

For Immediate Release

Publication of *Conservation Status and Red List of the Terrestrial Carnivores of Namibia*

The *Conservation Status and Red List of the Terrestrial Carnivores of Namibia* and an associated poster highlighting key findings have now been published. This publication, also known as the Carnivore Red Data Book, provides the latest scientific information on the conservation status of Namibia's 34 terrestrial carnivore species.

This is only the second Red Data Book to be published on the fauna of Namibia. The first was on the birds of Namibia in 2015 entitled *Birds to Watch in Namibia: Red, Rare and Endemic Species*.

This joint Carnivore publication between the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT), the Large Carnivore Management Association of Namibia (LCMAN) and the Namibian Chamber of Environment (NCE), involved 25 expert species assessors, 30 contributors and 31 reviewers. The book comprises just over 190 pages, 39 maps, more than 100 colour photographs and over 750 references.

Each species assessment includes: 1) a detailed description of its distribution in Namibia alongside a map displaying records from public contributors and scientific surveys; 2) the latest population estimates and trends; 3) ecology and behaviour of the species; 4) and conservation threats, status and recommended actions.

Each conservation status assessment follows the global standard created by the International Union of Conservation of Nature (IUCN), which provides guidelines for deciding which of the IUCN threat categories is applicable to the species under consideration. Some species may be more or less threatened nationally than they are internationally, depending on environmental and human factors. External reviewers check each assessment to ensure that it adheres to the IUCN standard.

Namibia's arid environment supports naturally lower carnivore population densities than other African countries, and species that prefer wetter environments (e.g. otters) will always be rare in Namibia. Yet other species thrive in arid environments, like the black-footed cat, brown hyaena and cheetah – Namibia is a major population stronghold for all three of these. These national assessments thus provide guidance for Namibia-specific carnivore conservation actions that respond to the Namibian situation.

All 34 species fell within the IUCN categories from Least Concern (meaning not threatened) to Critically Endangered. Eleven species were classified as Near Threatened or worse, including five cat species, two hyaena species, the African wild dog, two otter species and the African striped weasel. All of these, except the weasel, face known threats to their survival. Reducing or eliminating these threats are the main focus of carnivore conservationists across Namibia.

The three most common threats facing Namibian carnivores are human-carnivore conflict, bycatch and habitat-related threats. Human-carnivore conflict becomes a threat to carnivore species when farmers respond to livestock losses by killing carnivores, or they kill carnivores as a way to prevent livestock losses. The term bycatch refers to animals

being killed when they are not the main targets – for example, when a small carnivore that does not threaten livestock is killed in a trap set for a large carnivore. Habitat threats include the complete loss of habitat (e.g. a wetland is cleared for a crop field), habitat degradation through poor rangeland management, and habitat fragmentation due to fencing and other barriers to carnivore movement.

While the Carnivore Red Data Book provides a scientific perspective on carnivores, other perspectives are required to formulate and implement conservation actions. Farmers, conservancy members and hunters are key stakeholders, since they are at the front line of living with and managing carnivores. Consequently, these stakeholders along with research institutions and conservation organisations will be invited to establish a Carnivore Working Group chaired by the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT).

The Working Group’s primary responsibility will be to create and implement conservation action plans and to develop a research agenda to improve our understanding of Namibia’s carnivores. They will also coordinate broader actions that affect all carnivores, such as creating awareness of major threats (e.g., indiscriminate use of poison) and improving education on the role of carnivores in the environment.

The Carnivore Red Data Book thus provides a starting point for these actions and a baseline that will be used to measure progress, as future editions of this book will show whether the conservation status of Namibian carnivores improves over time.

Members of the public can purchase a copy of the *Conservation Status and Red List of the Terrestrial Carnivores of Namibia* from local bookstores (recommended retail price N\$260), or access the book free online at: <http://the-eis.com/elibrary/search/27193>

Posters can be collected from the Namibian Chamber of Environment office at 20 Nachtigal Street, near Ausspannplatz.

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FRONT COVER OF THE CARNIVORE RED DATA BOOK ON NEXT PAGE

POSTER OF THE CARNIVORE RED DATA BOOK ON FOLLOWING PAGE

Front cover

Conservation Status and Red List of the Terrestrial Carnivores of Namibia



Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism
Large Carnivore Management Association of Namibia
Namibian Chamber of Environment

Back cover



NAMIBIA'S ENDANGERED AND THREATENED CARNIVORES

6 THREATENED

1. **AFRICAN WILD DOG**
CRITICALLY ENDANGERED
1,377-3,599
2. **CHEETAH**
ENDANGERED
±1,500
3. **LEOPARD**
VULNERABLE
<12,000
4. **LION**
VULNERABLE
±600
5. **BLACK-FOOTED CAT**
VULNERABLE
±2,600
6. **SPOTTED HYAENA**
VULNERABLE
615-715

11 of Namibia's
34 terrestrial
carnivores are
threatened or
near
threatened

5 NEAR THREATENED

1. **SERVAL**
1,500-4,000
2. **BROWN HYAENA**
<3,000
3. **SPOTTED-NECKED OTTER**
UNKNOWN
4. **AFRICAN CLAWLESS OTTER**
UNKNOWN
5. **AFRICAN STRIPED WEASEL**
UNKNOWN

COMMON THREATS

HUMAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICT

POISONS, TRAPPING, SHOOTING, digging out breeding dens and killing pups

HABITAT LOSS

Expansion of GAME-PROOF FENCING and the prevention of MOBILITY for WILDLIFE, and RANGELAND DEGRADATION

NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS OF PREDATORS

BYCATCH

Killed in SWARES, GUN TRAPS or by POISON aimed at other animals - devastating impact on non-target species, e.g. birds of prey

ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE

Killed or captured to use their PARTS, TRAFFIC, THEIR SKIN, BONE OR TEETH, or sell them live (often as cubs, pups or kittens)

ACCIDENTAL ROAD MORTALITIES

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

MANAGEMENT

- PROTECT livestock to REDUCE human-carnivore conflict and indiscriminate killing
- RESTORE degraded habitat and PREVENT further degradation
- MAINTAIN or INCREASE natural prey availability
- DEVELOP clear protocols and monitoring standards for carnivore translocations

AWARENESS

- INCREASE understanding of and tolerance for carnivores through education and awareness
- PROMOTE carnivore-based tourism
- CREATE and IMPROVE incentives for carnivore conservation

RESEARCH

- MONITOR carnivore population trends for species and areas of concern
- COLLECT more and higher quality data (including economic) to inform management actions
- OBTAIN better information on causes of mortality and severity of threats

INSTITUTIONAL

A multi-stakeholder national Carnivore Working Group should be established to:

- DEVELOP action plans for threatened species
- IMPLEMENT the plans
- MONITOR and ASSESS impacts of actions on carnivore populations
- UPDATE information on both threats and actions as they be relevant per species and ADAPT implementation accordingly.

Conservation Status and Red List of the Terrestrial Carnivores of Namibia 2022

This poster and Namibia Red Data Book for Carnivores were produced with support from:

The book Conservation Status and Red List of the Terrestrial Carnivores of Namibia 2022 is available in electronic form <https://www.namibia.gov.na/RedDataBook> and <https://www.namibia.gov.na/RedDataBook> (PDF) on the website of the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries.

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