for coordinated, stakeholder-driven solutions involving communities, conservation groups, and policymakers to better manage lion movements and mitigate conflict. These guardians monitor lion movements and communicate with herders via WhatsApp, reducing livestock losses and decreasing reliance on emergency response vehicles.



Masegeri Rurai (Frankfurt Zoological Society):
Human-Lion Conflict in Serengeti

Improving communication between herders and lion monitors who share information about lion whereabouts instead of chasing them can significantly reduce livestock losses without the need for dedicated lion-chasing teams. Building strong relationships with the government is essential, but limited resources pose a challenge. Community-driven solutions are vital, with lion guardians acting as volunteers. The COVID pandemic, which caused a decline in tourism funding, highlighted how critical tourism revenue is for supporting lion conservation efforts.

Challenges include the influx of livestock from remotely based owners, incentive structures that can unintentionally encourage risky or harmful practices by herders (for example, a herder may drive cattle toward lions because they can sell the meat if an animal is killed), and high funding requirements when government support is limited. The Rapid Response Unit, funded by donors, works with government officials to address conflict incidents. Training and formalising volunteer community groups and coordinating efforts to address both lion and elephant conflicts, have led to the establishment of 53 Community Lion Guardians. These guardians monitor lion movements and communicate with herders via WhatsApp, reducing livestock losses and decreasing reliance on emergency response vehicles.



Jeneria Lekilelei (Ewaso Lions):
Change in Culture and Livelihoods and Its Impacts on Communities in Northern Kenya (Traditional Pastoralists Turned Camel Keepers)

Traditional Samburu pastoralists are increasingly adopting camel herding, influenced by intermarriage with camel-keeping tribes and the use of camels as bride price. The county government further accelerates this shift by distributing 700 camels annually to communities, leading to a notable rise in camel numbers. Camels are highly valued—one camel equals the worth of three cows or twenty goats—and offer practical advantages such as being milked more frequently and withstanding drought conditions. These attributes make camels especially attractive to women, as they are easier to manage and provide a reliable source of livelihood.

Ctd...

Camels are vulnerable because they lack natural predator-defences and are docile, making them easy prey for predators such as lions. Conservationists face pressure to address conflicts with lions, as camel losses often result in retaliatory actions against lions. Traditional deterrents such as cow bells and thorn bush fences are ineffective; lions have adapted to recognise the difference, and camels can break out of enclosures due to their size when panicking if lions' approach, increasing their risk of being killed.

The questions and comments focus on the current dynamics of camel herding among Samburu communities, emphasising that while camel numbers are still low compared to other livestock, their economic importance is much higher, especially for women. Lion predation on camels is a growing concern as the government continues to distribute more camels, intensifying human-lion conflicts. Suggestions to mitigate these conflicts include adopting zero grazing (paddock), learning from Somali camel-keeping practices, and considering the use of dogs or donkeys as protective companions, as is done successfully elsewhere. The main issue highlighted is not the cultural shift to camel keeping, but rather the urgent need to find sustainable ways for communities to coexist with lions and protect their livelihoods, given the substantial losses incurred with each camel killed.

Fail Fest: Learning from what has not worked



The Fail Fest session was a candid, peer-learning session which allowed participants to share their experiences and stories of failure to promote a culture of learning and innovation. Through short presentations followed by open discussion, participants reflected on what did not work and lessons that can strengthen future practice.

Key takeaways:

- Several challenges and failures in community-based lion conservation efforts were highlighted.
 - Government compensation for livestock losses can lead to unintended negative consequences and complicated expectations.
 - There is a tension between setting supportive precedents and being perceived as uncaring if no help is offered.
 - Conservation efforts fail when communities feel animals are prioritised over their needs.
- There is a lack of open communication about mistakes, and power imbalances with the government hinder safe dialogue. Social media can create challenges, for example, by creating hysteria if lions that have been named are killed in conflict or translocated.
- Projects often lack sustainability, with donor dependency leaving initiatives vulnerable when funding ends.
- Collaboration is insufficient, with NGOs sometimes working in isolation rather than partnering based on complementary strengths.
- Communities have been excluded from ownership of solutions, leading to reduced engagement and leadership.
- Trophy hunting (and even tourism pressure) can disrupt lion prides and exacerbate conflict.

The overarching message was the need for more transparent communication, genuine community leadership, collaboration, and sustainable project design to balance wildlife conservation with community wellbeing.

DAY 2: INCREASING THE VALUE

Scene Setting: Survey Results

The EWCL team presented the results of the participant survey on incentives. Following those results, Dr. Amy Dickman (Lion Landscapes) then presented her experience with incentive programmes across Africa. Discussions were held to share experiences and thoughts on incentive programmes and their use for human-lion coexistence.

The top five incentives used to promote coexistence between people and lions and their effectiveness.



Tourism lodges and associated income and/or employment for communities

29% rated this as highly effective
(12 respondents)
12% rated this as effective
(5 respondents)



Other diversified employment opportunities for communities (e.g. community guardians)

61% rated this as highly effective
(25 respondents)
34% rated this as effective
(14 respondents)



Income or other benefits from conservation practices (e.g. certified Wildlife Friendly Beef)

22% rated this as highly effective
(9 respondents)
7% rated this as effective
(3 respondents)



Performance Payments

27% rated this as highly effective
(11 respondents)
17% rated this as effective
(7 respondents)



Payment for ecosystem services

15% rated this as highly effective
(6 respondents)
4% rated this as effective
(2 respondents)

Top five incentives that people would like to use but have not been able to.

- 1.** Wildlife or biodiversity credits (54%; 22 respondents)
- 2.** Income or other benefits from conservation practices (e.g. certified Wildlife Friendly Beef) (46%; 19 respondents)
- 3.** Payment for ecosystem services (39%); 16 respondents
- 4.** Carbon credits (37%; 15 respondents)
- 5.** Other diversified employment opportunities for communities (e.g. community guardians) (29%; 12 respondents)

Challenges with incentive programmes:

- **Financial sustainability for long-term impact**
 - Most funding is short-term which makes it difficult to maintain when support ends
 - Lack of funding dedicated to incentives
 - More focus on short-term benefits than long-term sustainability
- **Inconsistent community benefits**
 - Communities want the rewards before the effort and stop when incentives end
 - Can create a hand-out mentality that does not support behaviour change
 - Benefits not always equitably shared among community members
 - Unrealistic expectations from local communities or stakeholders
- **Government restrictions or demands**
 - Conflicting sectoral policies
 - Misalignment between government priorities and community needs
 - Not enough policy and political support
- **Complicated management**
 - Too much effort and management for conservancy leadership
 - Not enough enforcement of rewards or punitive actions
 - Lack of accountability in fund management
 - Monitoring and verification a challenge
- **Missing robust/strong linkage between incentives and conservation outcomes**

Other human-wildlife coexistence or incentive management approaches that could apply to lions.

- Conservation incentive payments
- Bio Boundary methods e.g. chemical deterrents or scent marks
- More entrepreneurship opportunities for products with premiums for Wildlife Friendly
- Compensation schemes
- Subsidies for sustainable practices
- Ecotourism
- Lion bonds
- Livestock or lion insurance schemes
- Social games or activities e.g. Soccer competitions



Breakout Group Discussions: Key Takeaways

GROUP 1

emphasised the importance of adopting a bottom-up approach by **engaging communities directly and respecting their value systems**. They recommended prioritising the community's needs, placing habitat conservation at the centre and lions at the periphery, and connecting conservation efforts to broader community development objectives.

GROUP 2

discussed the **effectiveness of wildlife credits and Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM)** in Namibia and other countries, emphasising that revenue from hunting or state land should benefit local communities. They noted a positive shift toward rewarding wildlife sightings made by the community rather than lodges. However, they identified challenges such as slow fund disbursement through government channels, poor community governance, financial mismanagement, and governmental reluctance to allow full community control over funds. In Namibia, government intervention occurs when communities raise concerns about fund management. The group concluded that public-private partnerships (PPPs) are critical for the success of these incentive schemes.

GROUP 3

discussed **market-based and in-kind incentives** for conservation, noting the importance of clarifying land tenure and ownership to enable community members to benefit. They emphasised the need for clear roles, accountability, and transparency, particularly in protected areas. The group highlighted that capacity building is essential, especially for market-based approaches, as monitoring is often conducted by external parties. They advised defining incentives more clearly, securing start-up capital with support for at least three years, and ensuring sustainability if donor funding ends. Finally, they stressed the necessity of establishing clear mechanisms and communication for linking incentives to conservation outcomes.

GROUP 4

reviewed approaches such as wildlife credits, direct payments to conservancies, and government compensation for losses. Lion collaring (with 60-70 individuals for early warning systems) enables monitoring of lion presence and time spent in communities. **Ctd.**

Breakout Group Discussions: Key Takeaways (Ctd.)

Compensation benchmarks are informed by hunting values, and resource sharing decisions are made by the communities themselves. Overall, while monitoring supports these schemes, effective community governance remains essential for success.

GROUP 5

focused on the importance of identifying the **root causes behind community participation in compensation schemes**, emphasising that incentives must be determined by the communities themselves. They highlighted the need for a clear relationship between national government compensation schemes and local initiatives to avoid conflict and ensure transparency. The group discussed challenges in linking compensation to measurable outcomes, especially at the ecosystem level, and noted that monitoring for such credits is difficult. They suggested that insurance models can be effective if premiums reflect community behaviour, with negative actions resulting in higher premiums. Overall, they stressed that behaviour-based incentives require robust monitoring, and that solutions must be tailored to specific scale and context as there is no one-size-fits-all approach.

