# Leopard hunting packages reach £116,000 as conservationists demand UK trophy import ban



The controversy surrounding trophy hunting in Africa has intensified, particularly as packages offering the opportunity to hunt endangered leopards are being sold for staggering prices of up to £116,000. With leopard populations declining dramatically — potentially by as much as 90% over the last 50 years — the ethical implications of such hunts have sparked significant public outcry. A multitude of big-game tour companies now promote these hunting experiences online, with some even offering extras like hunts for elephants, lions, and cheetahs, thereby drawing in wealthy consumers eager for these exclusive experiences.

Among the alarming tactics employed in these hunts, a recent report by the Campaign to Ban Trophy Hunting highlights practices such as baiting leopards with live animals and creating fires to drive them from their habitats. These methods, deemed distasteful by many conservationists, raise ethical concerns about the impact on animal welfare and conservation efforts. The report reveals that in 2023 alone, 709 leopard trophies—including skins, skulls, and full bodies—were exported from Africa, while the UK accounted for a mere four of these imports.

Despite repeated governmental promises to ban the importation of hunting trophies, legislative progress has stalled, drawing criticism from both conservationists and members of the public. Since 2020, a consultation found that 84% of respondents supported a ban, and both major political parties in the UK have included pledges for such measures in their election manifests. Nevertheless, legislative actions to implement a ban have faced significant hurdles, including the prior termination of the Animals Abroad Bill under Boris Johnson's government and the blockage of the Hunting Trophies (Import Prohibition) Bill in the House of Lords.

Wildlife conservation advocates, including notable figures like Joanna Lumley and Chris Packham, are rallying for the UK government to prioritise the banning of trophy hunting imports. Lumley has been vocal about the urgent need for legislative action, stating that “Britain must show leadership” in protecting endangered species. On a global scale, the International Union for Conservation of Nature has classified leopards as vulnerable, with certain subspecies facing greater threats due to habitat loss and illegal hunting.

Interestingly, the trophy hunting industry is experiencing shifts as countries in Eastern markets are explored for potential export opportunities, particularly in Zimbabwe, given rising bans in parts of Europe. This move highlights the ongoing demand for trophy hunting that continues to exist, despite international condemnation and local protests against such practices.

The juxtaposition of hunting for sport against the backdrop of conservation raises difficult questions. Leading figures in the hunting community often argue that their activities contribute to conservation efforts through funding and tourism revenue. However, evidence suggests that the ethical implications of killing iconic animals for sport increasingly conflict with the global movement towards stricter wildlife protection measures. As activists call for immediate action, the haunting reality remains: the fate of endangered species like the leopard hangs precariously in the balance, caught between conflicting interests in conservation and commercialism.

This year marks a significant moment for wildlife conservation as it coincides with the tenth anniversary of the killing of Cecil the Lion, highlighting the continued urgency to act before more species face similar fates. The government claims it is committed to enacting a ban on trophy hunting imports, but as calls for accountability grow louder, observers remain sceptical of whether this commitment will materialise into actionable policies in the near future.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/hunt-leopards-tour-package-sale-africa-b2756085.html), [[2]](https://www.reuters.com/business/environment/zimbabwe-look-east-trophy-hunting-export-markets-2024-05-28/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/hunt-leopards-tour-package-sale-africa-b2756085.html), [[3]](https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/elephant-deaths-trigger-kenyan-call-tanzania-curb-hunts-2024-04-10/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/hunt-leopards-tour-package-sale-africa-b2756085.html), [[4]](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-32815508), [[5]](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jan/25/south-africa-bans-leopard-hunting-2016)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/hunt-leopards-tour-package-sale-africa-b2756085.html), [[6]](https://africahuntlodge.com/our-game/leopard-hunting)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/hunt-leopards-tour-package-sale-africa-b2756085.html), [[7]](https://www.discountafricanhunts.com/hunts/leopard-hunt-in-zimbabwe.html)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/hunt-leopards-tour-package-sale-africa-b2756085.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.reuters.com/business/environment/zimbabwe-look-east-trophy-hunting-export-markets-2024-05-28/> - In May 2024, Zimbabwe's wildlife authorities began exploring trophy hunting export markets in Eastern countries due to increasing bans on trophy imports in European nations. This shift aims to find alternative markets for Zimbabwe's wildlife products, especially as countries like Belgium and Britain have implemented bans on trophy imports. Fulton Mangwanya, director-general of Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife, emphasized the need to seek new markets in the East to sustain the trophy hunting industry. ([reuters.com](https://www.reuters.com/business/environment/zimbabwe-look-east-trophy-hunting-export-markets-2024-05-28/?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/elephant-deaths-trigger-kenyan-call-tanzania-curb-hunts-2024-04-10/> - In April 2024, conservationists in Kenya expressed concern over the impact of licensed trophy hunting in Tanzania on the Kenyan elephant population, vital for tourism. Recent incidents, including the shooting of three Kenyan elephants by hunters across the border, prompted calls for Tanzania to restrict hunting activities near the Kenyan border to protect these valuable elephants. ([reuters.com](https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/elephant-deaths-trigger-kenyan-call-tanzania-curb-hunts-2024-04-10/?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-32815508> - In 2015, Zambia lifted its ban on lion and leopard hunting to generate foreign currency for sustainable wildlife programs and benefit local communities. Trophy hunting licenses, costing up to $25,000, were seen as a significant source of revenue, though critics questioned the ethics of hunting such majestic animals. ([bbc.com](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-32815508?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jan/25/south-africa-bans-leopard-hunting-2016> - In January 2016, South Africa imposed a year-long ban on leopard hunting to protect the species, as the size of the country's leopard population was unknown. The Department of Environmental Affairs acted on recommendations from South Africa's Scientific Authority, which suggested an intervention to ensure the survival of the leopard population. ([theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jan/25/south-africa-bans-leopard-hunting-2016?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://africahuntlodge.com/our-game/leopard-hunting> - Africa Hunt Lodge offers leopard hunting opportunities in Zimbabwe and Namibia, with hunts typically conducted from March through November. The trophy fee for a leopard is around $8,500, with daily rates ranging from $1,400 to $1,800, depending on the country. A 14-day African safari is usually combined with the leopard hunt. ([africahuntlodge.com](https://africahuntlodge.com/our-game/leopard-hunting?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://www.discountafricanhunts.com/hunts/leopard-hunt-in-zimbabwe.html> - Discount African Hunts offers a 14-day leopard hunting package in Zimbabwe's Gonarezhou Region, with a total cost of $20,170. The package includes 14 full hunting days, 15 nights of lodging, and a $5,000 trophy fee for the leopard. Additional costs include pre-baiting, baits, and transportation. ([discountafricanhunts.com](https://www.discountafricanhunts.com/hunts/leopard-hunt-in-zimbabwe.html?utm_source=openai))