

# WORKING TOGETHER FOR LIONS

Showing our commitment to protect and monitor lion populations in the wild.



- 1. Evaluating the progress of our work in line with our Conservation & Education Strategy**
- 2. Planning Our Future Impact**

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**Safina Lion Conservation Fund**

Registered Charity in England and Wales 1172709



# Our Mission

**“TO WORK WITH OTHERS TO PROTECT AND MONITOR  
LION POPULATIONS IN THE WILD”**

*Figure 1 - Young male cub from the Olare Motogoro Conservancy, Maasai Mara Ecosystem February 2020*

The Safina Lion Conservation Fund is a UK charity founded in April 2017 by a small group of people interested in lions and dedicated to aiding conservation efforts to save them in the wild. The charity is run entirely by volunteers and 100% of all funds that reach us go towards our charitable objectives and do not cover administration costs.

## Our Objectives

Like any other charitable organisation we have a set of objectives that all of the work we carry out must link to. Here at the Safina Lion Conservation Fund we go by the following:

**1) To promote for the benefit of the public the conservation and protection of lions by:**

- A) Supporting conservation projects in such ways that are charitable**
- B) Conserving and protecting the natural habitat of lions**
- C) Supporting and publishing research into the conservation and husbandry of lions**

**2) To advance the education of the public in lion and wildlife conservation by such means as the trustees decide including through the support and publishing of research.**

## Our Conservation & Education Strategy

In 2018 trustees wrote a strategy to assess and add more focus to the work that we carry out under our charitable objectives. It also ensures that our work can reach the specific areas of lion conservation that we believe would benefit most from our support and where our relatively small amount of funds raised could realistically make an impact. The strategy assessed the current status of lions in the wild, their behaviour and the threats that they face. Within the strategy we decided how we would plan our future work and highlighted three targeted points of conservation interest that our conservation and education work will be based around, these key focus areas are:

- **Young Dispersing Male Lions**

When dispersing from their birth pride, young male lions often travel into community areas to seek refuge from the much larger dominant male lions. Sadly they often conflict with communities over livestock at this time.

- **Lions Outside Protected Areas**

Most African wildlife are only protected by where they happen to be. It is legal to kill wildlife if they are threat to yourself or your livestock. Working with the local community and lion monitoring is vital to promote coexistence.

- **Involving Local Communities**

Wildlife conservation can't make a lasting impact unless the local communities are involved in the work in the first place. Education and ensuring that local communities can benefit from wildlife are vital to make projects successful.

# 1. Evaluating the progress of our work in line with our Conservation & Education Strategy

This section aims to show the donations and work that we have carried out since our conservation strategy was written in 2018 and how they have matched the focus points from the strategy that were put in place.

All donations made to external organisations must fit the pre-existing donation policy and checklist. This ensures that funds raised are spent wisely and in line with the charity commission commitment to fulfil our charitable objectives. Donations will be made on a case by case basis and organisations will be under constant scrutiny.

To assist and give an outside opinion a group of experienced people from different backgrounds have been created to form a conservation advisory committee. Although decision making remains purely with the trustees themselves the outside views of experienced and knowledgeable people is an invaluable too to assist the trustees in ensuring that the charity funds go to the best and most suited organisations possible.

## Donations Prior To 2018

Prior to the writing of the conservation strategy trustees had only sent off one donation to support a conservation organisation. This was to cover the sponsorship of Lion Guardian Longoi Ole Parsitau through the organisation Lion Guardians. This was an organisation already supported by many UK zoos and one that the trustees thought was a great project to show our intentions.

**Donation made in December 2017 = £1080 (\$1500)**

### Lion Guardians Spotlight:

Founded in 2007, Lion Guardians is a conservation organisation dedicated to finding and enacting long term solutions for people and lions to coexist. Their approach involves recruiting young, traditional Maasai and other pastoralist warriors to learn the skills needed to effectively mitigate conflicts between people and wildlife, monitor lion populations and help their own communities live with lions. Transforming previous lion killers into lion protectors.

## Donations 2018

In December 2018 trustees decided to continue our support for Lion Guardians and agreed that they fitted within our new conservation strategy. The focus area that our support of Lion Guardians would work under would be **Involving Local Communities** and **Lions Outside Protected Areas**.

