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**MOT/6/7/33**

**REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA**

## **MINISTRY OF TOURISM**

OFFICE OF THE MINISTER  
KWACHA HOUSE, CAIRO ROAD  
P.O. Box 30575  
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24<sup>th</sup> March, 2025

Chair Bruce Westerman  
Subcommittee Chair Harriet Hageman  
Committee on Natural Resources  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515  
**UNITED STATES**

Dear Chair Westerman and Chair Hageman:

I write to express the strong support of the Republic of Zambia, Ministry of Tourism, to the legislation proposing amendments to the U.S. Endangered Species Act (Endangered Species Act Amendments of 2025). Zambia has long opposed restrictions on the import of animals from our well-managed hunting programs. We welcome the U.S. Congress' recognition of our success in conservation and sustainable development, and efforts to reduce the burdens imposed by import restrictions.

The first and foremost priority of the Zambian government is sustainable development and the need to fight poverty, and Zambia relies upon sustainable development practices also to achieve wildlife conservation. Zambia has seen significant growth in most wildlife populations, including species listed under the U.S. Endangered Species Act, such as elephant and lion, over the past decade. This growth is due to important investments made by the government, private sector, and donors.

Zambia's conservation success and poverty reduction strategies include both consumptive and non-consumptive wildlife utilization. In this regard, regulated hunting is one of the components that Zambia relies upon due to the high level of benefits it can produce, tangible and intangible. Safari Operators need a healthy wildlife population in order for the sector to be viable. To achieve that they support the government in actions not only to increase protection of habitats and wildlife, but also in community development.



Funds generated from hunting and Safari Outfitter obligations are distributed to communities that continue to benefit from 50% of all animal fees via a network of Community Resource Boards. These CRBs, and Safari Operators through their lease agreements, invest in various social services and law enforcement.

Sustainable utilization has demonstrated ecological, economic, and social benefits and is a critical component of Zambia's overall conservation strategy. In Zambia, Game Management Areas and Open Game Ranches where safari hunting is conducted represent nearly 180,000 km<sup>2</sup> as compared to about 64,000 km<sup>2</sup> in National Parks that are strictly protected. Without the incentives provided by hunting, this habitat likely would be lost and converted to other, less optimal land uses that do not include wildlife.

Overall, the value of hunting cannot be measured only in financial terms. The value generated by hunting to habitat protection, law enforcement, and social benefits is crucial to maintain tolerance of species like elephants and lions. Income from hunting of all species continues to be important for the Ministry to undertake a wide range of conservation activities both inside and outside of Protected Areas. The participation of hunters from the United States of America in the Zambian hunting industry is key to contributing to the overall management and conservation of wildlife.

The Ministry and the Department of National Parks and Wildlife has built on its 10-year conservation strategy to put in place a hunting programme that contributes positively to conservation of wildlife throughout their range in Zambia. Moreover, by adhering to the 2021 IUCN/SSC "Guiding principles on trophy hunting," the Department has adopted best practices to implement and enforce sound governance systems to ensure the long-term conservation of Zambia's wildlife populations.

Zambia like other southern African range states has implemented best practices on large carnivores, elephants, and all wildlife subject to selective hunting. It is understood that our practices are even stronger than similar ones used in northern hemisphere countries. Yet despite our best efforts and the provision of countless pages of information to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the import of wildlife from Zambia has been subject to strict restrictions. In many instances, even after we have demonstrated "enhancement" apparently required by the U.S. Endangered Species Act, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has required more. The success of Zambia's robust hunting programme and sustainable-use conservation depends in large part on contributions from U.S. hunters. For this reason, the better U.S. hunters are able to hunt in Zambia and bring back the results of their hunts, the greater their contributions to Zambia's sustainable use conservation strategy.

For this reason, the Ministry and Department support the proposed amendments. These will reduce burdens and improve conservation. They will strengthen the relationship between the Republic of Zambia and the United States of America by

removing the obstructions of unfavorable wildlife policy. And they will benefit first and foremost the wildlife that we all appreciate and seek to conserve.



Hon. Rodney Sikumba, MP  
Minister

**MINISTRY OF TOURISM**