GROUP 6

reviewed various community-based conservation incentive schemes in Africa, such as community camera trapping in Kenya and Tanzania, conservation contracts, lion lotteries, and point systems as used by Lion Landscapes. While some initial challenges occurred (like camera theft), implementing point systems has delivered direct community benefits for wildlife sightings. However, translating these credit systems into broader conservation gains remains a challenge, especially since gate fees often go to central governments before communities can access them. The group discussed whether benefits in kind or cash rewards are preferable, emphasising that **incentives must be fair to those contributing effort**. They also highlighted the **need for financial training among conservationists** and noted that even well-designed schemes can have unintended outcomes or implementation difficulties.

GROUP 7

discussed employment and incentive-based approaches for community integration in lion conservation. Strategies include hiring community members as lion guardians, ambassadors, and rangers, with additional benefits for patrol efforts (e.g., in Namibia). *Ctd.*

Breakout Group Discussions: Key Takeaways (Ctd.)

Employment in tourism and related sectors provides direct salaries, lease payments to landowners, community shareholding, and communal funds for local projects, multiplying the economic impact of wildlife conservation. Payment schemes reward communities for wildlife presence, using tools like camera traps to incentivise sightings.

Performance-based incentives, such as those supported by technology (e.g., SMART in Namibia), and diversification of donor funding are highlighted as important. Communal funds support local development, and carbon credits are being used to fund insurance schemes. Large-scale employment projects have significant community benefits, such as feeding children and empowering women (e.g., in Botswana). High-value, community-based tourism is preferred over mass tourism, and wildlife-friendly beef initiatives aim to supply local lodges and mines, focusing on sustainable cattle management.

However, challenges include the need to understand the underlying drivers of community participation and ensuring incentives originate from the community itself. Insurance schemes can work if linked to premiums, but compensation schemes are often unsustainable due to limited knowledge and funding. Success requires appropriate scale, context, training, time, money, and community-driven decision-making. Public and private partnerships are also essential for long-term sustainability.

Country-specific incentives



In **South Africa**, devolving lion ownership to landowners has been effective when lions are valued, primarily for photographic tourism. However, this approach has led to many lions living in fenced areas with limited movement, requiring intensive management. To address this, a metapopulation system has been established where all lions are monitored and registered, despite being in disconnected habitats. The uptake of rhino bonds remains low, likely due to their complex implementation and uncertainty over returns, making them less attractive to landowners. *Ctd.*



In **Tanzania**, while the state owns major wildlife habitats, devolving land rights to communities in the context of Wildlife Management Areas has shown some indications of success in some areas. This enables communities to manage local tourism businesses and retain some of the profits. Additionally, allowing communities to hunt game for meat could help preserve cultural traditions and provide value from wild areas. However, this can also create challenges, including overexploitation, conflicts over land use, and difficulties in ensuring equitable benefit sharing.



Kenya's conservancy model has fostered greater community acceptance of lions, with linked communities showing increased tolerance. Government compensation schemes for livestock losses have generally been effective, though funding shortfalls have led to the adoption of insurance schemes. Overall, when communities receive recognition and tangible benefits from the government, outcomes improve.



Namibia's Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) is functioning effectively. Wildlife credits tied to lion presence generate income for conservancies, though this could unintentionally encourage increasing lion numbers at the expense of the broader ecosystem. Communities have full control over the funds earned, but strong governance and financial oversight are necessary to prevent misuse. Lion Guards receive payment from the conservancy.



In **Botswana**, Community Trusts operate effectively, but a major issue is the distribution of funds.

Carbon credits in **Kenya, Malawi, and Tanzania** support increased habitat connectivity and lion conservation. However, their effectiveness is hindered when government involvement leads to complex and difficult-to-understand regulations.

In Summary:

Building trust with communities is crucial; actions like helping find lost livestock and treating wounded animals, while not always financially significant, make communities feel valued and foster better relationships with farmers.

Key needs include stronger public-private partnerships, collaboration among government, NGOs, businesses, and communities (with communities at the core), improved local governance, devolution of land and wildlife rights, and ensuring communities benefit directly from lion conservation.

Insights show that coexistence with lions works best when landowners or communities have clear ownership and can realise the value of wildlife on their land. However, smaller, private, fenced systems improve lion numbers but reduce habitat connectivity.

Main issues include poor communication, lack of trust and transparency among stakeholders, inadequate governance, the influence of external animal rights activists unfamiliar with local realities, and resentment among communities not receiving compensation.

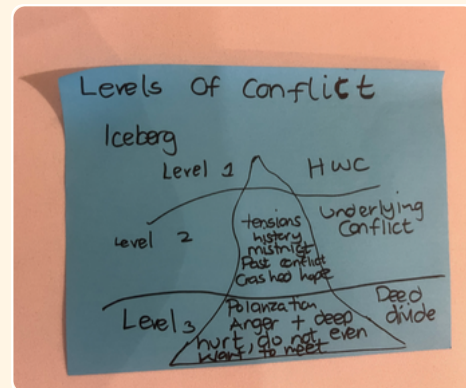


Case Clinics / Case Studies - Day 2

Alexandra Zimmerman (IUCN HWCCSG; Oxford University): A framework for dealing with human-human conflict in co-existence, an iceberg model

Three levels of conflict were described as:

- **Level 1:** surface-level, practical issues (e.g., human-wildlife conflict), where dialogue and practical solutions are still possible.
- **Level 2:** centres on underlying mistrust and historical grievances, with communication marked by scepticism and sarcasm; dialogue is possible but requires careful handling, as simple solutions may worsen mistrust.
- **Level 3:** characterised by deep polarisation, hostility, and identity-based divisions, where parties often refuse to engage, and professional mediation is typically needed for resolution



Original sketch, Alexandra Zimmerman

Diagnosing conflict requires first understanding which level of conflict is present before planning interventions. It's important to recognise that communities are not uniform; different individuals or groups may experience conflict at different levels. Applying solutions suited for surface-level issues to deeper or more complex conflicts can worsen the situation.

- To effectively respond to conflict, it is crucial to first understand its nature, depth, and the stakeholders involved. Conducting a stakeholder and power analysis is especially important for identifying underlying tensions. Mere consultation is insufficient; meaningful engagement and the capacity to manage complex stakeholder dynamics are necessary. Building trust should precede project implementation to help prevent or lessen future conflicts. In cases of deep-rooted or highly polarised conflict, professional mediators are essential to facilitate dialogue and restore trust.

Alexandra Zimmerman is available to share her expertise on conflict management through her published paper and offers in-person courses at Oxford. She is also open to providing tailored sessions for organisations or groups upon request.

Case Clinics / Case Studies - Day 2

Rosemary Groom (African Wildlife Conservation Fund [AWCF]): Developing a Lion Management Plan for Savé Valley Conservancy, Zimbabwe

The primary issue in Zimbabwe's Savé Valley Conservancy (SVC) is conflict related to lions. SVC spans 3,500 km² with 18 landowners and supports a population of over 100 lions (about 1 lion per 3.5 km²), which is considered a low density without a clear explanation. Landowners wish to increase the lion population for hunting opportunities, raising the question of what the optimal number should be. The conservancy covers five districts and wards, and there is a donor request for a comprehensive lion management plan. Recent years have seen an unexplained decline in the lion population (notably between 2022 and 2023), possibly linked to the lion bone trade and poisoning incidents. The current lion numbers are insufficient, and there is a need to set a target population, especially given the poor prey availability in SVC.

AWCF Activities:

- **Carnivore monitoring** is conducted to track population trends, including a Spatially Explicit Capture-Recapture lion survey scheduled for 2024-2025.
- **Education and community management** initiatives have been ongoing since 2011 to promote coexistence and awareness.
- **A Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC) programme** has been active since 2023, covering seven wards across three districts.

Lion Management Plans to Date:

- The **2011 plan by Funston *et al.*** primarily focused on controlling and reducing the lion population.
- The desired outcome of the **Lion Management Plan** is to maintain a healthy and sustainable lion population in **Savé Valley Conservancy**, support landowners' economic goals through regulated hunting, and provide financial benefits to nearby communities.

Summary of key considerations for developing a Lion Management Plan for Savé Valley Conservancy:

Examples and models: Draw on successful models from South Africa (such as Welgevonden Game Reserve), emphasising bottom-up approaches and separating reserve management from landowner interests.

Process and Approach: Begin broadly with carnivore management and then focus on lions due to their unique challenges. Engage stakeholders through questionnaires and group discussions to set visions and objectives. *Ctd.*

Case Clinics / Case Studies - Day 2

Essential Background Data: Collect accurate data on prey numbers and classes, pride structure, and lion demography to inform carrying capacity and management decisions.

Intended Audience: The plan should primarily serve landowners (who seek maximum lion numbers) but must also address community interests and government involvement, especially regarding problem animals and conflict cases.

Objectives: Achieve a healthy, sustainable lion population, balance economic benefits (such as hunting), and ensure communities see tangible value from lion presence.

Adaptive Management: Implement robust, well-funded monitoring (possibly financed through hunting quotas and fees), annual review of actions and quotas, and use of decision trees for flexibility.

Ensuring Compliance: Increase landowner accountability, possibly by linking trophy fees to monitoring and using demographic data (e.g., through collaring) to inform decisions.

Additional Considerations: Address external pressures (e.g., poisoning, community expansion), Problem Animal Control killings, and problem animal management. Ensure community input is heavily weighted and identify synergies among stakeholders.

Scope: Consider whether to broaden the plan to all carnivores or focus on lions first, recognising their unique management needs.

Plan Duration and Adaptability: Set a 10-year plan with built-in annual reviews and adaptive mechanisms to remain relevant and effective.