Year	Organisation Donated To	Focus Area	Donation Amount:
<b>2018/19</b>	<b>LION GUARDIANS</b>	<b>Involving Local Communities</b> <b>Lions Outside Protected Areas</b>	<b>£1167 (\$1500)</b>

We heard in the Summer of 2018 that Longoi had decided to retire from Lion Guardians, we were delighted to hear in November that a new guardian has been recruited from the local community to take on Longoi's previous zone called Risa which borders the Amboseli National Park, their core zone. Our new guardian is Kuya Kipampa and we updated his sponsorship in January 2019. We received the following information from the Lion Guardians team about Kuya:

*"Kuya's father died when he was very young, an event which pushed him to quickly become a responsible young man at a very tender age. Upon becoming employed by Lion Guardians he was thrilled to further increase his responsibilities and improve his skills"*

## Donations 2019

After a very successful fundraising year in 2018 trustees were in the very fortunate position of having a much larger amount of funds than ever before to donate towards lion conservation efforts even after continuing our donation to Lion Guardians. Our donation to Lion Guardians as before covered the sponsorship of Guardian Kuya Kipampa going towards the same focus areas as before. Trustees has been in the planning of stages of the two next donations for several months and both would involve much larger amounts of funds. Due to this trustees agreed that carefully written donation agreements will be created and signed with the organisations to ensure the correct placement of these large donations. The focus area that our support of these new donations would be **Young Dispersing Male Lions**. The first of our new conservation partners would be the Mara Predator Conservation Programme and a donation was made in August 2019.

### Mara Predator Conservation Programme Spotlight:

Under the umbrella of the Kenya Wildlife Trust in 2018 their two flagship predator conservation projects (The Mara Lion and Mara Cheetah Projects) were merged into one long term conservation commitment, the Mara Predator Conservation Programme. Their vision is a world-class conservation programme, providing evidence-based, practical management recommendations, solutions and ideas. Their three goals include:

- To help community members and landowners understand and appreciate the role of predators in the ecosystem.
- Ensuring that key stakeholders in the area consistently utilise sound scientific information to inform conservation strategies.
- To support stable, healthy predator populations in the Mara by providing scientific evidence for conservation evidence.

As defined by our conservation strategy as a priority the donation to the Mara Predator Conservation Programme will go specifically towards their 'Collars For Conservation' project by sponsoring a GPS collar and the veterinary fees required to fit the collar which will go on a young dispersing male lion. We had been in discussions with Niels Mogensen, Senior Programme Scientist of the Mara Predator Conservation Programme since late 2017 when one of our trustees visited the Naboisho Conservancy in September and learnt about the work that the then Mara Lion Project was doing to protect and monitor lions in the area, as well as seeing the particular pressures facing lions in the Mara, young dispersing male lions conflicting with the local communities was an aspect that was immediately highlighted during that visit. Shortly before that visit a young male coalition had ventured into the community area to seek refuge from the older more dominant resident males in the protected areas. After a cow was killed at least one of the lions was sadly killed in retaliation by the local people.

In February 2020 one of our trustees and representatives from two of our supporters went to visit the headquarters of the Mara Predator Conservation Programme in the Olare Motogori Conservancy. We met Niels Mogensen and his research team to see how they monitor the lions within their study area and to see the problems that they face and to see some potential candidates for the collar. Due to the disturbance caused by the Covid-19 Pandemic the deployment of the collar has been slower than expected but we are told that it should be deployed in 2021 and that suitable candidates have now been identified.



**Figure 3** – Sub adult male lion, Naboisho Conservancy, Maasai Mara Ecosystem, Kenya - September 2017

Having donated to the Mara Predator Conservation Programme trustees still had enough funds to sponsor another collar. Trustees decided to explore other projects in potentially another country to expand our impact. Kope Lion was chosen because of their ground based approach which involves the local community and with their current collaring efforts they looked to be the perfect partners. After more scrutiny from our conservation advisory committee and permits investigated and granted for another collar a donation was made.

