



SUMMARY



DECLARATION ON THE ABOLITION OF TROPHY HUNTING

Trophy hunting is an act of violence that stands as a tragic symbol of our fractured relationship with nature. It denies that animals are sentient beings, and places species, ecosystems and ultimately humanity itself at risk.

The continued killing of large numbers of wild animals for trophies is rooted in outdated and misplaced notions of dominance and conquest over nature. In a civilised society, there can be no moral justification for taking the life of an animal merely for entertainment and vanity.

Trophy hunting disrupts complex social structures within animal communities. Trophy hunters often inflict appalling injuries on the animals they target. Threatened species, already struggling to survive, are actively pursued.

The removal of the largest, strongest, and biologically fittest individuals is particularly concerning. These possess important traits that have aided in their species' survival during the course of evolution. They are now more important than ever in our rapidly changing environment.

Despite mounting evidence of its harmful impacts, a powerful commercial industry continues to promote and profit from the killing of extraordinary numbers of wild animals. It rewards and honours individuals who kill the largest or highest numbers of animals, and encourages others to emulate or exceed such perceived accomplishments.

There are ethically and economically robust alternatives to trophy hunting. Community-based tourism, ecological restoration, and habitat protection can generate sustainable income while preserving biodiversity. These approaches respect both nature and human dignity.

Ethics and the welfare of wild animals can no longer be treated as dispensable afterthoughts on our fragile, ailing planet. The preservation and restoration of a life-sustaining environment requires an end to humanity's suicidal war with nature.

This requires us to value nature not only for the direct and indirect benefits it provides us with, but also for its intrinsic worth. It is therefore imperative that we invest in conservation in a way and at a scale that reflects humanity's interdependence with the ecosystems we inhabit.

Moreover, it necessitates an understanding of the consequences of our individual and collective behaviours and choices - many of which are fuelling destruction of the earth's life support systems at a rate unprecedented in human history.

We need to fundamentally reset and heal our relationship with the natural world and must ask ourselves: why is killing wild animals under the guise of 'sport' still permissible?

We can—and must—end this practice, and do so now. Deeply rooted in the colonial past, trophy hunting has no place in the future we should strive to build. Let us consign it to history, where it belongs.

We call on individuals, nations, and international bodies to act. Now.