Implementation Steps: Follow a Theory of Change or log frame process, conduct comprehensive prey surveys, collect stakeholder input, and establish clear management structures involving managers, communities, scientists, and government.

Key takeaways from the case clinic are that effective monitoring is essential and should be financially supported, potentially through hunting revenues and quota allocations, which need to be clearly distributed among landowners, communities, and for monitoring purposes.

Case Clinics / Case Studies - **Day 2**

Elizabeth Naro (African People & Wildlife): *The Intersection of Technology and Indigenous Knowledge in Reducing Human-Lion Conflict*

The tool described effectively integrates Maasai Indigenous Technical Knowledge (ITK) with state-of-the-art GIS technology, enabling the collection and analysis of data related to human-livestock-predator conflict and rangeland health.

It is designed to be accessible and useful for a diverse group of stakeholders, including government agencies, conservation organisations, community resource practitioners, and local communities.



Key Features Include:

- The use of indigenous naming protocols for user-friendly mapping
- The ability to identify specific predator conflict patterns and improve patrols
- Comparative photo tools for monitoring rangeland health over time.

Data quality is ensured through training and iterative improvements, and cleaned data is automatically displayed on a dashboard. The platform supports data sharing among multiple organisations and aids in securing funding for rangeland restoration by providing clear evidence of ecological trends. Additionally, district-specific online portals were created to support government planning and reporting.

DAY 3: COLLABORATION AND ACTION

*Mapping Exercise: Country Gaps and Scaling Priorities**

The mapping exercise gave participants a chance to identify country-level gaps in monitoring and scaling efforts using large country maps as a guide. In groups, participants discussed where data, coordination, or resources were still limited, and explored priorities and options for scaling up coexistence initiatives. The hands-on session made it easy for participants to connect local realities with regional strategies and helped build a shared understanding of where collective efforts could have the greatest impact.

General Insights:

Lions have been observed in regions where they are not officially reported by the African Lion Database, highlighting the importance of transboundary cooperation. Immediate action should focus on areas with significant lion populations, high conflict, and limited interventions, as indicated in the maps by red stars, while blue marks areas where efforts are already underway.



**IUCN Cat Specialist Group's African Lion Database will digitise the collected information on coexistence and lion projects in Africa and maintain it as a living project moving forward.*

Country / Regional Highlights

Country/Region	Strongholds/Priority Areas	Gaps/Challenges	Interventions/Needs	Collaboration/Partners	Hope/Opportunities
Angola	Southeast (Luenge-Luiana, Mavinga NPs), Lewa, Southwest	Minimal work in Southeast, gaps across most of the country	Assess, expand, complicated potential, collaborative management partnerships needed to support protected area management	KAZA	Huge potential, but the government might consider creating enabling conditions to encourage inward investment in the conservation space.
Benin, Burkina Faso	W-Arly-Pendjari (WAP) Complex transboundary park	Insurgency, extreme red zone, southern park gaps	Innovative approaches, security	Government support, orgs	The principal hope lies in retaining a management presence in Benin and resisting the southward expansion of rebel groups
Botswana	$\frac{2}{3}$ country lion range, >40% protected	Gaps: Ngamiland, southern parks, low human capacity. High-levels of bushmeat and targeted lion poaching. Limited capacity for anti-poaching	Leverage CBNRM, job platforms, long-term funding	Project finance for Permanence (PfP) with Pew Charitable Trusts	TFCAs, legislation changes
Cameroon	North (Waza NP), 2 main lion areas	Under-funded PAs, intense pressures, nomadic pastoralism	Confirm assessment, capacity	None	Habitat good, recovery potential. Difficult country to work in, the government is reluctant to consider devolved collaborative management partnerships.
CAR	Chinko NP (Eastern CAR)	Outside of Chinko, management capacity is very limited	Understand movements, expand effective PA management	Chinko NP	Huge opportunity for lion recovery.
Chad	Large landscape, hunting reserve in Southern part of the country	Lions limited in distribution	Transboundary approach	African Parks	Expansion of lion range from Zakouma to include the wider landscape of SE Chad
DRC	Garamba, Virunga	Lack support, changing landscape, conflict, isolated population	Understand context	NGOs	Massive threats
Ethiopia	Transboundary with Southern Somalia	Big gaps, cub trade, low capacity for PA management, high livestock and human populations	Recovery, development, peace, inward investment for the management of PAs	Somalia	Lions appear to continue to persist reasonably widely

Country / Regional Highlights

Country/Region	Strongholds/Priority Areas	Gaps/Challenges	Interventions/Needs	Collaboration/Partners	Hope/Opportunities
Kenya	Tsavo, Mara/Amboseli	Gaps: gap in lion numbers in Eastern Mara, Shaba-Meru corridor, poor coexistence, high livestock densities	Corridor planning, inward investment needed for under-funded PAs	NGOs	Shared populations with Tanzania
Malawi	2 PAs in South, Magetti (100 lions), Central Park	Closed system, need translocation, small, protected areas, gaps in North	Assess areas before translocation, restoration programmes	PPF with African Parks	Promising partnerships
Mozambique	Major parks (south, central), Niassa	Gaps in parks, data, resources, communication, political instability in the north, intense poaching pressure	Community engagement	Strong regional collaboration	Growing knowledge
Namibia	Northwest, Northeast (Angola, Botswana, Namibia), Etosha NP	Low prey base, persistent droughts, gaps for expansion, loss of habitat, illegal cows	Strengthen range, wildlife reintroduction, leverage Lion Rangers	Lion Rangers, communities	Communities willing, lion recovery, habitat connectivity
Republic of Congo	Southern lions	No lions in N, need connectivity	Prioritise connectivity	None	Potential
S. Sudan	East, North, Southwest park	Gap, civil conflict, tribal conflict, intense poaching of wildlife for meat, lack of capacity for PA management	Transboundary work, technical expertise, financial support	NGOs, Uganda, Ethiopia	Wildlife persists, opportunity
Senegal	West, National Parks	Targeted poaching, gold mining, unknown SE population	Mitigation action, information on lions	4 countries around NP	Promote coexistence
South Africa	All lions fenced except TFCA	Fragmented landscape, legislative gaps, increasing conflict (Limpopo)	Better communication between departments	SADC, Lion management forum	Policy changes, benefit sharing, living landscapes
Sudan	Transboundary areas	Civil unrest, gaps in understanding lions	Understand lions in transboundary areas	None	Opportunity

Country / Regional Highlights

Country/ Region	Strongholds/ Priority Areas	Gaps/Challenges	Interventions/Needs	Collaboration/ Partners	Hope/Opportunities
Uganda	Queen Elizabeth National Park, Murchison Falls National Park, Kidepo landscape	Gaps (Kidepo), low community incentives, poor NGO collaboration	HWC mitigation, capacity for communities	NGOs	Prey base, recovery potential, community interest
Zambia	Northwestern, Eastern areas of Zambia	Retaliatory killings, absence of HWC management, capacity, rapid encroachment in GMAs	Partnerships, collaboration, support from LRF	LRF	Transboundary collaboration
Zimbabwe	6 Active TFCA's	Land-use change, illegal harvesting, gaps (non-shaded areas)	Education, community engagement, understand poaching drivers	National coordination, partners (shaded areas)	Community engagement

Collaboration Group Session

Key characteristics of successful collaboration: Successful collaborations are distinguished by several essential qualities that enable effective and enduring partnerships.

- Flexibility allows partners to adapt to changing circumstances and emerging challenges.
- Shared goals unite collaborators around a common vision, ensuring that all parties are aligned and motivated toward mutual outcomes.
- Joint funding mechanisms facilitate the pooling of resources, increasing the reach and impact of collaborative initiatives.
- Open communication and transparency are fundamental to building trust and maintaining clear, honest dialogue.
- In-person engagement is also critical, as it fosters stronger relationships and a deeper understanding among partners.
- Clearly defined objectives provide direction and prevent misunderstandings, while continuous trust-building and humility ensure that all voices are valued equally.
- Formal agreements, such as Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), help to clarify expectations and solidify commitments, thereby supporting the long-term sustainability and success of the collaboration
- These effective partnerships leverage a diverse array of strengths, drawing on the unique expertise, resources, and capabilities of each participant. By addressing gaps and sharing resources, including knowledge, skills, or financial support, collaborations become more resilient and comprehensive in their approach.

Challenges hindering effective collaboration: Several obstacles can undermine the success of collaborative efforts and collectively limit the effectiveness and sustainability of partnerships.

- Key challenges include a focus on the competition among organisations for funds, rather than realising that collaboration attracts funders, misaligned missions among partners, organisational misconduct, and a lack of coordination.
- Disrespect between stakeholders and disproportionate credit-taking for joint accomplishments further erode trust and cooperation.
- Ineffective communication, especially when assumptions remain unspoken or when goals are not clearly articulated, can create confusion and hinder progress.
- Additional issues arise from government policies that impede cross-border collaboration, as well as from a lack of mutual recognition and differing priorities among partners.
- A general reluctance to share information, instances of forced collaborations, and the misuse of power by more dominant parties also contribute to an environment of distrust and inefficiency.

