

GOVERNMENT NOTICES • GOEWERMENTSKENNISGEWINGS

DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

NO. 7106

6 February 2026

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT: BIODIVERSITY ACT, 2004
(ACT NO. 10 OF 2004)

CONSULTATION ON THE INTENTION TO SET AND ALLOCATE THE 2026 AND 2027 CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA (CITES) EXPORT QUOTAS FOR ELEPHANT, BLACK RHINOCEROS AND LEOPARD HUNTING TROPHIES

I, Willem Abraham Aucamp, Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, hereby, in terms of regulation 3(2)(k) and (f) of Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Regulations, 2010, made under section 97(1) (b) (iv) of the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, 2004 (Act No. 10 of 2004), read together with section 97(1)(b)(viii), 99 and 100 of the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, 2004 (Act No. 10 of 2004) and the guidelines in Resolution Conf.14.7 (Rev.CoP15) on Management of Nationally Established Export Quotas, consult on my intention to set and allocate to provinces, the export quotas for elephant (*Loxodonta africana*), black rhinoceros (*Diceros bicornis*) and leopard (*Panthera pardus*) hunting trophies for 2026 and 2027 calendar years as follows:

QUOTA FOR 2026:

- **Elephant (*Loxodonta africana*)**: A quota of 300 (three hundred) tusks, derived from no more than 150 (one hundred and fifty) individual elephants.
- **Black Rhinoceros (*Diceros bicornis*)**: A quota of 12 (twelve) hunting trophies.
- **Leopard (*Panthera pardus*)**: A quota of 11 (eleven) leopard hunting trophies to be sourced from 11 (eleven) designated and eligible hunting zones.

QUOTA FOR 2027

- **Elephant (*Loxodonta africana*)**: A quota of 300 (three hundred) tusks, derived from no more than 150 (one hundred and fifty) individual elephants.
- **Black Rhinoceros (*Diceros bicornis*)**: A quota of 12 (twelve) hunting trophies.
- **Leopard (*Panthera pardus*)**: A quota of 11 (eleven) leopard hunting trophies to be sourced from 11 (eleven) designated and eligible hunting zones.

The above-mentioned quotas are allocated to provinces as follows:

Species	Province	Allocated quota	Notes
<i>D.b. bicornis</i>	All	3	
<i>D.b. minor</i>	All	8	

<i>D.b. michaeli</i>	All	1	
<i>Loxodonta africana</i>	All	300 (three hundred) tusks, derived from no more than 150 (one hundred and fifty) individual elephants	
<i>Panthera pardus</i>	KwaZulu-Natal	1	Only one leopard to be hunted per zone). The maps of eligible leopard hunting zones are presented in Annexure A.
<i>Panthera pardus</i>	Limpopo	5	
<i>Panthera pardus</i>	Mpumalanga	2	
<i>Panthera pardus</i>	North West	3	

Members of the public are invited to submit, within 30 days from the date of the publication of this Notice in the Government Gazette or publication of the newspaper notice, whichever is the later date of publication, written representations or objections on the setting and allocation of the export quotas for elephant (*Loxodonta africana*), black rhinoceros (*Diceros bicornis*) and leopard (*Panthera pardus*) hunting trophies for 2026 and 2027 calendar years to any of the following addresses:

By post: Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
 The Director-General
 Attention: Ms Olga Kumalo
 Private Bag X 447
PRETORIA
 0001

By hand: Reception, Environment House, 473 Steve Biko Road, Arcadia, **PRETORIA**.

By email: cites@dff.e.gov.za.

Enquiries must be directed to Mr Fhumulani Tshamano at Tel: 012 399 8864 or Email: cites@dff.e.gov.za.

Representations or objections received after the closing date may be disregarded.

The Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment complies with the Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013 (Act No. 4 of 2013). Comments received and responses thereto will be included in a comments and response report which may be made available to the public as part of consultation process. If a commenting party has any objection to his or her name, or the name of the represented company/organisation, being made publicly available in any comments and responses report, such objection should be highlighted in bold as part of the comments submitted in response to this Government Notice.


