



## Department of Environmental Affairs confirms extension of zero quota for leopard hunting in South Africa

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16 January 2017

The Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) can confirm that a zero quota for the hunting of leopard (*Panthera pardus*) has been extended to 2017.

The decision is based on the review of available scientific information on the status and recovery of leopard populations in South Africa. The Scientific Authority recommended to the Minister of Environmental Affairs, Mrs Edna Molewa that, based on the information received and reviewed, a zero quota for 2017 for the hunting of leopard, with the possibility of introducing a precautionary hunting quota in 2018.

The zero quota for the hunting of leopard has been in place since January 2016 following an evidence-based decision by the Scientific Authority.

The Scientific Authority took into account input from the Scientific Steering Committee for Leopard Monitoring comprising government institutions, NGOs, representatives of industry and academic institutions. Also taken into account was the results of systematic camera trap surveys undertaken in KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo and Mpumalanga as well as relevant data from the industry obtained using Cat Spotter.

Draft decisions from the 17<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES CoP17) require all Parties with leopard export quotas to review the leopard hunting quotas and provide the scientific basis for the quota allocated.

This CITES review process will continue in 2017 to ensure that an appropriate quota is allocated for the South African leopard population.

The status of the Norms and Standards for Leopard Hunting, which are soon to be published for public comment, was also taken into consideration. The Scientific Authority has recommended in its proposed quota zero quota for 2016 that a number of interventions should be implemented to ensure the sustainable utilisation of leopard populations. This included the development of norms and standards for the management and monitoring of leopard hunting as well as the extension of particularly systematic camera trap surveys to all provinces where leopard occur.

The Scientific Authority was established in terms of Section 60 (1) of the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, 2004 (Act No.10 of 2004) (NEMBA) (as amended) to assist in regulating and restricting the trade in specimens of listed threatened or protected species and species to which an international agreement regulating international trade applies.

The Department of Environmental Affairs is implementing the recommendations made by the Scientific Authority.

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