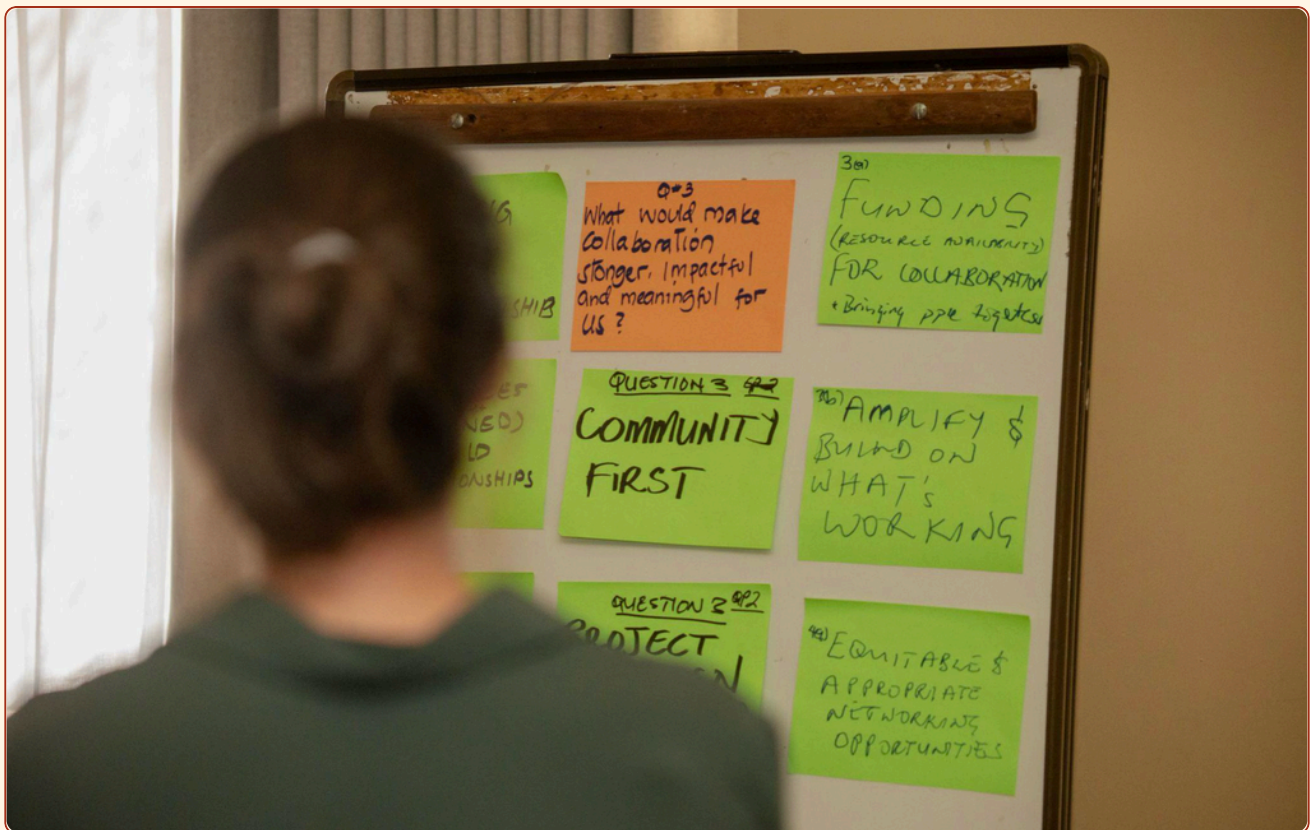
Collaboration Group Session

Strengthening collaborations: Effective collaboration is achieved by:

- Fostering honest and transparent communication among all partners.
- Regular check-ins and clear agreements, such as Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), play a pivotal role in establishing accountability and shared understanding. Open-mindedness and the commitment to shared funding efforts further strengthen partnerships, while the provision of dedicated resources ensures that collaborative initiatives are well-supported.

Making collaborations more impactful: To enhance the impact of collaboration, it is important to:

- Establish a unified voice while allowing each organisation to maintain its individual identity.
- Building trust between partners is a continuous process, supported by regular and transparent communication and a commitment to long-term engagement.



Collaboration Group Session

- Supporting transboundary collaboration broadens the reach and effectiveness of joint efforts, while clarifying the benefits for all involved helps sustain motivation and participation.
- Organising learning exchanges and holding both online and periodic in-person meetings. Providing funding to facilitate gatherings ensures that all relevant stakeholders can participate.
- Equitable networking opportunities should be made available so that every voice is heard and valued.
- Appointing a funded "champion" to drive collaboration, along with dedicated coordinators, helps to balance strategic objectives with personal connections.
- Developing clear frameworks for roles and expectations further supports the effectiveness of the partnership.

NEXT STEPS

Participants highlighted the following as the most valuable outcomes of the Forum:

1. **Increased transparency and trust through open and honest communication across the community**
2. **Shifts in thinking and adaptive approaches driven by deep, pragmatic discussions, enabling collaboration across organisations and organisational hierarchies**

Priority outputs to support ongoing collaboration

To strengthen coordination, visibility, and partner alignment, the following outputs were prioritised:

- Digitised maps that visually represent project activities and geographical coverage.
- An interactive dashboard displaying ongoing activities by location and partner organisation.
- A comprehensive directory containing contact details for all Forum participants
- The establishment of regional WhatsApp groups to improve communication among stakeholders.

Improving collaboration through contextual understanding

Forum participants emphasised the importance of understanding country-specific gaps, priorities, and contexts to strengthen collaboration and reduce duplication. Key outputs recommended to support this included:

1. Develop digitised maps and an interactive dashboard to track initiatives and identify gaps.
2. Shared access to contact information for all Forum participants.
3. Sustaining engagement and knowledge exchange
4. To maintain momentum beyond the Forum, participants recommended the development of centralised communication and knowledge-sharing mechanisms, including:
5. Regional WhatsApp groups or other centralised communication platforms.
6. A Resource Library containing partner resources, toolkits, best practices, and methodologies addressing shared challenges across community ownership, land use, and policy.

Actionable opportunities

Several priority areas were identified to translate collaboration into measurable impact:

1. **Strengthening technical capacity** to improve the use of collected data and support a shift towards landscape-level and cross-species conservation approaches.
2. **Increasing community engagement and leadership**, particularly within Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCA).
3. **Encouraging cultural change and deeper grassroots connections to conservation** by fostering thought-partnerships, peer support, and mentorship, especially for early-career professionals.
4. **Advancing collaborative funding for interventions**, sustaining engagement to maintain network momentum, and supporting the development of a comprehensive African Lion Conservation Action Plan.

Emerging opportunities

Additional opportunities identified include:

1. Collaboration on a lion census
2. Establishing effective data-sharing methods
3. Hosting quarterly online meetings
4. Organising regional gatherings
5. Creating a calendar for learning exchanges within and across countries and regions
6. Building a unified national voice
7. Pursuing collaborative fundraising initiatives

Proposed Action Table

Action Area	Key Actions	Lead / Actors	Timeline
Coordination & Visibility	Digitise maps of projects and geographic coverage; scope and design an interactive dashboard	Forum organisers with partners	Short term
	Maintain a living overview aligned with the African Lion Database	Organisers + IUCN partners	Short-Medium
Communication & Engagement	Create regional WhatsApp groups and share participant directory	Organisers	Immediate
	Host quarterly online convenings	Organisers + participants	Ongoing
	Develop a shared calendar for exchanges and events	Organisers	Short term
Knowledge sharing & Capacity building	Establish a central Resource Library (tools, methodologies, best practice)	Organisers + contributors	Short-Medium
	Promote peer learning, mentorship, and technical upskilling	Participants	Medium
Collaboration & Community leadership	Identify country-specific gaps and priorities	Participants + governments	Short-Medium
	Strengthen community leadership, especially in TFCA	Participants	Medium-Long
Data, Metrics & Impact	Align on shared coexistence and HWC metrics	Organisers + technical partners	Medium
	Improve data-sharing protocols across projects	Organisers + participants	Medium
Collective action & Funding	Explore collaborative initiatives (e.g. lion census)	Joint working groups	Medium
	Pursue joint fundraising and develop an African Lion Conservation Action Plan	Organisers + partners	Long term

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**Lion
Recovery
Fund**

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EWCL Class 10: LRF Project Team Human-Lion Conflict & Coexistence Practitioner Survey Survey Results Report



V. Frediani, 2018

Zachary Dvornicky-Raymond, D.V.M; Virginia Frediani, M.E.M;
Bwalya Kampamba, M.Sc; Indie Lewis, MPH; Taylor Mann, J.D..

Report Summary



The goal of this research was to gain insight on the challenges and opportunities of managing human-lion conflict across African lion ranges.

This collaborative project aimed to gather insight from conservation practitioners across lion range countries to build a comprehensive understanding of past and current practices, pitfalls, needs, and goals of human-lion conflict management.

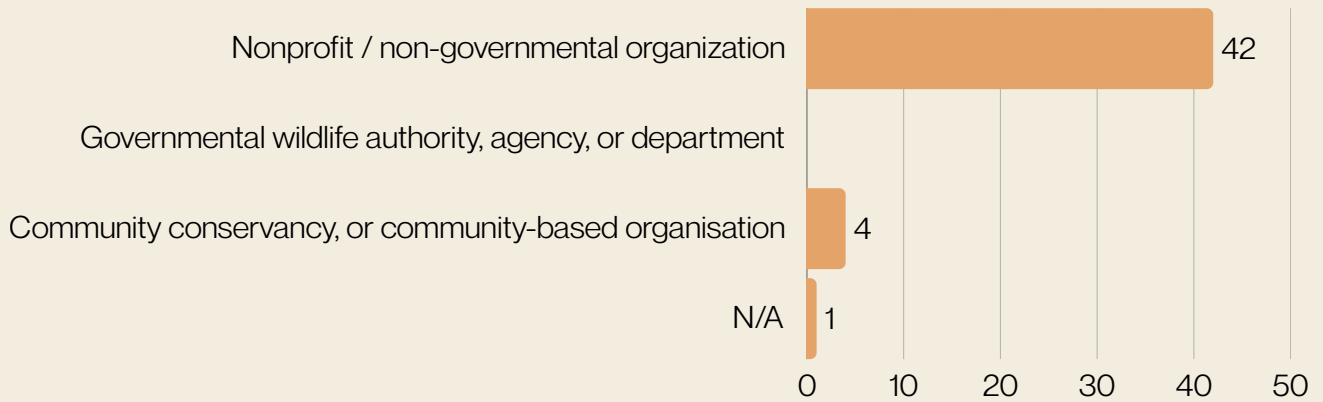
This report highlights significant data collected through the Human-Lion Conflict and Coexistence Practitioner Survey and interviews with wildlife authority representatives. The survey was distributed to Lion Recovery Fund (LRF) grantees prior to and following the Lion Footprint Forum from June 30th to July 3rd, 2025. There were 54 survey responses, representing 17 African lion range countries and numerous conservation organizations. Additionally, interviews were held with nine wildlife authority representatives.