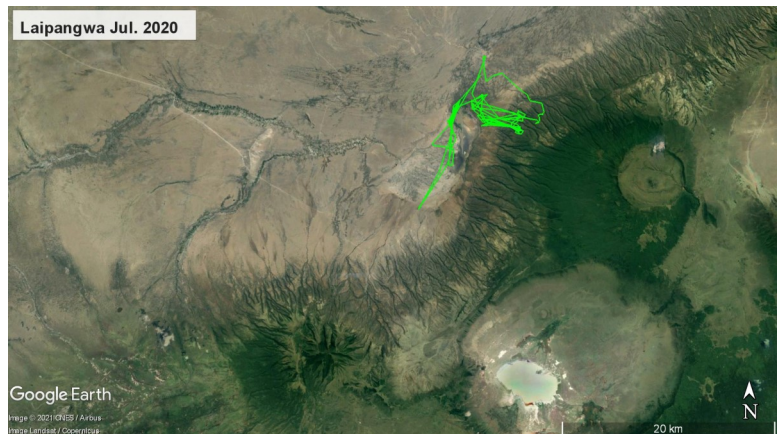
## Kope Lion Spotlight:

Kope Lion was founded in 2011 with the aim to change the trend in the area where intensifying human-wildlife conflicts have been tough on the lion population and in the last decades have seen lions begin to disappear entirely from some of their former ranges. Kope Lion works directly with the residents and comprises of local experts and international scientists as well as employing former lion hunters to actively protect the remaining lions and reduce conflicts with the community.

**Vision:** Successful and locally driven human-lion coexistence in Ngorongoro.

**Mission:** Inspire and enable local action, using science and traditional knowledge, for managing and monitoring sustainable human-lion coexistence in a multi-use landscape.

Having been in email contact with Kope Lion Director Ingela Jansson we explained our particular interest in young dispersing male lions and how their behaviour led to our focus. Ingela explained that she had some lions within her study area who were slightly older but still nomadic and therefore behaved in exactly the same manner with no specific territory. We agreed that with this similar behaviour this would match our objective and focus area. In June 2020 the collar was put on five year old male lion Laipangwa whose present collar had started to fail. Laipangwa had been wandering



nomadically since his uncle disappeared in 2018 and had moved to the multi-use area where communities and wildlife live together. The map above shows our first GPS view of his activity in July 2020 and we have continued to receive more maps on a regular basis. During the following months Laipangwa has continued to settle in an area on the north west slopes of the crater with a pride of lionesses who originated from the crater now known as the 'Lakes Lopers'. Considering that Laipangwa had originated from the nearby Ndotu area and has settled and now bred with crater born lionesses is great genetically and he is proof that the corridor of tolerance that Kope Lion have been working to restore has now been opened up again, allowing lions to move in and out of the crater which has been isolated from other territories for many years. These lions are also living in an area that hasn't been utilised by lions for many years and people and livestock are now coexisting together once more, thanks to the Kope Lion team who watch over the lions and the communities and their livestock to maintain the peace.



**Figure 3** – Longoi having his new collar fitted by the Kope Lion Team, Ngorongoro Conservation Area, Tanzania- Summer 2020  
Photos courtesy of Roimen Lelya, Lion monitoring and conflict officer.

The table below details the total donations that took place in 2019, the amount and the focus area that each donation went towards and the organisation.

Year	Organisation Donated To	Focus Area	Donation Amount:
2019	LION GUARDIANS	Involving Local Communities Lions Outside Protected Areas	£1169 (\$1500)
2019	MARA PREDATOR CONSERVATION PROGRAMME	Young Dispersing Male Lions	£2938 (\$3500)
2019	KOPE LION	Young Dispersing Male Lions	£2588 (\$3278)

## Donations 2020

In our 2020 financial year all of our previous conservation partners received donations. We continued our sponsorship of Lion Guardian Kuya Kipampa for the third year and we sent our sponsorship for the GPS collar transmission fee of the collar via Kope Lion. This fee ensures that the data can be received from the collar and used by the scientists. We also sent a donation to cover the monthly fuel budget of one monitoring vehicle for the Mara Predator Conservation Programme. This was given in light of the fallout of the Covid-19 Pandemic and the loss of funds the MPCP had seen. Fuel is vital to allow the team to go and monitor the lions within their study area. The table below details the total donations that took place in 2020, the amount and the focus area that each donation went towards and the organisation.

