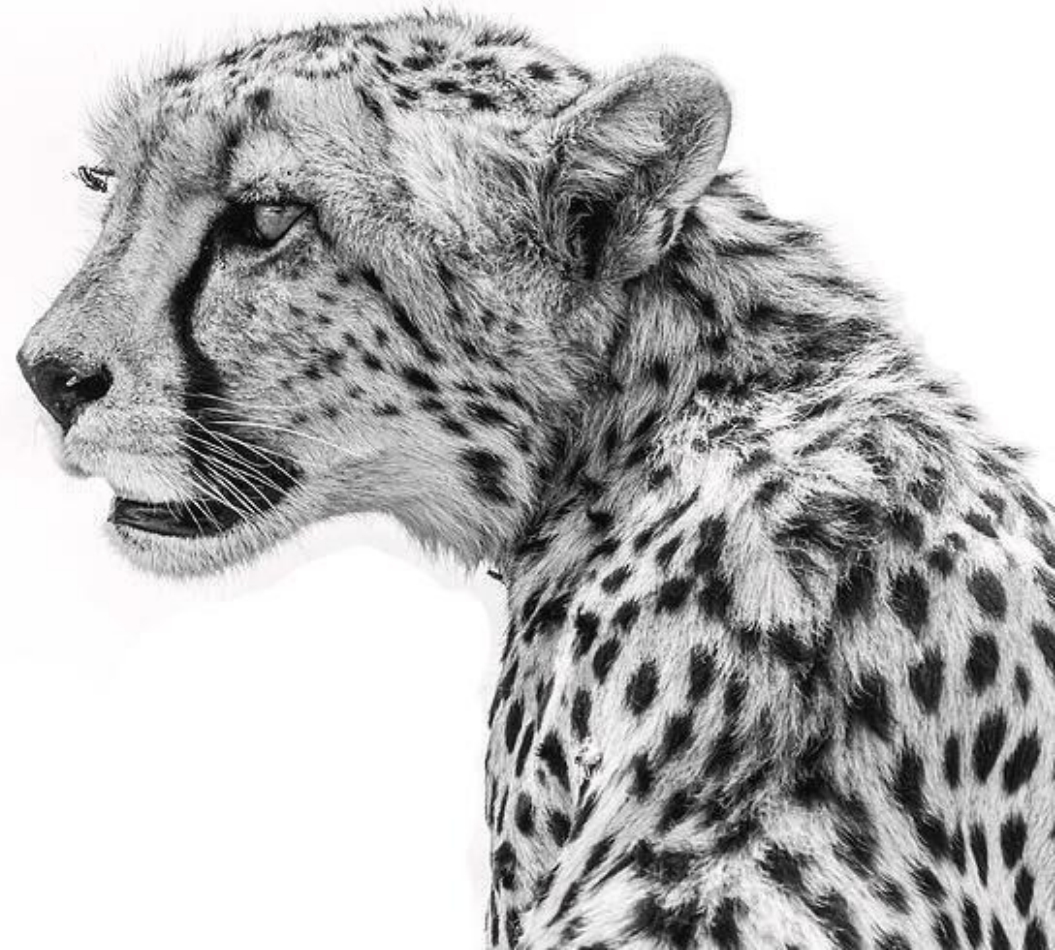


Conservation Status of Cheetah

IUCN SSC Cat Specialist Group



Cheetah habitat – from desert to thick bush

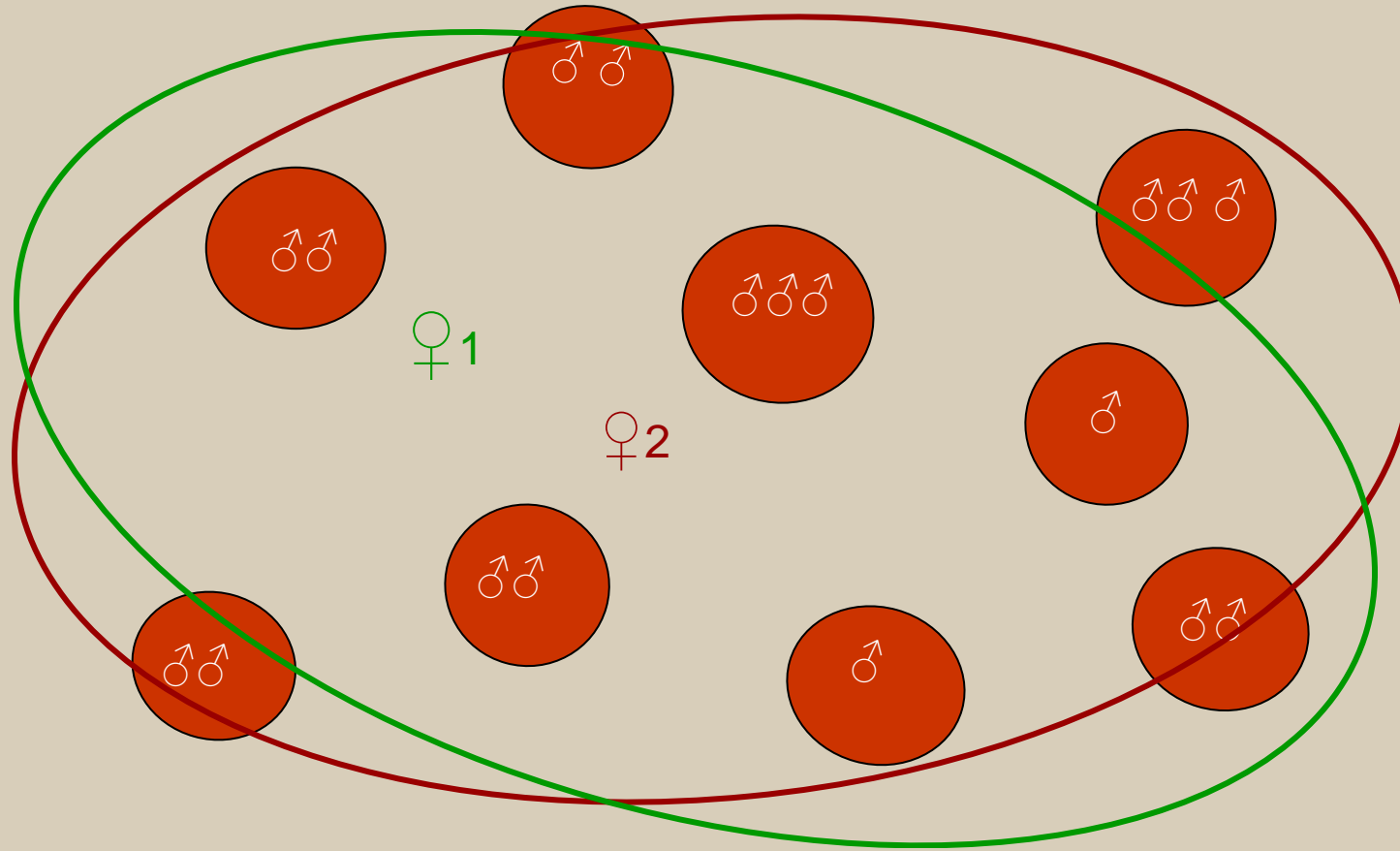


Cheetah diet

- Wide range of prey species, from hares to wildebeest
- Usually medium-sized antelope: 10-35kg
- Usually gazelle/impala/kob, but males also take larger prey
- Sometimes prey upon livestock/ farmed game which can result in conflict



Cheetah System



The cheetah system is unique amongst mammals



Cheetah: A wide-ranging, low density species

The unique behaviour of the cheetah is an adaptive response to competition with other large carnivores

Limited by large carnivores inside protected areas

Limited by people outside protected areas



A photograph of two cheetahs standing in a savanna landscape. The cheetahs are the central focus, with one slightly behind the other. They have distinctive spotted fur and black tear-like stripes around their eyes. The background shows a blurred natural environment with some greenery and a clear sky.