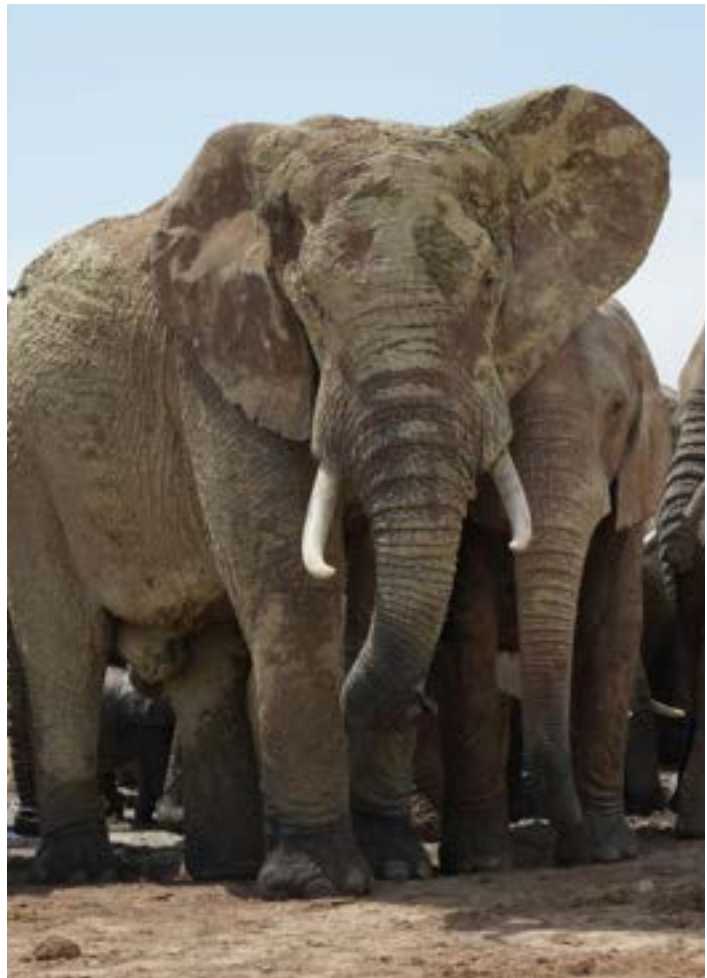
KEY FACTS & FIGURES

Nations

1. As many as **32,000** endangered animals were shot by trophy hunters last year.
2. **Over half** were killed by American hunters. Just **12** countries accounted for nearly **90%** of animals killed.
3. Between **76-82%** of Americans oppose trophy hunting.¹ Opposition in major European hunting nations such as Germany and Denmark, who both feature in the top 12, ranges from **75-89%**.² In Britain, **92%** of people deem it unacceptable.³
4. **Two-thirds** of countries/territories imported **0** trophies. A further **20%** imported fewer than 100.
5. The top exporter of hunting trophies was Canada, with **37%** of global trade. In 2nd place was South Africa with **20%**. Canada and South Africa also feature in the top 12 importers. 84% of Canadians are opposed to sport hunting of animals.⁴ **68%** of South Africans oppose trophy hunting.⁵

Hunters

6. A small number of hunters are responsible for shooting large numbers of animals. Spanish trophy hunter Tony Sanchez-Arino has **4,044** kills, including 1,317 elephants, 340 lions, 167 leopards, and 127 Black rhinoceroses.⁶ Zimbabwean Ron Thomson has killed **5,000** elephants.
7. Over **300** members of Safari Club International have shot animals from **100** or more different species. To win its top prize, the 'World Conservation & Hunting Award', members must shoot the equivalent of approximately **537** animals.
8. The current Top 12 award-winners have shot the equivalent of over **10,000** animals between them. **8** are American, **2** are Russian, and **2** Spanish.



Spanish trophy hunter, Tony Sanchez-Arino, said his "...personal record is 20 elephants in 75 minutes"

Animals

9. Bears were by far the most popular animal, representing over **one-fifth** of the total. Most were Black bears. Hunters also shot Brown, Glacier and Polar bears. Canada is the only country which still allows Polar bear trophy hunting – the practice is banned in both the US and Russia.
10. In 2nd place is primates – specifically monkeys and baboons - on **10%**. (Baboons are a type of monkey).
11. African elephants are 3rd on **9%**. These are now classed as 2 species – Forest elephants are Critically Endangered on IUCN's Red List, with Savanna elephants classified as Endangered. Both are shot by trophy hunters.
12. Other animals in the Top 12 are Giraffes, Lechwe antelopes and Zebras – all are on **6%**. Lions follow on **5%**, Hippopotamuses and Crocodiles on **4%**, Wolves and Leopards register **3%** each, and Caracal cats complete the list with **2%**.
13. Leopards, Cheetahs and Black rhinoceroses were among several CITES 'Appendix I' species shot by trophy hunters. CITES states trade in such species "must only be authorized in exceptional circumstances".⁷



Animals in the top 12 of species targeted by trophy hunters.

Trophies

14. Genitalia of bears, elephants and giraffes were among trophies taken home by hunters.
15. Bodies, skins, feet, ears, tails, and – in the case of elephants – trunks also feature.
16. Skulls, horns, tusks, bones, claws, and teeth were popular too.

Trends

17. The number of animals shot has fallen by one-third over the past decade.
18. However, trophy hunters still kill significant numbers of animals. Since Cecil was shot in 2015, hunters have killed another **10,000** lions. The number of lions remaining is estimated at between **15-20,000**.⁸

Conservation

19. Wildlife numbers have fallen by **73%** since 1970.⁹ IUCN Red List reports commonly cite hunting as one of the contributory factors to a species' decline. Several studies have directly linked trophy hunting to declines of species such as lions and leopards.¹⁰
20. Countries where trophy hunting is banned appear to buck the trend. Kenya's wild lion population has increased by **25%** over the past decade.¹¹ Its black rhinoceros population has more than **doubled** to over 1,000 individuals.¹² White rhino numbers went up **38%** between 2017-2021.¹³ Elephants increased by **16%** from 2021 to 2024, while giraffe populations increased by **22%** over the same period.¹⁴ Tiger, elephant and leopard numbers are increasing in India, and populations of big cats and monkeys are growing in Costa Rica. Both countries prohibit trophy hunting as part of wider conservation measures.



Wildlife numbers have fallen by 73% since 1970. Countries where trophy hunting is banned appear to buck the trend.