All survey design, interview questions, data collection and analysis was completed by an Emerging Wildlife Conservation Leaders (EWCL) Class 10 project team. The report was completed in collaboration with the LRF, Wildlife Conservation Network, and the World Wide Fund for Nature's Living with Big Cats Initiative.

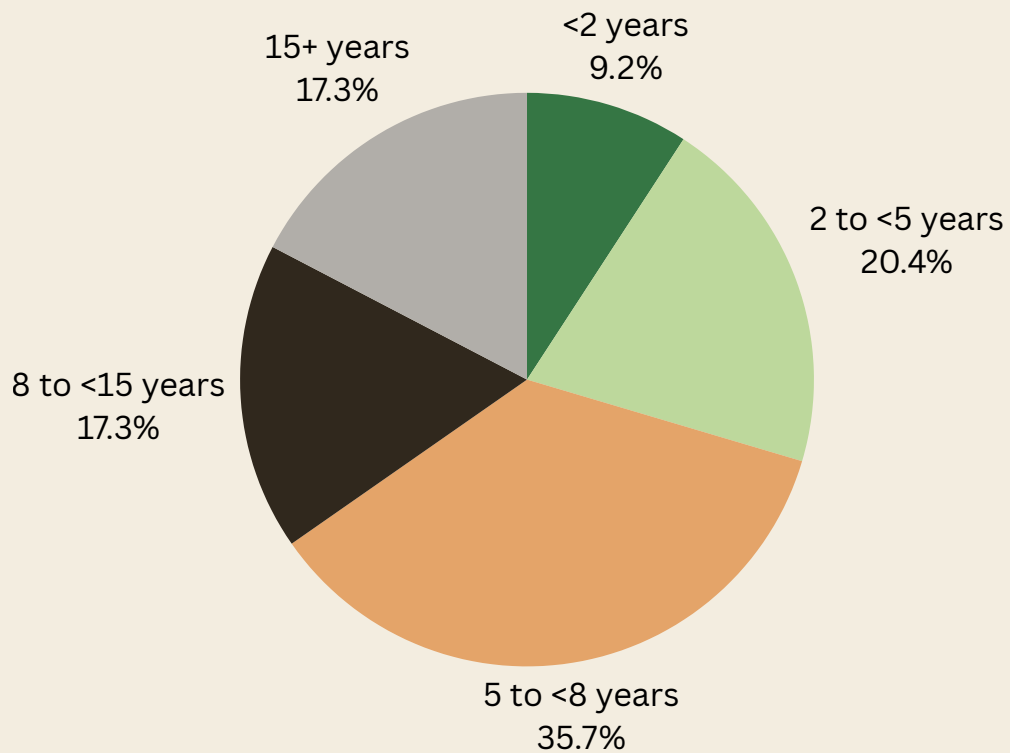
The EWCL programme helps train conservation professionals in a 25-member cohort over two years. Throughout the two years, participants work in teams to develop, implement and evaluate a global wildlife conservation project. The EWCL Team leading this report partnered with the Lion Recovery Fund to document and disseminate best practices and lessons learned around available strategies to promote human-lion coexistence.

Survey Responses: Representation

Sectors where survey respondents are currently employed or affiliated:

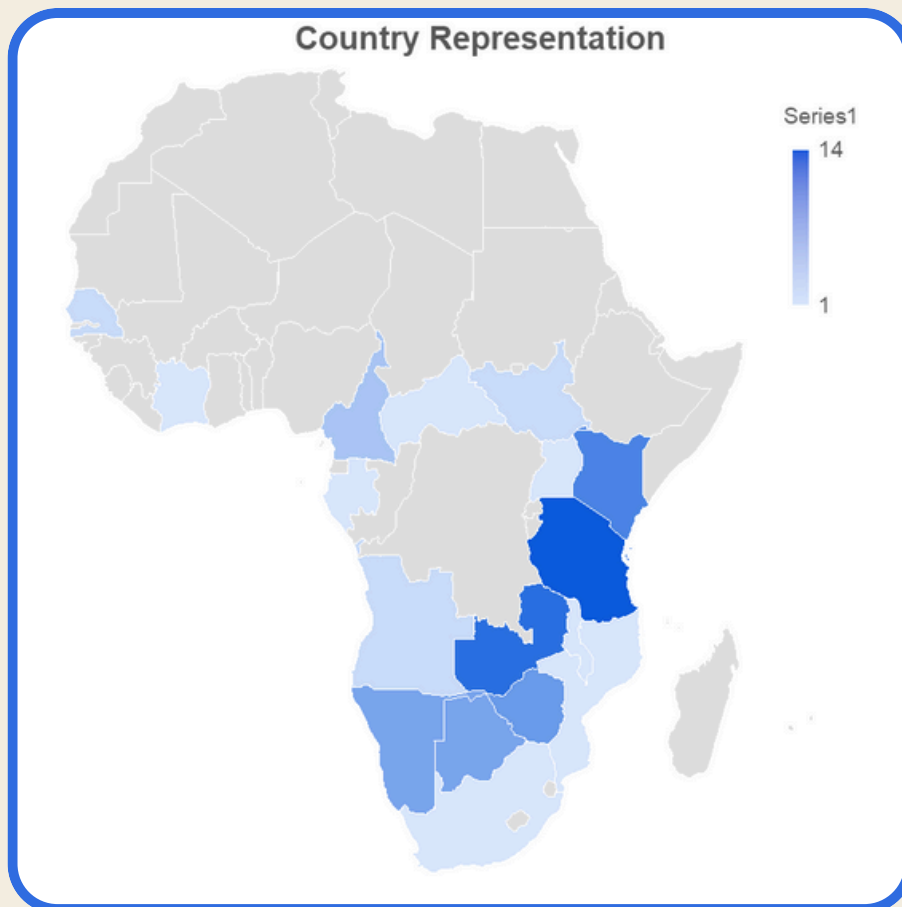


Length of time working in human-lion conflict:



Countries where respondents reported working in the last five years:

- 17 countries represented
 - Highest number from Tanzania (25.9%)
 - Second highest from Zambia (22.2%)
 - Regional representation listed by strongest representation (list from the African Union)
 - Southern Africa (Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe) (52%)
 - Eastern Africa (Kenya, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda) (36%)
 - Central Africa (Cameroon, Central African Republic, Gabon) (8%)
 - Western Africa (Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal) (4%)



Regions where survey respondents are currently working:

COUNTRY	AREA	REGION	CONSERVATION AREA
Angola			
Botswana		Okavango Delta, Ngamiland, Northern Central Kalahari, Chobe	
Cameroon	Central, Northern		
Central African Republic			
Cote d'Ivoire			
Gabon			
Kenya	Southeast	Amboseli ecosystem, Rift Valley, Narok County, Maasai Mara ecosystem	Kamungi Conservancy, Tsavo Conservation Area
Malawi			
Mozambique			
Namibia	Northwestern		Kunene
Senegal			Niokolo-Koba National Park
South Sudan	Eastern		
South Africa			
Tanzania	Northern, Southwestern	Serengeti ecosystem, MARA, Maasai steppe, Katavi, Tabora, Rukwa	Game reserves and community wildlife management areas surrounding Serengeti National Park, Ngorongoro Conservation Area
Uganda		Greater Virunga Landscape, Murchison-Semliki Landscape	Queen Elizabeth National Park, Murchison Falls National Park
Zambia	Eastern, Western Province	Luangwa Valley, Greater Kafue ecosystem	Greater Kafue National Park
Zimbabwe		Matabeleland North, Hwange West District, Zambezi Valley, southeastern Lowveld	Zambezi National Park, Matetsi Safari Areas

Regions where survey respondents would like to work
but are unable to due to limitations:

Regions below were mentioned more than once

REGION	LIMITATION
Loliondo, Tanzania	Limited resources (funding)
Makgadikgadi Pans (eastern and southern side), Botswana	Lack of permanent water for wildlife
Ngamiland (western and northwestern side), Botswana	Remote, poorly accessible, complex tribal policies, and lack of significant resources
Niokolo-Koba NP, Senegal	Security risk, lack of financial resources, lack of defined area status, no actions for conflict management
Kaputiei, Kenya	No specific limitations provided

General limitations of working in new regions:

- No compensation for livestock losses
- Limited or restricted resources (financial, mobility, data collection devices, mitigation tools, limited players, capacity)
- Insecurity/security risks
- Remote/poorly accessible
- Complex tribal policies
- Lack of permanent water
- Lack of clear status/defined area in the landscape

Survey Responses: Collaboration

Stakeholders, outside of their respective entity, that respondents collaborate with around human-lion conflict:



Common challenges to collaborating or communicating with stakeholders with respect to or when working on human lion conflict:

- Funding (lack of funding, donor restrictions)
- Community difficulties
- Communities misidentifying carnivore predation
- Traditional grazing/kraaling practises provide inadequate protection against carnivores
- Lion attacks on livestock pose a significant financial burden to livestock keepers, while there is no incentive or compensation for losing livestock.
- Competing priorities, local politics
- Difficult relationships with wildlife authorities
- Limited communication
- Misaligned priorities

Added Post Forum:

- Government capacity

Survey Responses: Human-Lion Conflict

Conflict remains a major challenge across lion ranges. 60% of respondents reported increasing conflict trends over the past five years.

