

## **TESTIMONY OF THE SAFARI CLUB INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION**

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**Subcommittee for Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans and Insular Affairs;**

**House Natural Resources Committee**

**Re: HR 50 - Multinational Species Conservation Funds Reauthorization Act of 2011**

**July 28, 2011**

Good morning, my name is Joe Hosmer, and I am very thankful for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the hunter-conservation community today.

The Safari Club International Foundation (SCIF) is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization that funds and manages programs dedicated to wildlife conservation, outdoor education, and humanitarian services. Since 2000, SCIF has provided in excess of \$50 million in support to these causes around the world. SCIF has worked tirelessly to increase wildlife management capability throughout Southern and Eastern Africa through strategic partnerships with African nations and conservation NGOs.

Currently, SCIF participates on the steering committee of the Multinational Species Conservation Fund Coalition and SCIF has participated as a member of the Multinational Species Coalition for well over 10 years. In our current role on the coalition, we assist in providing grassroots support for the species conservation funds.

Safari Club International Foundation believes that the United States plays a pivotal role in international conservation. We further believe that the United States' continued support for international conservation projects is necessary, both for the continued growth of wildlife populations, and for the stability of rural economies throughout many nations of Africa. For these reasons the Safari Club International Foundation strongly supports HR 50, the Multinational Species Conservation Funds Reauthorization Act of 2011.

As an organization, SCIF is highly committed to wildlife conservation throughout the world, but we have a particular affection and interest for African wildlife species. I would like to offer the hunting community's perspective on the importance of investing in conservation funding internationally. There is a tremendous return on investment that rural economies realize through effective sustainable use practices for wildlife management.

SCIF's Conservation Committee dedicates over a million dollars annually to global wildlife conservation, with a specific focus on conserving African species. SCIF's leadership in Africa has led to the development of the African Wildlife Consultative Forum, which brings together African wildlife officials, representatives of the African professional hunter associations, international NGO's and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services staff. At these meetings we have increased collaboration for sustainable use conservation programs, and we have improved relations to increase rural economic development around sustainable hunting.

Other speakers today will touch on the incredible impact that the conservation funds have made for wildlife populations. I would like to speak specifically about the impact on rural economies that sustainable use and conservation of these species can have.

The role of sport hunting today in many developing countries is vital to the very survival of communities. Using southern Africa as an example, sport hunting has been one of the main economic engines in rural communities. In many countries of southern Africa, agrarian or pastoral economies cannot flourish, due to limited land suitable for agriculture or grazing. In these areas, regulated sport hunting has been a consistent form of revenue for local communities. To take better advantage of sustainable wildlife use, many governments have begun Community Based Natural Resources Programs. These programs, in essence, devolve power from the central government so that locally created community councils can regulate and manage wildlife in their areas. Their mission is to utilize wildlife so that it remains a sustainable resource for their community.

Successful community based programs have been developed across Africa including, but not limited to, Communal Areas Management Program for Indigenous Resources, otherwise known as CAMPFIRE, in Zimbabwe; Living In a Finite Environment, known as LIFE in Namibia; and other programs in Zambia, Botswana and Tanzania.

rural communities to actively conserve wildlife. Revenue retention schemes ensure that money generated from sport hunting ends up in the hands of indigenous people. In the case of sport hunting in southern Africa, communities in the most rural portions of countries reap the benefit of conserving wildlife through Community Based Natural Resource Programs.

Here are some facts and figures on the positive economic impact that sport hunting has in Africa.

1. International hunting by 18,500 hunters generates \$200 million USD annually in remote rural areas of Africa in 23 countries. Private hunting operations conserve wildlife on 540,000 square miles, which is 22% more land mass than is found in all the national parks of Africa. (Lindsey, Conservation Biology, 2007)
2. "Hunting is of key importance to conservation in Africa by creating [financial] incentives to promote and retain wildlife as a land use over vast areas..." (National Geographic News, March, 2007)
3. In Namibia, 29 conservancies involve almost 150,000 rural individuals through trophy hunting, conservancy management or secondary industries. (Weaver, C.L. & Skyer, P. 2003.)
4. The Zambian Wildlife Authority works with safari operators to ensure that as part of their contract they must develop and manage roads, employ Zambian Professional Hunters or Apprentice Hunters, ensure that a minimum of 80% of labor comes from neighboring

communities, develop local infrastructure, notably schools, clinic and wells, and employ Zambian game scouts to manage wildlife and poaching. (Kampamba, G. 2005.)

5. International hunting employs approximately 3,700 people annually in Tanzania. ([www.tanzania.go.tz/](http://www.tanzania.go.tz/)) and supports over 88,000 families (Hurt & Ravn 2000)

Particularly in Africa, creating an incentive to coexist with wildlife has been a central reason why so many populations of species are now thriving. Elephants, rhinos and lions are the best examples of this dynamic at work. Of the 23 southern African nations that have regulated hunting, an overall trend of positive species population growth has been reported. The growing population of white rhino has been one of the most notable success stories. Unsurprisingly, in countries like Kenya, where wildlife utilization by indigenous people is extremely limited and where hunting does not exist, wildlife population levels are now low and in continuous decline. Trophy hunting in Kenya was banned in 1977 and this ban has resulted in an accelerated loss of wildlife due to the removal of incentives for conservation (Baker 1997; Lewis & Jackson 2005).

As an organization, SCIF has not directly utilized the funds made available through the authorizing legislation. However, organizations that SCIF has partnered with in providing matching grants have been recipients of funding from the FWS.

The investments that the U.S. government has made through the multination species conservation funds are necessary. They provide stability and continuity for ongoing wildlife conservation investments from other organizations, and from the hunters who travel to Africa. The MSCF certainly provides significant and measurable successes for a very small investment of federal dollars.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak before the subcommittee today.