

The Definition of a Hunttable Male Lion

Hunttable Male Lion:

The hunting and scientific communities agree that lion hunting must be biologically sustainable, in which harvests should have no negative long-term impact on lion populations. An essential step in attaining sustainability is the adoption of standards on what is a 'hunttable' male lion; that is, a lion that can be hunted without any negative effect on the sustainability of the local population from which it is removed.

The most important factor to consider is age. The exact age of a hunttable male lion is dependent upon many regional factors such as habitat and associated differences in lion ecology and social structure and thus, may vary slightly regionally, but the general concept holds true for all. The below definition has been endorsed by scientists working in Tanzania, Mozambique and Zambia.

Hunttable male lions are defined as those male lions whose off-take has no negative impact on the sustainability of local lion population dynamics. Research has shown that these are typically lions six years of age or more that have completed at least one breeding cycle. To reduce risks of infanticide, males of any age known to be heading prides or known to be part of a coalition heading prides with dependent cubs (18 months old or less) should not be hunted. Based on these considerations, a hunttable male lion is at least six years of age and is not known to head a pride or be part of a coalition heading a pride with dependent cubs. The *ideal* hunttable lion is an older individual known to be a transient, that is, no longer in breeding association with any pride.

For the long-term sustainability of this valuable resource, if the maturity or pride status of a lion is in question, it is strongly encouraged that the hunter foregoes taking that lion. Research models have confirmed that responsible hunting does not alter wild lion population dynamics if restricted to males which meet the criteria of a hunttable lion.

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