Local Communities

21. Local communities in hunting areas rarely – if ever – benefit from trophy hunting. A report by pro-hunting group CIC says “hunting companies contribute only **3%** of their revenue to communities living in hunting areas. The vast majority of their expenditure does not accrue to local people and businesses, but to firms, government agencies and individuals local internationally or in national capitals.”¹⁵
22. A study by South African economists found that nature tourism projects such as photographic safaris can create up to **11** times as many jobs as trophy hunting for people in local rural communities.¹⁶
23. Maasai tribe members in Kenya where trophy hunting is banned have received extensive benefits from nature tourism, including free high school education. However, Maasai in Tanzania are being violently evicted from their land to make way for exclusive hunting estates for wealthy foreigners.

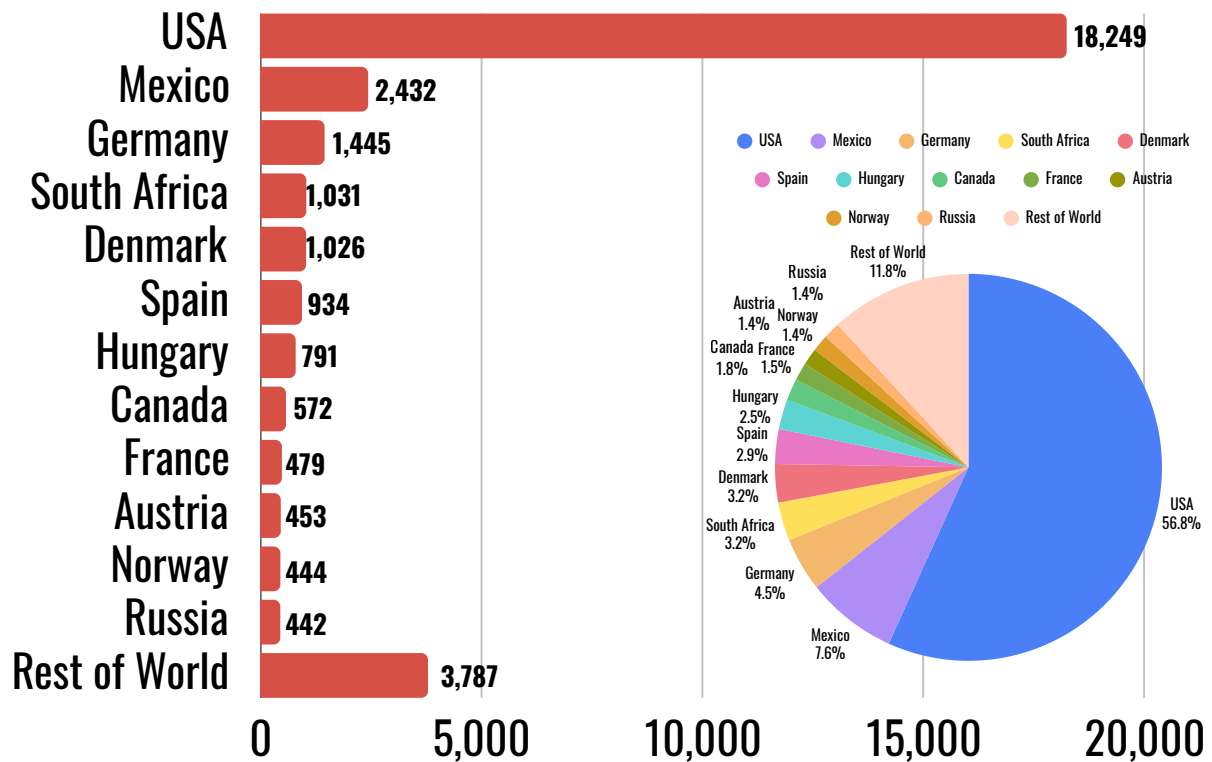
Animal Welfare

24. Research by the Campaign to Ban Trophy Hunting/Wildlife & Conservation Foundation has documented how trophy hunters commonly wound animals rather than kill them outright. Studies by US agencies point to around 50% of all animals shot by trophy hunters being wounded.