Top five primary drivers of human-lion conflict in survey respondents' focal regions:

Driver	Impact Level
Increase of people and livestock near wildlife areas 62% (29 respondents)	62% list this as high impact 11% list this as a medium impact
Expansion of settlements into lion habitat 47% (22 respondents)	47% list this as high impact 17% list this as medium impact
Livestock are housed, but the enclosures are inadequate (e.g. weak fencing, poor maintenance) 47% (20 respondents)	37% list this as high impact 15% list this as medium impact
Livestock are not herded 32% (15 respondents)	28% list this as high impact 4% list this as a medium impact
Increase in livestock populations 28% (13 respondents)	24% list this as high impact 4% list this as medium impact

How respondents understand and identify primary drivers:

- Community knowledge 81% (38 respondents)
- Personal knowledge 79% (37 respondents)
- Reported conflict 74% (35 respondents)
- Wildlife reports 45% (21 respondents)
- Published literature 15% (7 respondents)

Overall trends of human-lion conflict in the last five years in the country or countries where survey respondents work:

Increasing	60% (28 respondents)
I don't know the overall trend	17% (8 respondents)
Decreasing	13% (6 respondents)
Stayed the same	4% (2 respondents)
Other (please specify): <i>"It fluctuates based on drought/ rainfall."</i>	2% (1 respondent)
Trend is unknown/unavailable (e.g. no information is being collected)	0% (0 respondents)

Most commonly occurring negative impacts to people from conflict with lions in the country or countries where survey respondents work:

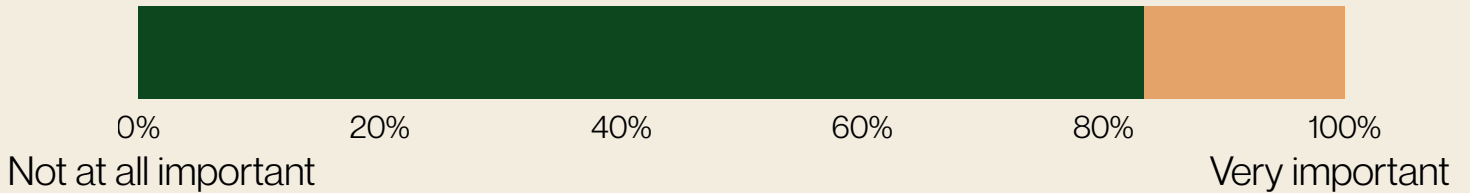
Livestock injury or death	100% (47 respondents)
Changes in tolerance or attitudes towards wildlife	47% (22 respondents)
Human injury or death	30% (14 respondents)
Non-physical human health impacts (ex. Fear, opportunity costs etc.)	9% (4 respondents)

Summary of lion behaviours that respondents believe increase human-lion conflict.

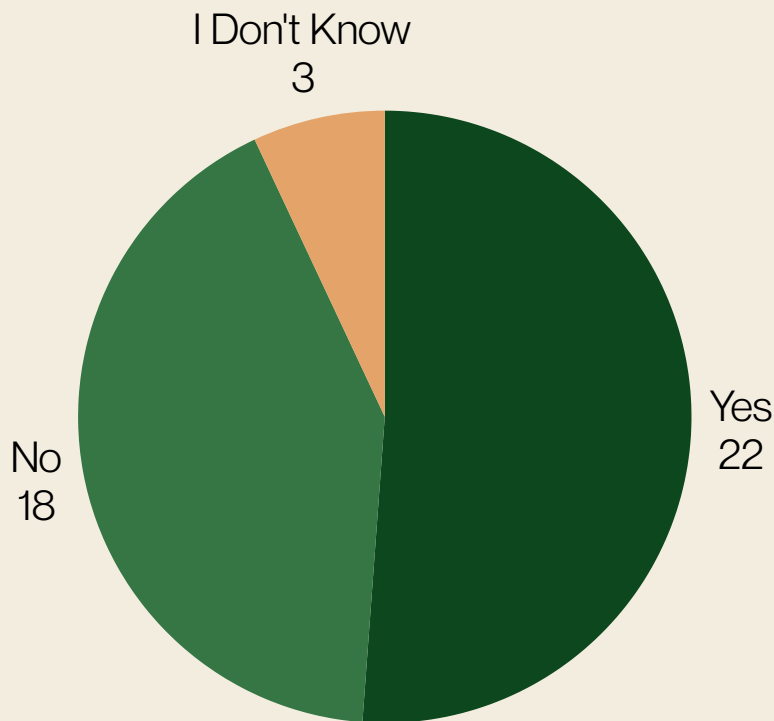
- Dispersal and Movement Beyond Protected Areas
 - Young sub-adults, especially males, and displaced individuals (injured, old, or nomadic coalitions) are often pushed out of territories.
 - These lions frequently move into community lands, sometimes traveling 20 km or more, leading to encounters with livestock and people.
- Predation on Livestock
 - Livestock are easier and more predictable prey, particularly when poorly guarded or grazing in areas near reserves.
 - Habituation can occur; some lions learn to regularly hunt livestock, even establishing territories near villages.
 - Certain life stages increase livestock targeting: lactating females feeding cubs, dispersing during pride takeovers, or after trophy hunting removes dominant males.
- Environmental Pressures
 - Droughts, prey declines, and floods displace lions from their habitat push them toward human settlements.
 - Wet seasons may coincide with livestock being moved into grazing areas, increasing encounters.
- Territorial and Social Dynamics
 - Takeovers, pride instability, and infanticide can cause lionesses to hide cubs near communities.
 - Competition for mates or territory can force males into marginal, human-dominated zones.
- Behavioural Adaptations and Boldness
 - Some lions become habituated to people, showing bolder behaviour and localizing in village lands.
 - Certain individuals or prides develop patterns of repeated livestock predation, making management difficult.

On a scale from "not at all important" (0) to "very important" (100), how important is it to understand or better understand lion behaviour, and/or what things influence lion behaviours that lead to conflict? (47 Responses)

Survey Average: 83.4%



Percentage of respondents whose organisation has written guidelines or procedures on how to manage or respond to human-lion conflict.



Lessons learned from conflict approaches that could benefit others in the lion conservation community.

- Well-built or mobile livestock enclosures are very effective to reduce depredation
 - Should provide community training on their use and assembly
 - Commiphora trees useful for reinforcing traditional enclosures
 - Building enclosures must be done with beneficiaries' contribution to ensure ownership/sustainability
- Land use planning must be incorporated into conflict management
 - Provide clear areas for development to help prevent conflict from occurring
- Community involvement and engagement is essential to secure lions
 - Empathize with communities about the challenges of living with lions
 - Co-design and implement conflict management approaches in collaboration with communities
 - Example: Community camera-trapping programmes and the establishment of Community Guardians or Peace Advocates
 - Must address livelihoods
 - Build capacity to deal with conflict
- Need to understand lion behaviour
 - Communities lack awareness of lion behaviours
 - Lions can become habituated to chase livestock during the wet season due to additional coverage
- Collaring lions for lion alert systems and community response teams are beneficial to reduce conflict.
- Communication and transparency from government/non-government entities towards communities when planning or implementing approaches is essential for community buy-in.

“Building coexistence begins with community ownership and shared solutions.”

Survey Responses: Conflict Approaches

Top five *most* effective approaches to manage human-lion conflict.

Building permanent lion-proof enclosures	47% (22 respondents)
Ensuring livestock are enclosed at night	36% (17 respondents)
Engaging communities about the value of wildlife	34% (16 respondents)
Early alert warning systems	32% (15 respondents)
Building mobile lion-proof enclosures	28% (13 respondents)

Top five *least* effective approaches to manage human-lion conflict.

Capture and translocation of lions killing livestock	26% (11 respondents)
Lethal control of lions killing livestock	14% (6 respondents)
Chasing problem lions away	9% (4 respondents)
Protecting enclosures using dogs	9% (4 respondents)
Finding lost livestock	5% (2 respondents)
Compensating for livestock losses	5% (2 respondents)

Responses to why the approaches above are not effective to manage human-lion conflict.

Capture and translocation of lions killing livestock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lions returned to the area that they came from Most problem lions cause the same issues in a new place or are killed/kill local lions
Lethal control of lions killing livestock	This is only a temporary solution to a larger problem.
Chasing problem lions away	Lions often move back after being chased because we have not dealt with the core issue.
Protecting enclosures using dogs	Lions kill the dogs
Finding lost livestock	No explanations given
<i>Reason below added post-forum</i>	
Compensation	Not sustainable long term

Top five greatest barriers in implementing conflict management approaches.