MR WAS AUCAMP, MP
MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

ANNEXURE A

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO SET AND ALLOCATE THE 2026 AND 2027 CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA (CITES) EXPORT QUOTAS FOR ELEPHANT, BLACK RHINOCEROS AND LEOPARD HUNTING TROPHIES

1. Elephant (*Loxodonta africana*)

The African elephant has an IUCN Red List status of Least Concern in South Africa, since it is a common species with an increasing population and therefore not at risk of extinction. The total national wild population is estimated at approximately 43 681 elephants. Since 2006 there has been an approximate increase of 41% in South Africa's elephant population, and the current national elephant population growth rate is approximately 5.5% per annum. With the elephant population effectively doubling every 13 years, there are many measures being implemented to reduce population growth rates on both private and state properties.

Given this context, there are no concerns related to the hunting of elephant in South Africa at present and offtakes between 0.35% and 0.7% of the population to ensure large trophies, that is between 153 and 306 elephants (equating to 306 to 612 tusks, respectively), is sustainable.

2. Black Rhinoceros (*Diceros bicornis*):

The Conference of Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) established an export quota for black rhinoceros for South Africa based on a percentage of the national population, as described in CITES Resolution Conf. 13.5 (Rev. CoP18) on *Establishment of export quotas for black rhinoceros hunting trophies*. In accordance with this Resolution, the number of adult male black rhinoceros to be exported from South Africa as hunting trophies may not exceed 0.5% of each of the black rhinoceros' populations of the three subspecies in the year of the export. The objectives for this cautious/conservative export quota are to:

- a) Expand the species' range in South Africa through incentivising the keeping and protection of viable populations of black rhinoceroses.
- b) Increase/ maintain productive population growth rates through the offtake of surplus males.

Based on current population sizes (Table 1), this translates into an export quota of 10 (ten) black rhinoceros hunting trophies, one (1) for *Diceros bicornis michaeli*, seven (7) for *Diceros bicornis minor*, and two (2) for *Diceros bicornis bicornis*.

Sub-Species	Population size in years							
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<i>D.b. michaeli</i>	83	92	99	105	115	100	100	110
<i>D.b. minor</i>	1632	1493	1391	1764	1541	1664	1495	1697
<i>D.b. bicornis</i>	331	347	373	398	400	441	470	500
Total	2046	1932	1863	2267	2056	2205	2065	2307

3. Leopard (*Panthera pardus*)

An export quota for South Africa of 150 leopard has been established by the Conference of Parties to the CITES in terms of CITES Resolution Conf. 10.14 (Rev. CoP19) on *Quotas for leopard hunting trophies and skins for personal use*. The South African populations of *Panthera pardus* (leopard) are currently classified under the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List as "Vulnerable," necessitating careful and evidence-based management interventions to not only ensure sustainability but also to foster landowner tolerance of leopards and promote their conservation. The determination of sustainable quota for the species has been based upon the following principles:

- i The allocation of the quota should be guided by an adaptive management approach that is underpinned by a monitoring programme conforming with the *Best-practice guidelines for monitoring leopards in South Africa*.
- ii Leopard hunting should only be allowed in areas where leopard populations are stable or increasing.
- iii Monitoring data used to estimate trends should be recent (no more than three years old) and consist of a time series with at least three data points.
- iv Only male leopards 7 years of age or older may be hunted.

In 2016, the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) initiated the South African Leopard Monitoring Project in collaboration with Panthera, a non-governmental organisation focused on the conservation of large cat species. With almost 10 years of robust monitoring data now available, areas with stable or increasing leopard populations can be identified on an annual basis with a high level of confidence. The program's expansion trajectory includes the integration of additional provincial conservation agencies (including North West Province, Eastern Cape, and Mpumalanga) and incorporating monitoring infrastructure established by professional hunting organizations.

The latest SANBI/ Panthera Report (for the 2024 monitoring year), and in particular the results of the multi-state models to ascertain population trends. **11 (eleven) leopard hunting zones** has been designated as eligible for leopard hunts (only one leopard to be hunted per zone) for the 2025 calendar year period. The maps of eligible leopard hunting zones are presented below:

