

Lions have a beauty that penetrates you and touches your soul. This is why I am here and why all the PAL ambassadors are part of our mission to Protect African Lions

Statistically speaking, since the start of today's Global March for Lions, here in London and world wide

200 cubs have been petted

36 walking with lion experiences are going on at this moment

16 lion cubs have been forcibly removed from their mothers

2 lions have been murdered in a canned hunt

These are the CONS in Conservation. The sad reality is that these people are getting away with, literally, murder.

I got involved with PAL in order to make a difference. Every one of you here today, and those not with us have gotten involved because you too want to make a difference and save our lions.

The South African Government was challenged over a year ago through motions tabled in parliament decrying the barbaric practise of canned lion hunting. The motion stated that Africa's wildlife, and in particular the lion, deserve the greatest possible legislative protection.

The challenge was raised again to the South African Government yesterday by the Hon. SJ Nkomo for the IFP

Yet the South African Government continues to allow the multi million pound industry that profits from the murder of tame, drugged, captive lions to thrive in the country.

This is unacceptable in a country that has overcome such vast challenges in its history. A rainbow nation that's being bloodied by the self indulgent hunting fraternity and myopic corrupt officials. This is why we are here today. To influence and implore all governments to change the law and ban canned hunting.

We all communicate with each other on social media, we all repost and share between us, however we need to be making a concerted effort to get the message out there beyond our social media platforms.

We need to be educating everyone we come into contact with about the canned hunting industry, about its vile practices, about the conditions the lions have to endure before they get shot.

We have to shout loud against volunteer programs across Africa who are fronts for canned hunting as much as we need to applaud the REAL conservation volunteer work being done out there.

No cub petting, no walking with lions, no volunteers going to Africa and then discovering to their horror the despicable practices that go on in these places and how badly the volunteers are treated, let alone the lions. The Ukutula volunteer program was experienced by two girls on the march today! Beth & Sarah have now bravely shared their experience with us all in their CLAWS-OUT.com BLOG.

Personally, all groups and individuals that are doing their bit to save and protect lions are important to me.

I do not care about political wranglings, I concern myself with what is physically being done on the ground. Some shout about their work and many get on with it quietly in the background. This is an important balance and does not diminish the value of the work being done by either party. It is worthwhile work. Like the work Marnus does in his Walking For Lions program, or the work of the Lion Queen Andi Rive from Glen Garrif Lions, or the Greater Mapungubwe Lion Project, an initiative by local stakeholders in creating a trans frontier conservation area which PAL Foundation is proud to support, The Global White Lion Protection Trust and all the hard work they do behind the scenes. Lion Aid, who are today preparing for Brussels to negotiate a ban on the import of trophies into the entire EU, Campaign Against Canned Hunting who are getting the message out across the world and of course the countless, selfless individuals who give every day to helping protect lions. Collectively heroes.

Be it the release of a new book which raises the topic of lion conservation, or attending meetings where our influence is helping drive policy on the import of lion trophies, or if you are quietly directing a group of ambassadors in raising funding and awareness to create a lion sanctuary, every single thing we all do matters.

There is no place in this world today for a trophy hunter. Trophy hunters can go on all they want about them being conservationists, about ethical culling or the legitimacy of their hunting. However their pictures shared on social media tell the truth about those bloodthirsty sociopaths.

Canned Hunting featured in the Wildlife Photographer of the Year exhibition at the Natural History Museum this year. The photographer, Brent Stirton, won photo journalist of the year. This is a major platform with recognition being made of this appalling industry, a platform being visited by 100s of thousands of “ordinary” people/tourists/nature lovers throughout the world as the exhibition tours and it will be getting the message out there.

We all know that extinction is forever, however endangered means we still have time. Time to act, time to support one another, time to educate the masses, time to stand up and be counted, as you have all done today.

Messages of Support

The LION is much more than an element of the environment; it is a symbol of strength for nations around the globe. We must unite to protect these magnificent creatures that have blessed our earth with so much beauty and power. It is my honour to serve as vice president for PAL and work as one to conserve their future. - Rohan Marley Vice President PAL

The Lion has always been a symbol of Pride, Power and Authority. That is why it is important for us, especially as Africans, to make sure that we do what we can to protect our lions. Thank you for your support on the Global March for Lions - Ndaba Mandela.

"To all you wonderful people marching for those lions that don't have a voice or choice,

I'd like to personally thank each and everyone one of you for taking the time out of your busy lives and schedules, to march for such an important cause. Creating awareness about this sordid industry is imperative. Tourists need to know and understand the consequences of coming to South Africa to pet lion cubs. They need to know what happens to the majority of these lions when they mature. They need to see the link between the petting and the slaughtering of these lions in the 'canned' hunting industry. It needs to stop and we need to support organisations like PAL, who actively campaign to create much needed awareness to ultimately stop this repugnant practise. Although I'm not joining you there, you can rest be assured that the lions and I, are with you in spirit. God Bless." Kevin Richardson - Lion Whisperer

We should not forget that it will be just as important to our children to protect and preserve our planet as it is in our lifetime. We need to teach them how to do this.

Man is a complex being. He makes watches that talk yet allows wildlife to die. The lion is the apex predator, lose him and there will be a profound effect on the wildlife ecosystem and humanity shall suffer for it.

Lion warriors, Thank you for being the voice of the voiceless. I urge you all too please educate, educate educate all those you come into contact with and we will get the lion the protection it deserves.

Thank you.