Lack of sufficient funding to implement and sustain management strategies: 77% (33 respondents)	<p><i>What is needed to address this barrier?</i></p> <p>Long term funding, diverse funding sources, funding collaboration and partnership</p>
Size or remoteness of the area: 58% (25 respondents)	<p><i>What is needed to address this barrier?</i></p> <p>Enhanced communication, rapid response vehicles, transportation, more staff</p>
Community unwilling to restrict livestock from the wildlife area: 42% (18 respondents)	<p><i>What is needed to address this barrier?</i></p> <p>More education to herders, government fines, non-financial incentives or support systems</p>
Lack of community willingness to monitor roaming livestock: 28% (12 respondents)	<p><i>What is needed to address this barrier?</i></p> <p>More frequent community engagement, Herding 4 Health programmes</p>
There are not enough staff: 23% (10 respondents)	<p><i>What is needed to address this barrier?</i></p> <p>Need more trained staff, greater budget for hiring, local community recruitment</p>

Survey Responses: Measuring Impact

Conflict management approaches and their return on investment to reduce conflict.

Top five approaches with the highest return on investment:

1. Building permanent lion-proof enclosures (61%; 25 respondents)
2. Ensuring livestock are enclosed at night (51%; 21 respondents)
3. Engaging pastoralists about living with lions (42%; 17 respondents)
4. Engaging communities about the value of wildlife (39%; 16 respondents)
5. Early alert warning systems (37%; 15 respondents)

Top five approaches with no return on investment:

1. Capture and translocation of lions killing livestock (15%; 6 respondents)
2. Lethal control of lions killing livestock (12.20%; 5 respondents)
3. Protecting enclosures using dogs (7%; 3 respondents)
4. Protecting enclosures using guards (2%; 1 respondent)
5. Avoiding herding livestock into thick bush (2%; 1 respondent)

Top five approaches with the lowest return on investment:

1. Capture and translocation of lions killing livestock (22%; 9 respondents)
2. Reinforcing traditional enclosures (15%; 6 respondents)
3. Lethal control of lions killing livestock (20%; 8 respondents)
4. Using loud noises or other deterrents at enclosures (12%; 5 respondents)
5. Communal herding (12%; 5 respondents)

Top five uses of metric data or information collected on conflict management.

1. Make decisions on which approaches to use (90%; 37 respondents)
2. Fundraising or data for grants (73%; 30 respondents)
3. Incorporate the data into management plans or strategies (71%; 29 respondents)
4. Develop reports for sharing with partners or key aligned organizations or wildlife authorities (71%; 29 respondents)
5. Develop reports for internal use (68%; 28 respondents)

Metrics used to measure the effectiveness of conflict approaches.

Metrics related to lions	Metrics related to livestock	Metrics related to conflict	Metrics related to people
Lion and prey population trends	Number of livestock killed by lions (in improved enclosures, with herders, by farmers with livestock management training)	Conflict trends (before and after interventions)	Community tolerance/attitudes for lions
Number of retaliatory attacks on lions	Number cattle in herding programmes	Number reported human-lion incidents (against number of interventions)	Number of people killed/injured by lions
Presence of lions	Number of livestock farmers kraaling in hotspots	Response times to conflict incidents	Number community awareness raising events and participation
Change in lion loss incidents	Proportion of livestock successfully protected by interventions	Number of conflict management tools adopted or carried out	% change in illegal wildlife activities
Frequency of lion sightings near settlements or grazing areas		Occurrence of conflict following early warning alert	Number of suspects and cases successfully prosecuted for illegal wildlife crime
Lion movement patterns and how it correlates with conflict hotspots		Return rate of a chased lion back to area of high conflict	Number of households with diversified livelihoods opportunities
		Effectiveness of enclosures (Number of breaches by lions)	

Survey Responses: Incentives

Top five incentives used to promote coexistence between people and lions and their effectiveness.



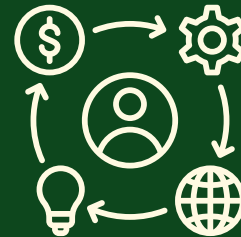
Tourism lodges and associated income and/or employment for communities

29% rated this as highly effective (n = 12)
12% rated this as effective (n = 5)



Other diversified employment opportunities for communities (e.g. community guardians)

61% rated this as highly effective (n = 25)
34% rated this as effective (n = 14)



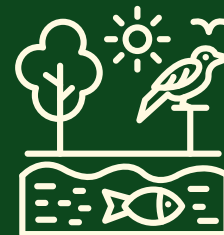
Income or other benefits from conservation practices (e.g. certified Wildlife Friendly Beef)

22% rated this as highly effective (n = 9)
7% rated this as effective (n = 3)



Performance Payments

27% rated this as highly effective (n = 11)
17% rated this as effective (n = 7)



Payment for ecosystem services

15% rated this as highly effective (n = 6)
4% rated this as effective (n = 2)

Top five incentives that respondents would like to use but have not been able to.

1. Wildlife or biodiversity credits (54%; 22 respondents)
2. Income or other benefits from conservation practises (46%; 19 respondents)
3. Payment for ecosystem services (39%; 16 respondents)
4. Carbon credits (37%; 15 respondents)
5. Other diversified employment opportunities for communities (29%; 12 respondents)

Challenges with incentive programmes.

- Financial sustainability for long-term impact
 - Most funding is short-term which makes it difficult to maintain when support ends
 - Lack of funding dedicated to incentives
 - More focus on short-term benefits than long-term sustainability
- Inconsistent community benefits
 - Communities want the rewards before the effort and stop when incentives end
 - Can create a hand-out mentality that does not support behaviour change
 - Benefits not always equitably shared among community members
 - Unrealistic expectations from local communities or stakeholders
- Government restrictions or demands
 - Conflicting sectoral policies
 - Misalignment between government priorities and community needs
 - Not enough policy and political support
- Complicated management
 - Too much effort and management for conservancy leadership
 - Not enough enforcement of rewards or punitive actions
 - Lack of accountability in fund management
 - Monitoring and verification a challenge
- Missing robust/strong linkage between incentives and conservation outcomes



Z. Dvornicky-Raymond, 2025

Survey Responses: Resources

Other human-wildlife coexistence or incentive management approaches that could be applicable to lions.

- Conservation incentive payments
- BioBoundary methods ex. chemical deterrents or scent marks
- More entrepreneurship opportunities for products with premiums for Wildlife Friendly
- Compensation schemes
- Subsidies for sustainable practises
- Ecotourism
- Lion bonds
- Livestock or lion insurance schemes
- Social games or activities ex. Soccer competitions

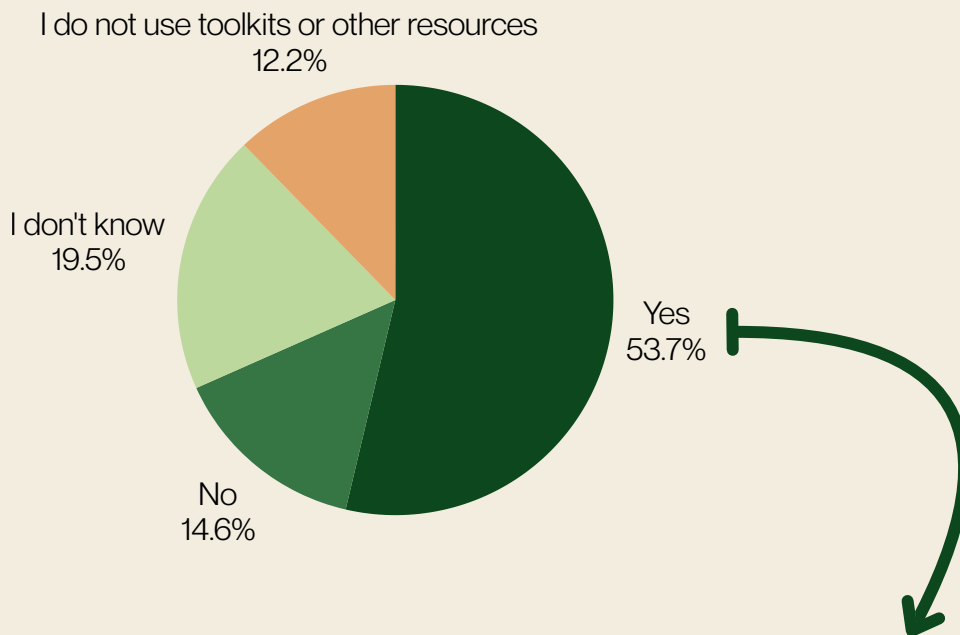
“Are there other lion conflict resources (ex. Toolkits, field guides, educational pamphlets etc.) that you have found useful?”

- Yes = 23 responses (56.1%)
- No = 18 responses (43.9%)

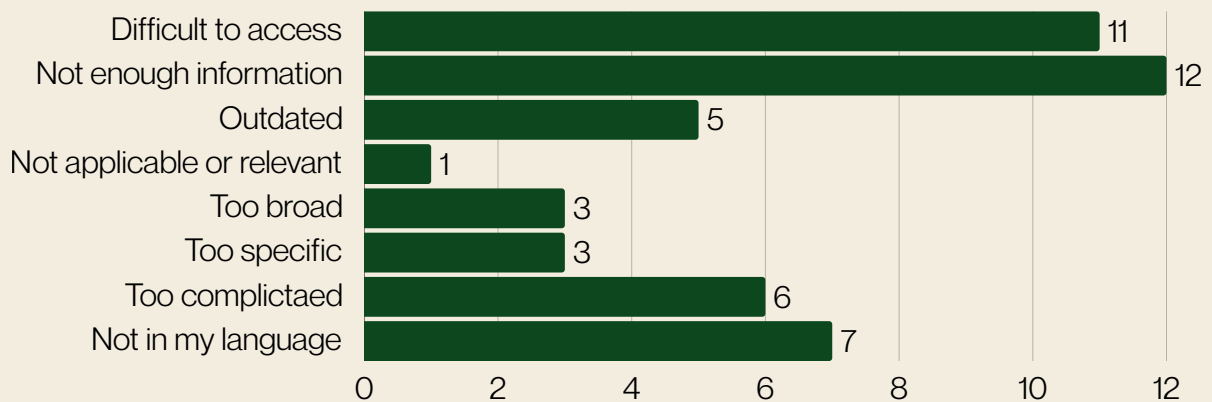
For those who answered “Yes”, respondents further shared what top three qualities made the resource helpful from a set list. Top selections included resources that are:

- Accessible = 14 respondents (34.1%)
- Highly informative = 17 respondents (41.5%)
- Up-to-date and regularly updated = 9 respondents (22%)
- Locally or specifically tailored = 13 respondents (31.7%)
- Broadly applicable = respondents 6 (14.6%)
- In multiple languages = 5 respondents (12.2%)
- Other/Open-ended Responses
 - *“Toolkits are tricky because conflict is very context specific and what works in one area is not always transferable to another. I think a toolkit for community approach and involvement is more useful than the conflict tools themselves.”*

Percentage of respondents who believe the current human-lion conflict resources have limitations.



What are the most critical limitations?
Select the top 3 to 5.



Comments on critical limitations to lion conflict resources

- Communities struggle to maintain activities and without NGO intervention it won't keep going.
- It's tough to determine what is the best option to implement and everything has its pros and cons, and some (like compensation) can be quite a morass. It's daunting to determine what the best approach to use is.
- Too expensive to implement

Qualities that would make other conflict resources more useful.

Accessible	61% (25 respondents)
Highly informative	42% (7 respondents)
Up-to-date and regularly updated	46% (19 respondents)
Locally or specifically tailored	54% (22 respondents)
Broadly applicable	17% (7 respondents)
In multiple language	29% (12 respondents)
Available as a digital application	15% (6 respondents)
Other (please specify): <i>“An assessment of the pros and cons for each strategy for practitioners, as usually these aren't included and people find out the hard way how things don't work.”</i>	5% (2 respondents)

Other Resources

African Lion Database

Uganda Aims for 30% increase in Carnivore Populations by 2033: Launch of the 2024-2034 Strategic Action Plan

<https://lionrangers.org/on-going-project/>

Lion Ranger Manual

Journal Article: Examining rural livelihoods relevant to human-lion conflict interventions within the communal conservancies of the Kunene Region, Namibia

Journal Article: Desert-adapted lions on communal land: Surveying the costs incurred by, and perspectives of, communal-area livestock owners in northwest Namibia

WASIMA Contact

Co-developing a community camera trapping programme to deliver benefits of living with wildlife

Wildlife Authority Interviews

The majority of wildlife authority interviews were conducted via online calls and two were submitted via email with answers typed out. A total of nine countries are represented in the wildlife authority interview results, including Burkina Faso, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

“How long have you been working in lion conservation or management?” (This was for the individual and not the institution.)

- Seven respondents had over 15 years of work experience in lion conservation while two had between 8 to 15 years of experience.

“Where does most of your conflict management work occur? Are there areas that need support and what are some of the barriers to supporting challenging areas?”

- Respondents reported conflict taking place in both protected and conservation areas, and report communities that live around protected areas experience conflict.
 - Conservation area conflict was more prevalent due to locations of communities, and lifestyle habits. I.e. when they take their animals for grazing in the case of unfenced protected areas.
- Communities that are near national parks, conservation and protected areas are in need of support, and can have negative viewpoints (e.g. the government does not care about us) towards the wildlife authorities.
- Authorities face significant challenges in traversing difficult terrain, accessing and connecting with remote communities with poor infrastructure, safely containing expanding lion populations, and inability to translocate conflict lions as needed.
 - Limited transportation and transportation options was a barrier that was identified as a core component of this issue by multiple respondents.
 - Specific areas mentioned: Badingilo NP, Southern Mozambique, Majete Wildlife Reserve, Kafue NP, Hwange, Matusadona, Mana pools, Nande area and South- East Gonarezhou.

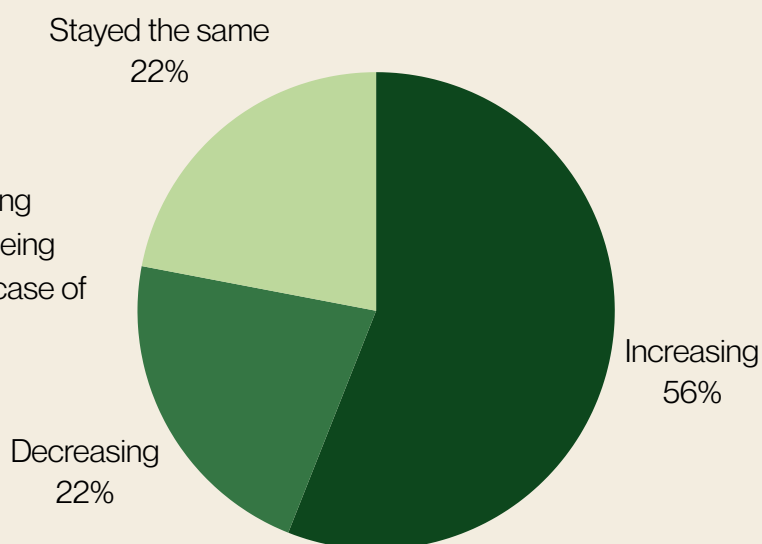
“During your work, what have you seen as the main reasons for human-lion conflict? What conflict are you seeing?”

- Respondents for this question all gave highly similar responses focusing on how human and lion populations are increasingly overlapping to meet daily needs. Top responses included:
- Limited prey base (5 responses)
- Livestock predation (4 responses)
- Habitat loss (2 responses)
- Expanding use of land for livestock grazing (2 responses)
- Expanded human development (1 response)

“Do you think human-lion conflict has been increasing, decreasing, or is about the same where you work over the last 5 years? Why?”

Top responses for this trend included:

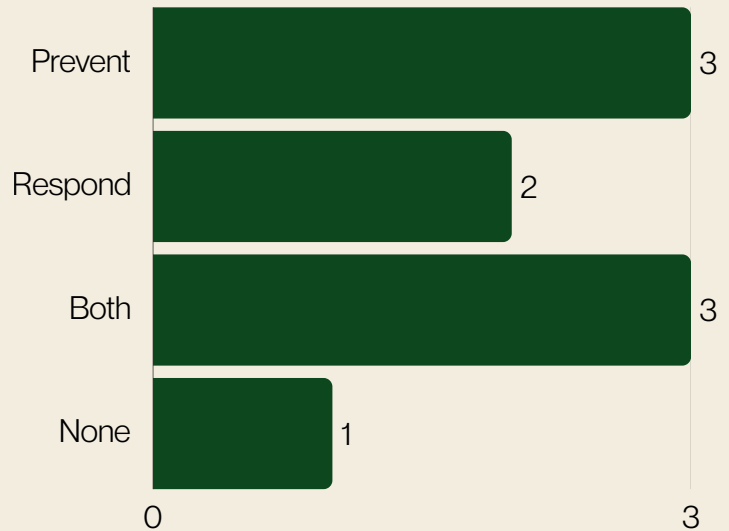
- Decreasing prey base
- Human encroachment into lion habitat
- For those who reported conflict levels being ‘about the same,’ this was linked to lions being highly confined to protected areas in the case of those that are fenced.



“Do you have written guidelines or procedures for managing or responding to human-lion conflict?”

- Four respondents reported having guidelines used for responding to human-lion conflict, however, two out of four respondents (50%) indicated that the guidelines are not written down, and another respondent shared that the guidelines in use are old and in need of updating.
- Responses to conflict included compensation (paying for funerals, livestock predation, medical bills), sending out teams to assess damages, and to translocate or euthanize conflict lions as needed.

“Can you describe whether in your role, you work more to prevent conflict from happening or respond to conflict incidents?”



“Are there any other approaches or procedures you or your team use (that you haven't previously mentioned) to manage human-lion conflict?”

- Respondents reported interest in management approaches including:
 - Use of bells on livestock
 - Increase use of natural bomas
 - Creating conservancies for tourism
 - Increase use of translocation
- Respondents noted that barriers to such approaches included limited funding, community buy-in, pressure from the press, and community response if they do not see the benefit of the work.

“Do you provide compensation/consolation for communities impacted by human-lion conflict?”

- Two respondents indicated compensation programmes are offered, and five respondents indicated no compensation programmes are offered.
- For programmes that are offered, compensation is provided in the form of money in accordance with the damages or loss.
- For countries without compensation, they note that there is support provided, including assistance with medical needs from an attack, providing food or a coffin to affected families, groceries or employment to surviving family members.
- Reluctance around compensation programmes included issues with the financial stability of such a programme / funding the programme, false claims, and response time from conflict to compensation.

“Have you used or developed any incentive programmes to help promote coexistence?”

Respondents offered ideas including:

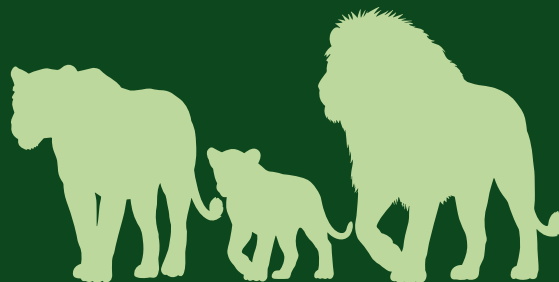
- Predator species-specific compensation
- Revenue-sharing models for tourist hunting programmes
- Performance-based payments
- Increasing ecotourism programmes
- Establishing community investment work and collaborations



V. Frediani, 2014

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