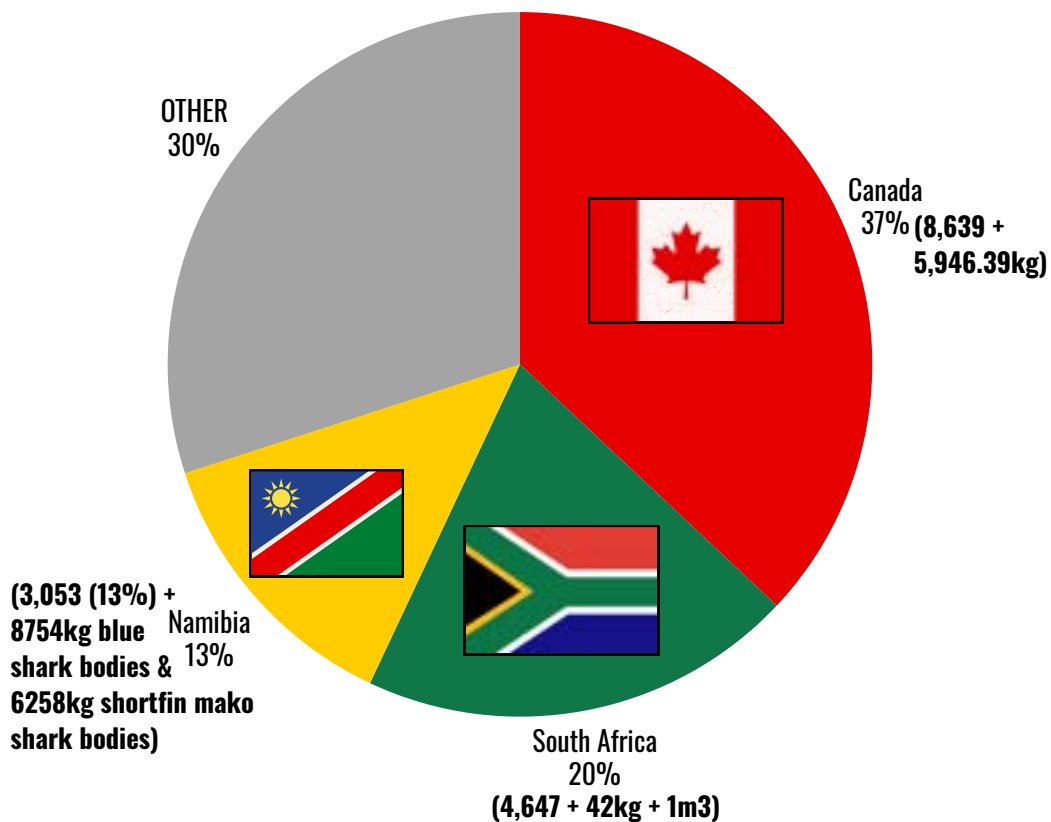
Notes On Data

25. The data on trophies in this report comes from UNEP-WCMC, which monitors wildlife trade in 250 countries and territories on behalf of CITES.
26. In 2024 – the most recent year for which full official data is available – the total number of hunting trophies imported of CITES-listed species was 32,085. In 2014, the figure was 46,881.
27. The data excludes species which are not CITES-listed. This includes animals that are considered threatened by the IUCN Red List e.g. Cape Buffalo. The number of non-CITES species shot each year is thought to be many times higher than the total number of CITES-listed animals.
28. The data excludes any animals hunted within a country by its own nationals (e.g. Americans hunting within the USA) and includes only those animals killed by foreign hunters and whose bodies are then transported to the hunters' country of origin.
29. The term trophies can mean either a whole animal or individual parts of the animal. The precise number of animals killed by trophy hunters is unknown.
30. There are occasional irregularities within the CITES wildlife trade database. These are often the result of faulty data provided by member states. In 2024, examples include some plant species being listed as hunting trophies, and 'horns' from bears being included in the list of trophies.
31. The data on the world's leading award-winning trophy hunters is from Safari Club International's annual 'Safari' Magazine (Awards edition). The data on the numbers of animals required for each award comes from SCI's World Hunting Awards Field Journal.¹⁷
32. The number of animals shown for each hunter listed in the Top 12 represents the sum of the animals required for each of the SCI awards won by that hunter. In some cases, the actual number of animals shot may be lower. This is because a single animal may count towards more than one award (e.g. a lion may count towards both the 'Big Five Award' and its 'Cats of the World Award'). In other cases, the actual number may be higher. This is because only Record Book-eligible animals count towards SCI awards. Such animals must be of a certain size to qualify. Many animals shot by trophy hunters fail to meet the criteria and are therefore not included in the data. In addition, SCI does not count many animals popular with animals, including several in the Top 12 (namely: monkeys/baboons, giraffes, and zebras). Hence, while Marcial Gomez Sequeira comes 8th on the list of Top 12 hunters with just over 800 animals, he is known to have shot at least 2,000 animals and possibly many more.