JANUARY 2021		
Organisation Donated To	Focus Area	Donation Amount:
LION GUARDIANS	Involving Local Communities   Lions Outside Protected Areas	£1107 (\$1500)
MARA PREDATOR CONSERVATION PROGRAMME	Young Dispersing Male Lions	£358 (\$475)
KOPE LION	Young Lions	£329 (\$438)

## Future Kings Project

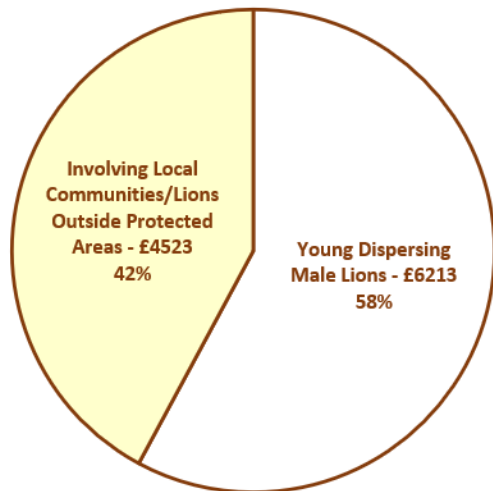
Our two collaring sponsorships with Kope Lion and the Mara Predator Conservation Programme have been grouped together as part of a new Future Kings Project. This project sees us able to work with these conservation partners and possibly more in the future working towards the same goal of protecting and monitoring young sub adult dispersing male lions. It also gives us the opportunity to add more focused educational elements to this project as time goes on. A strategy has been written specifically for this project and has been published on our website.



**Figure 3** – Sub adult and adult male lions, Olare Motorogi Conservancy, Maasai Mara Ecosystem, Kenya - February 2020

## Donation Evaluation

In the first four years up to 2021 8 different donations have been made to three different organisations. Four donations were made to support our Future Kings Project to two organisations to go towards the focus area of **Young Dispersing Male Lions**. Two donations went towards sponsoring GPS collars in 2019, two further donations were made in 2020 to support these organisations by providing the annual collar transmission fee for the following year and a months budget of fuel for one of their lion monitoring vehicles to assist them during the fallout of the Covid-19 Pandemic.



*Figure 4 – Fig Tree Pride, Maasai Mara National Reserve - February 2020*

Four donations have been made to the same organisation Lion Guardians to sponsor one of their Guardians annually. The last three years have focussed on Lion Guardian Kuya Kipampa and supports his salary and his works to protect and monitor lions in his area outside the Amboseli National Park and goes towards the focus areas of **Lions Outside Protected Areas** and **Involving Local Communities**.

The pie chart to the left shows our total donation output in correlation to our focus areas. 58% of donations have gone towards the focus area of Young Dispersing Male Lions compared to 42% which has gone towards Lions Outside Protected Areas and Involving Local Communities. This focus is particularly prevalent when donations to Young Dispersing Male Lions only started in 2019 whereas the Lion Guardian sponsorship began in 2017. This is largely due to the two big donations to sponsor the collars which were much larger than any donations we have ever given. Due to this to try and balance our support between the different focus areas it could be worthwhile in the future to work with another project that focuses with either Lions Outside protected Areas, Involving Local Communities or both combined.

## Research and Education

Over the last three years our educational output has grown massively through putting up more information on the Learn About Lions section of our website. We now have segments dedicated to the work of our conservation partners on our particular focus areas. On our visit to the headquarters of the Mara Predator Conservation Programme in February 2020 daily video blogs were made and uploaded onto Facebook. These videos allowed us to share our experiences with our supporters in almost real time and focused mainly on our Future Kings Project which we were there to launch and the human-wildlife conflict issues that we were learning about.

Trustees have not supported direct research projects just yet as much more time and planning is needed to create a policy and our main priority has been our conservation support. Despite this trustees along with the assistance of Apex Extreme, a new predator conservation based Registered Charity no. 1183466 in creating the 'Lion Keepers Resource Group'. The LKRG is hosted on the website and is a password protected area open to zookeepers in which they will be able to share information relating to any aspects of lion care, husbandry and anything else that may be useful to lion keepers. The idea of this is to give something back to our zoo supporters by providing a place to share knowledge and ideas that can advance lion care and husbandry in zoos in the UK and further afield.



**LION  
KEEPERS  
RESOURCE  
GROUP**

## 2. Our Next Steps

This section aims to show our assessment of the African Lion, the planning and implementing of our donations and work that we have carried out since our conservation strategy was written in 2018 and how they have matched the focus points from the strategy.