Maximum density of 2
cheetah per 100km²

Average home ranges can go up to 3,000km²



Threats: Habitat loss and fragmentation



Threats:

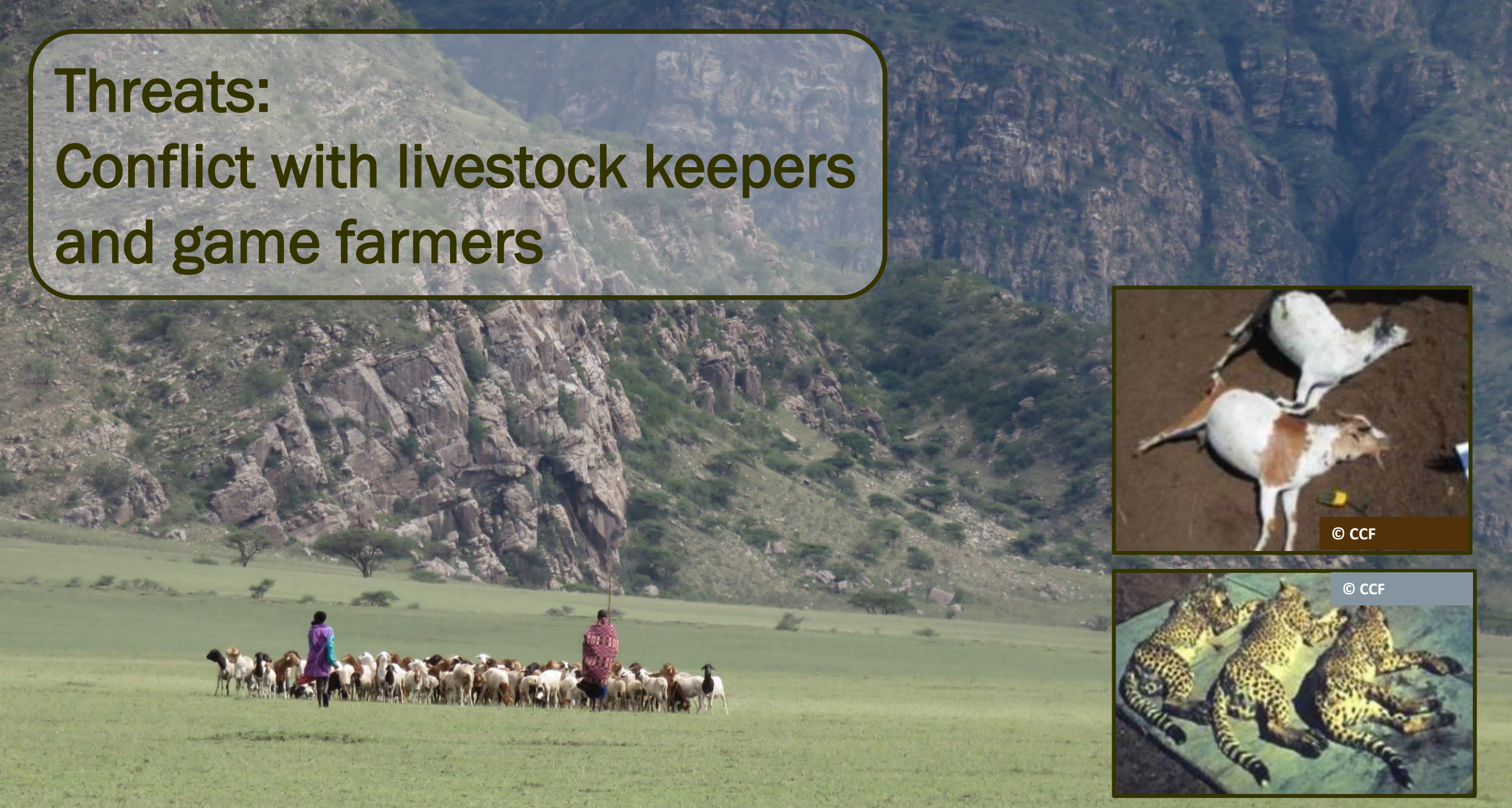
Loss of prey – unsustainable hunting or grazing competition with livestock



© Matt Becker/Zambia Carnivore Program



Threats: Conflict with livestock keepers and game farmers



Threats: Illegal trade



Threats: Road kill



© Dennis Minja, Serengeti Cheetah Project

© Sarah Durant, ZSL



Threats: Poorly regulated tourism



© Sarah Durant, ZSL



Overall status of cheetah

The IUCN Red List assesses cheetah as Vulnerable, with a global population of less than 7,000.