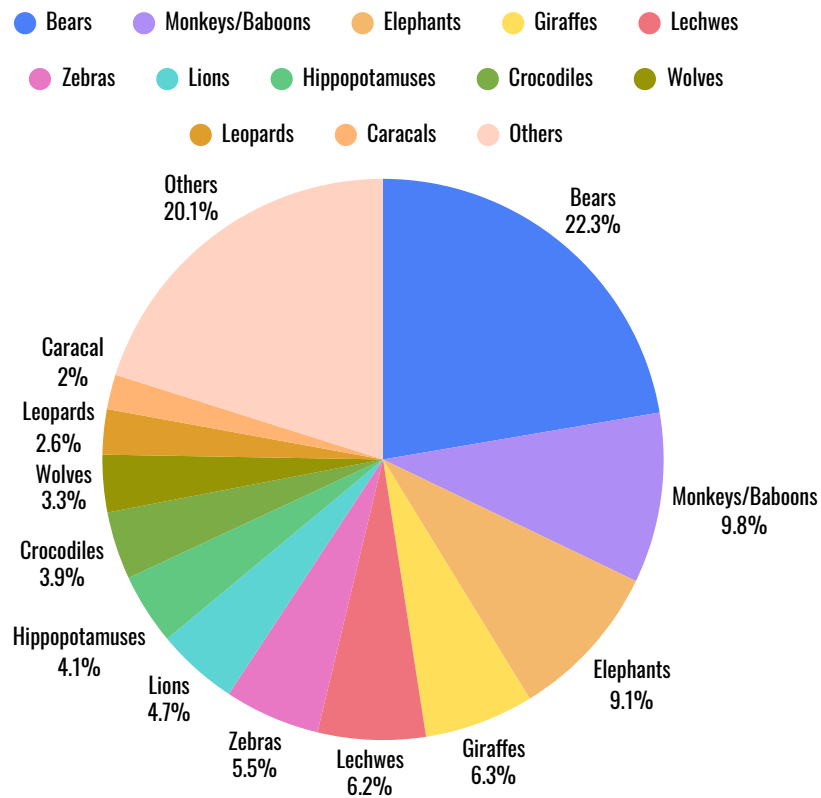
Top 12 Importers



Top 3 Exporters

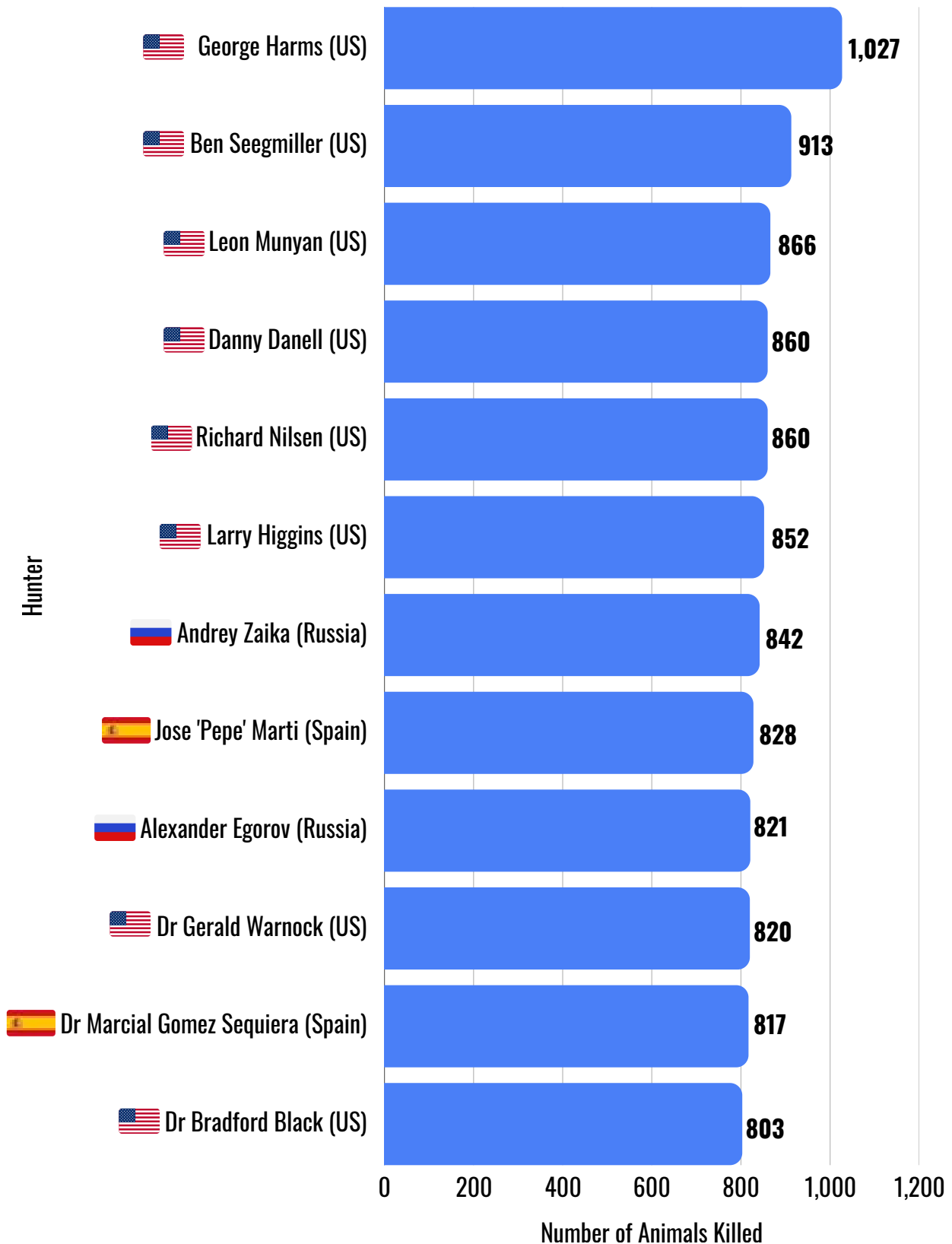


TOP 12 SPECIES



SCI'S Top 12 Award-Winning Hunters

Safari Club International's World Hunting Awards Program awards prizes to members who shoot large numbers of animals. Below is the total number of animals its Top 12 award-winners were required to shoot for each prize they won.



What do Trophy Hunters think about it?

These are actual quotes from real trophy hunters.

DID YOU EVER
GET UP FEELING
LIKE YOU JUST
HAD TO KILL
SOMETHING?

I TOOK MY
SON FOR HIS
9TH BIRTHDAY.

IT'S LIKE
MAINLINING
ON HEROIN!

IT FALLS TO THE
GROUND, IT'S
EYES ALREADY
STARING INTO THE
HEREAFTER. THE
EXHILARATION IS
COMPLETE.

WE HAVE A LARGE
WALL OF ANIMALS
WE CALL THE WALL
OF PAIN.

I WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER
THE PURE ADRENALINE-
INDUCED EXPERIENCE THE
BEAR'S EXISTENCE AFFORDED
ME.

BRAIN SHOT AT 48
YARDS: THE MOST
EMOTIONAL MOMENT
OF MY HUNTING
LIFE.

EVERY TIME I SEE
THOSE CREATURES
ADRENALINE STARTS
COURSING THROUGH
MY BLOOD.

TO SAY I HAD
THE TIME OF MY
LIFE IS NOT AN
EXAGGERATION.

NOT EVEN I COULD TELL YOU ALL
THE ANIMALS I HAVE HUNTED
BUT IT'S IN THE THOUSANDS.

MY LUNGS WERE
BELLOWS FANNING
THE FIRE OF
DESIRE FOR THIS
TROPHY.

MY ADRENALINE FLOWED SO
FAST THAT MY WHOLE BODY
TINGLED WITH EXCITEMENT.

MY PERSONAL
RECORD IS 20
ELEPHANTS IN 75
MINUTES.

TAKING A **LIONESS**,
THERE'S NOTHING LIKE IT.

HUNTING'S **LIKE A
DRUG** TO PEOPLE
THAT DO IT.

I REMEMBER THE
**SOUNDS, SMELLS AND
FEEL OF THE ADRENALINE
RUSH** AS YOU TRACK AND
SCRUTINIZE THE IVORY.

I HUNT BECAUSE **MY KNEES
TREMBLE WHEN I HAVE A TARGET
IN THE CROSSHAIRS** OF THE SCOPE.

IT'S ABOUT AS
MUCH FUN AS YOU
CAN HAVE WITH
YOUR CLOTHES ON.

FOR SOMEONE
THAT GETS AN
ALMOST
PERVERSE LEVEL
OF SATISFACTION
FROM A BULLET
'THUD' ON ANY
ANIMAL, **THIS
WAS VERY
ENJOYABLE.**

THE ELEPHANT
FEET HAVE BEEN
**TURNED INTO
UMBRELLA STANDS.**

YOU SEE SOMETHING AND YOU
GET ALL ADRENALINE OVER IT
AND **YOU PAY ANYTHING FOR IT!**

MY 3 TROPHY ROOMS
HAVE **NEARLY 700 MOUNTS
OF ANIMALS** ON DISPLAY.

THE FEELING WAS
AMAZING – MY FIRST
AFRICAN ANIMAL, **I
WAS OVER THE MOON.**

**I SHOT 15 OF
THEM** THAT NIGHT
OFF THE BACK OF
THE TRUCK!

I JUST GOT
CARRIED AWAY
AND **SHOT
EVERYTHING!**

I HAD THIS THING
IN MY HEAD – **I
WANTED TO SHOOT
A BABOON!**

I'VE BECOME ENRICHED
BECAUSE OF THE ANIMALS
I'VE HUNTED.

What Public Figures & Conservationists Say

"The idea of killing for fun those animals most at risk of disappearing from the wild in our lifetimes is an abhorrent one."

The Times (London)



"Trophy hunters kill for pleasure. They destroy animals simply for bragging rights, to demonstrate their supposed courage. How on earth have we allowed this to continue for so long? Trophy hunting is just unconscionable. It is utterly cruel, utterly unnecessary and utterly disastrous from a conservation perspective. It inflicts pain and suffering on animals for no other reason other than to boast of some ephemeral 'prowess'. There is no material human need met by it: it is a hobby, pure and simple, and a deeply wrong one at that."

Dr Jane Goodall, 1934-2025

"Dr Jane Goodall DBE was a longstanding supporter of the Campaign to Ban Trophy Hunting. We at the Institute are committed to continuing that legacy in her name. We are opposed to trophy hunting based on ethical, ethological, ecological and economic concerns. These include the harm to individual animals, the removal of prime individuals from their groups - with damaging social and genetic consequences - and the inequality of allowing a select few people (often foreign tourists) to kill endangered species based on their financial privilege. As Dr Goodall said: 'Trophy hunting is not only cruel but it is having a negative effect on endangered and threatened wildlife. Each one of these animals is an individual, with a personality, a mind, and emotions.'"

Dr Zara Bending, Resident Expert on Wildlife Crime and International Law, The Jane Goodall Institute Global

"It's what people did in the 19th century. One would've thought people would've gotten over that. But apparently there are still people who get a kick out of killing things and taking the lives of others, which is something I find incomprehensible."

Sir David Attenborough OBE



"With the decline of wildlife worldwide, and many species approaching extinction, all caused by man, how can there be justification in trophy hunting? I call upon those countries from where these promoters of extinction come from to step up and ban the import of trophies."

President Seretse Khama, Botswana (2008-2018)

"We have a common responsibility to care for our planet. To think that animals are hunted for fun, when their death serves no other purposes than the provision of a 'trophy', is frankly offensive. Trophy hunting is cruel, meaningless, and a cowardly plundering of our animal world."

Bishop John Arnold, Environment spokesperson – Catholic Church (England & Wales)



What Public Figures & Conservationists Say cont...

“Trophy hunting is, and always has been, a rich white man’s sport. For Africans, it is a symbol of colonial oppression. The idea that trophy hunting benefits African economies is also a myth – or more accurately, a lie.”

Dr Paula Kahumbu, CEO Wildlife Direct (Kenya), Board member of WWF International

“Trophy hunting is linked to declining numbers of lions throughout its range. Lions have already disappeared from 93% of their historic range. They have declined by 43% in the past 21 years. Trophy hunting is standing in the way of progress because a small white elite, together with their clients, have exclusive access to the land.”

