

Research Activity Report
Supported by “Leading Graduate Program in Primatology and Wildlife Science”

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1. Country/location of visit	Japan, Kyoto University
2. Outreach project	Conserv’Session#4: Blood Lions and discussion with Pr. Nobuyuki Yamaguchi
3. Date	2017. 02. 02
4. Main host researcher and affiliation	None
5. Progress and results of your outreach activity	<p>At the end of the film, we asked: “Who has heard about canned (lion) hunting before?” About 6 hands raised on 42 attendees. A few months back, I also would not have raised a hand. I learnt about canned lion hunting last Summer in Hawaii while attending a screening of the film Blood Lions at the IUCN World Conservation Congress. The next day, I interviewed the executive producer of Blood Lions – Dr. Andrew Venter, who is also the CEO of WildLands Conservation Trust – a South African NGO empowering local communities to address environmental degradation and poverty (http://www.cicasp.pri.kyoto-u.ac.jp/news/podcasts/andrew-venter).</p> <p>Blood Lions is a 2015 documentary about the lucrative and legal business of canned lion hunting (- where the animal is in a closed area and cannot escape from gun shots) in South Africa. To discuss about this issue, we invited Dr. Nobuyuki Yamaguchi, Associate Professor of Animal Ecology at Qatar University, part of the IUCN Species Survival Commission Cat Specialist Group, and member of the African Lion working group. This session approached the ethics and the presupposed conservation value of lion and other felids breeding for the hunting, tourism and bone industries. Dr. Yamaguchi brought up his expertise at the end of the film to share with the audience some additional facts via a short presentation on African lion conservation. He also tested the audience knowledge about lion conservation facts several times. The discussion turned to be somewhat controversial, challenging the public sensitivity toward losing emblematic carnivore species such as lions in their natural habitat. In the end, most of the audience learnt about the underlying reasons for captive-breeding of lions in South Africa, as well as the misconception of our relation to wildlife, and people may have left the Science Seminar House with a busy mind.</p> <p>Since the film was released and Cecil the lion has been killed, countries like Australia, France, and the Netherlands banned the import of lion trophies; the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have considerably tightened up their import regulations, which ultimately has reduced the number of American hunters arriving into South Africa to pursue canned hunts; and the Professional Hunting Association of South Africa has distanced itself from canned hunting and is encouraging other groups to do the same. Since the screening at the European Parliament, Jagd & Hund – Europe’s largest hunting exhibition has committed to banning the marketing, exhibition of sales of all captive-bred animals at the exhibition and through their magazine. The motion to end the hunting of captive-bred lions and other predators and captive breeding for commercial, non-conservation purposes has been accepted at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Hawaii last September, however countries failed to reach consensus on banning all international trade in African lions from trophy heads to bones at the CITES meeting (CoP17) in Johannesburg last October. And recently, the Department of Environmental Affairs of South Africa announced the decision to export 800 skeletons of captive-bred lions annually to feed the southeast Asian market for traditional medicine – which revolted the Blood Lions movement.</p>

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Top: Screening of Blood Lions and discussion with Pr. Nobuyuki Yamaguchi. **Bottom:** Group picture (with Zsofia Budai missing – busy talking to attendees); from left to right: Nachik. eth Sharma, Ryoma Otsuka, Nobuyuki Yamaguchi, I (Cecile Sarabian), Miku Akiyama, Himani Nautiyal and Shimegi Yanagi

6. Others

Acknowledgements: I would like to thank PWS for its continuous support; our invited speaker: Pr. Nobuyuki Yamaguchi for his participation; as well as Miku Akiyama and Yoko Sakai for coming and helping us.