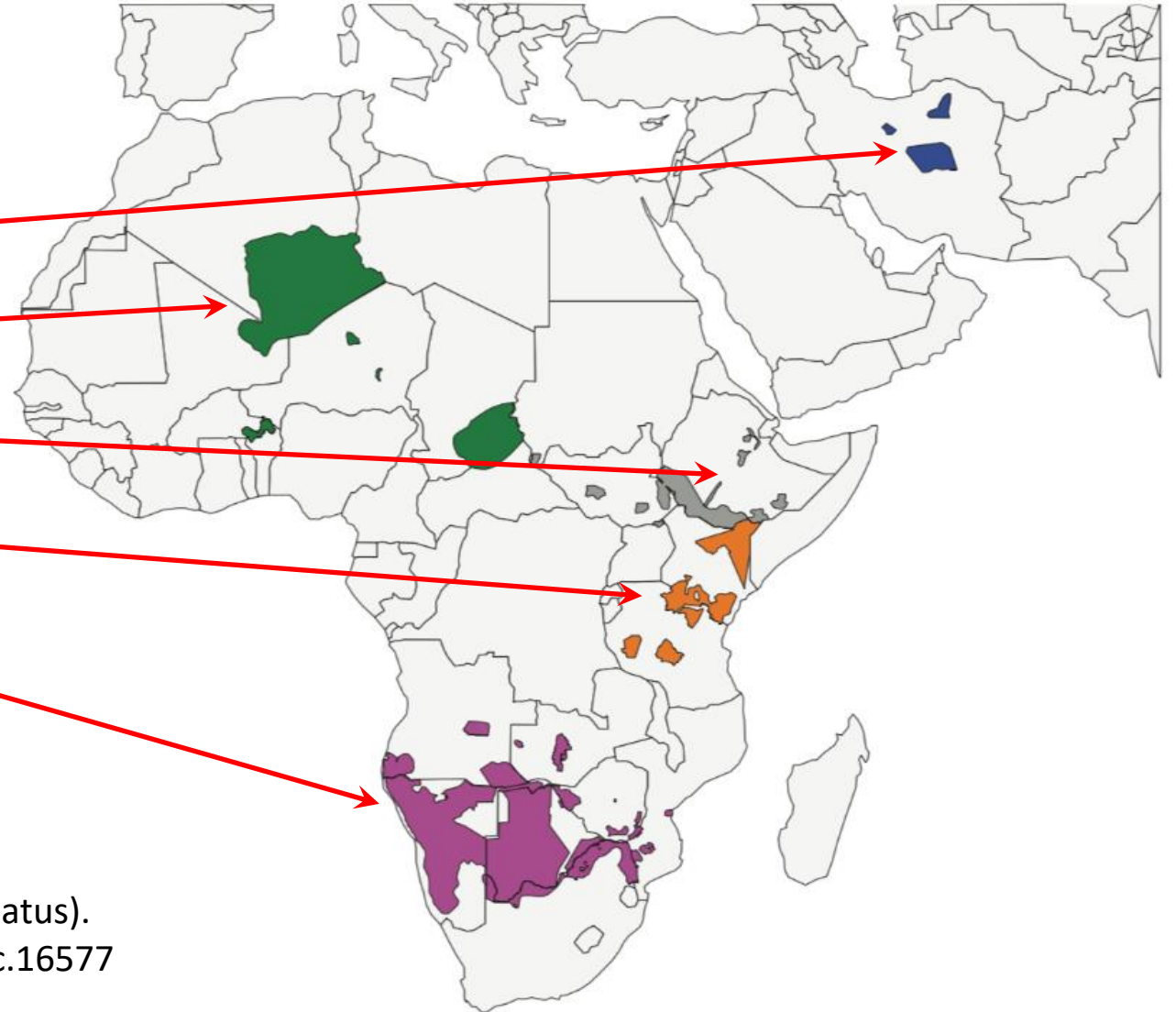
Two thirds of these cheetah live outside protected areas sharing the habitats with people