### Assessment Of The African Lion

The African Lion has been listed by the IUCN as 'VULNERABLE' since 1996. The African lion population has suffered a decline of 43% over the 21 years prior to the last assessment in 2014 (1993-2014) which is approximately three lion generations (2). As the last assessment took place in 2014 and was published in 2016 and relisted as Vulnerable nothing has changed from the IUCN assessment information since our strategy was written in 2018. Our assessment of the species stays as is written in our strategy with a few major points highlighted below: The current population trend is listed as decreasing with an estimated number of mature individuals between 23,000-39,000 with a continuing decline of mature individuals. The West African Lion has been listed as Critically Endangered in 2015, the most recent survey suggesting that only 404 (269-583) remain in this region. The African Lion now lives in less than a quarter of its historic range and are currently distributed in approximately 78 habitat patches in 27 countries and since 2002, five countries have lost their entire lion populations (1).

The main threats to lion populations in the wild are indiscriminate killing, generally as a result of conflict with local communities and in retaliation or pre-emptive killing of lions to protect livestock and human life, prey base depletion and habitat loss and conversion.

### Our Three Year Plan 2021-2024

The section details the next steps that we plan to take over the next three years specifically regarding our conservation donations. Our education work will continue to evolve with a greater ties to our three key focus areas. This has taken into consideration the evaluation of our donations in line with the plans set in our first conservation strategy. As always these donations depend on the agreement of all trustees in line with our donation policy and checklist and also in consideration with the restrictions and delays that could still be in place in regards to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

#### 1. **Continue the sponsorship of our Lion Guardian Kuya Kipampa annually.**

This continues the work under our focus areas of **involving local communities** and **lions outside of protected areas**. We will continue to sponsor Kuya Kipampa unless he retires and we move to another Lion Guardian in his place. His zone of Risa borders the Amboseli National Park and is therefore a hotspot for conflict as lions move in and out of the national park.

#### 2. **Save to donate and replace both lion collars with Kope Lion and the Mara Predator Conservation Programme when required due to the success seen so far.**

This will continue our work to protect and monitor (our focus area of) **young dispersing male lions** as they travel nomadically to conquer a territory of their own. The results from the collaring of Laipangwa have been particularly encouraging and we look forward to seeing the progress of the MPCP study lion once the collar is deployed. The saving for these collars does take a long time due to the expense so it is likely that the fundraising could take a couple of years, the lifespan of the current collars should see through this timeframe. This also depends on the continuing of collaring programmes by both organisations.

#### 3. **Investigate a further organisation/project or a project run by a current conservation partner to donate towards so that we can increase our support for our focus areas to involve local communities and lions outside protected areas.**

Trustees will work with the conservation advisory committee to approve a new organisation to support that carries out work to conserve lions and more specifically through community projects to meet these two particular focus areas to bridge the gap of donations towards different focus areas and to make our support more equal.



## Acknowledgements

The Safina Lion Conservation Fund would like to thank all involved from the three conservation partners who we have worked with to organise our support for them. We would like to thank in particular Kate Yoshida from Lion Guardians, Ingela Jansson and Sally Capper from Kope Lion, Irene Amoke from the Mara Predator Conservation Programme and Niels Mogensen in particular from the MPCP for hosting us at their headquarters to show us their work in February 2020.

Thanks also goes to our voluntary committee of independent conservation advisors who spend their free time assisting us in giving feedback on our conservation strategies and plans.

Thank you to all of our supporters who have helped us with our fundraising efforts which have allowed us to put these conservation actions in place. These include Wild Arena Ltd and our four main zoo partners Folly Farm Adventure Park & Zoo, Knowsley Safari, Dartmoor Zoo & Noah's Ark Zoo Farm.

## References

1. Riggio J. 2011. "The African lion (*Panthera leo*): A continent- wide species distribution study and population analysis." Nicholas School of the Environment, Duke University.
2. Bauer, H., Packer, C., Funston, P.F., Henschel, P. & Nowell, K. 2016. "*Panthera leo* (errata version published in 2017). The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2016." e.T15951A115130419. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2016-3.RLTS.T15951A107265605.en>. Downloaded on 10th April 2021.



**Figure 5** – James Welch, Chairman of the Safina Lion Conservation Fund with Niels Mogensen of the Mara Predator Conservation Programme and Peter Johnson of Knowsley Safari, Tony Lapham Carnivore Hub, Maasai Mara Ecosystem - February 2020.

## Contact Us

If you are interested in our work in lion conservation please follow our website and Facebook page [www.safinalionconservation.org](http://www.safinalionconservation.org)

If you have any comments or you have any feedback on our strategy please contact us at [info@safinalionconservation.org](mailto:info@safinalionconservation.org)