Professor Hans Bauer, Oxford University Wildlife Conservation Research Unit (WildCRU); author of IUCN Red List Assessment for Lions; co-founder, African Carnivores Initiative; member, IUCN Cat Specialist Group

“Advocates for Trophy Hunting are often blind to its long-term impacts on the hunted species, especially for those species considered threatened with extinction. This report illustrates the extent of the exploitation of threatened, and even non-threatened, species imported as trophies; the numbers are simply appalling.”

Professor Phyllis C. Lee, Director of Science, Amboseli Trust for Elephants

“Trophy hunting is an abomination masquerading as a means of ‘conservation’. CITES have found that trophy hunters have killed thousands of individuals that belong to species threatened with extinction. Killing animals whose numbers are declining is antithetical to conservation.”

Professor Fred Berkovitch Ph.D, Conservation Scientist, Anne Innis Dagg Foundation; former Executive Director, Save the Giraffes

“At a time when the number of wild animals has declined across the world by 73 per cent since 1970, it is madness to allow tens of thousands of them - usually the biggest and most spectacular individuals of their kind - to be killed for trophies. The arguments against trophy hunting are not only that it is cruel and unethical, but also that it does ecological and evolutionary damage to the species and ecosystems affected. Many of the targets are keystone species in globally important ecosystems, essential for climate stability, so shortening their lives has a measurable impact on the ecosystem services which sustain us all.

Dr Ian Redmond OBE, Hon.D.Uni.(hc), DSc(hc), FLS, FRGS, Consultant Wildlife Biologist; Head of Conservation, Ecoflox

“Humanity now has a stark choice. As we grow even more beyond 8+ billion people is it business as usual? Or do we come to our senses now and say enough is enough? There are many forces at work wanting things to stay as normal where hunters travel far and wide to kill innocent wildlife for thrills. Equally there is hope when we look at other forms of how we mistreat animals. For centuries, Spain and her South American colonies such as Mexico and Ecuador have undertaken thousands of bullfights. The act of bullfighting is now unpopular and has started to be banned across the world. In the UK, fox hunting, long a pastime of rich aristocrats, has also been outlawed. It is now time to add trophy hunting to this list.”

Simon Jones, CEO, Helping Rhinos

What Public Figures & Conservationists Say cont...

“The workers on South Africa's wildlife ranches are often exploited as deeply as they were during apartheid, and perhaps even more so in some cases. Trophy hunting both resembles and entrenches those colonialist relationships. Trophy hunting is the quintessential expression of a colonial endeavour. Switching in an organised fashion from trophy hunting to nature tourism could create many times more jobs in South Africa in poorer rural areas, and that they would be better jobs than those currently provided by the trophy hunting industry.”

Dr Ross Harvey, Director of Research, Good Governance Africa

“The entire premise of trophy hunting as conservation is based on a quicksand foundation of false promises and attempting to gloss over a clear record of failure. LionAid's 2025 assessment reveals an estimated total of 13,014 lions in eastern and southern Africa, and a critically low figure of 342 lions in western and central Africa. This underscores the alarming decline in lion populations and the urgent need for robust conservation measures, and the need to tackle the impact of trophy hunting”.

Dr Pieter Kat, Director, LionAid

“Trophy hunting continues to target species that are Near Threatened, Endangered or Critically Endangered, including CITES Appendix I animals that should only be traded in “exceptional circumstances”. With the majority of trophies imported by just a handful of countries, this is a policy failure, not a conservation success. Protecting wildlife means ending this trade, and not managing its decline. Conservation policy must catch up with reality and end the hunting of threatened species.”

Noma Dube, Founder - Zimbabwe Elephant Foundation

“When you talk about trophy hunting in Zimbabwe, you are rarely talking about communities. You are talking about a government that takes its percentage. You are talking about the trophy hunter and the organisation that is hosting the trophy hunters. Those are the people who see and receive the proceeds from the animals that are shot in Zimbabwe. The communities eat the crumbs.”

Alfred Sihwa, Director, Sibanye Conservancy Trust, Zimbabwe

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5. <https://www.humaneworld.org/en/news/new-ipsos-survey-reveals-majority-68>
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7. Art. II Fundamental Principles, CITES Convention (1973, as amended)
8. IUCN estimates are around 20,000. LionAid (2025) believes the figure to be closer to 13,500.
9. <https://www.worldwildlife.org/news/press-releases/catastrophic-73-decline-in-the-average-size-of-global-wildlife-populations-in-just-50-years-reveals-a-system-in-peril/>
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