Subspecies distribution

Five subspecies (Prost et al. 2022)

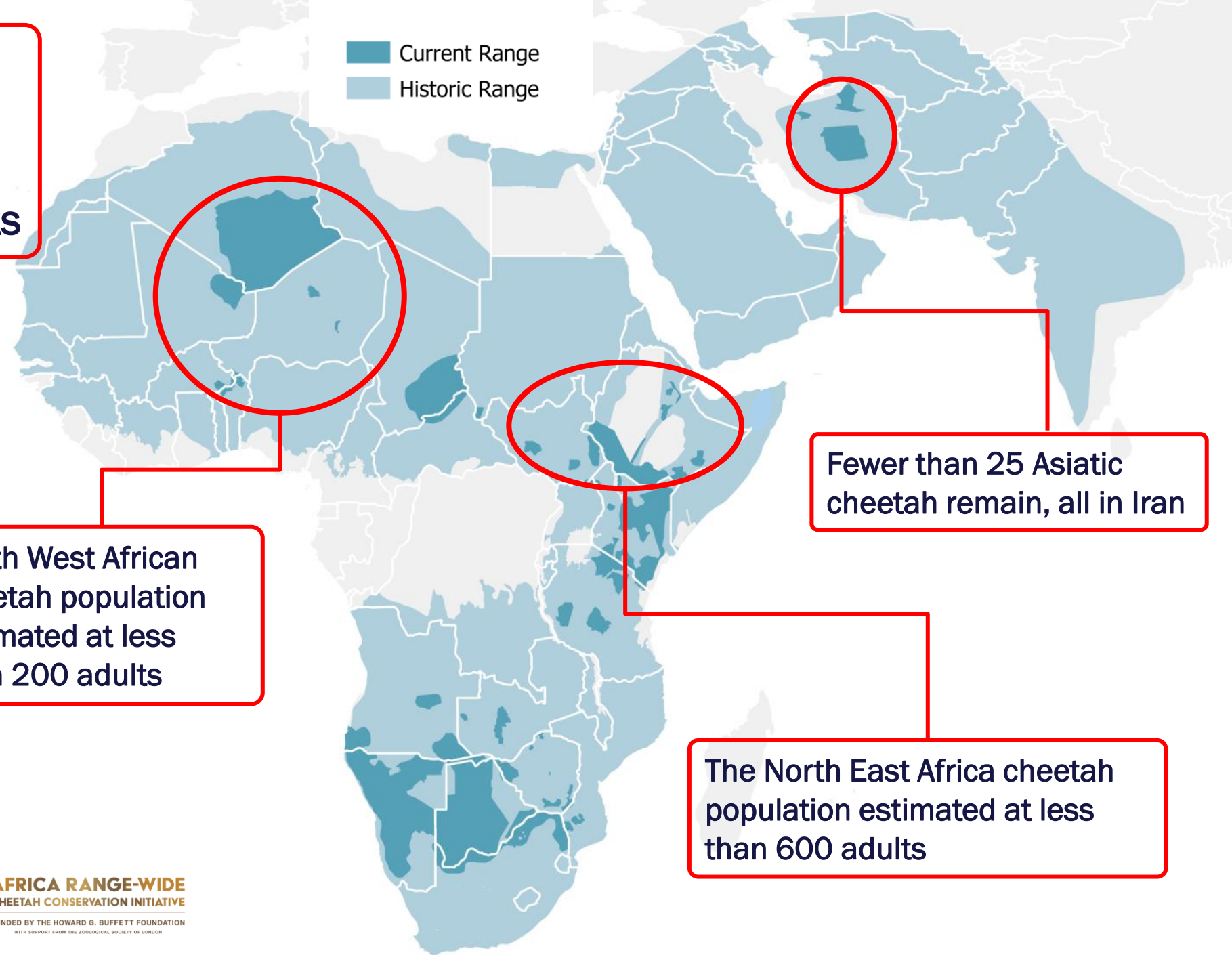
- *Acinonyx jubatus venaticus*
- *Acinonyx jubatus hecki*
- *Acinonyx jubatus soemmeringii*
- *Acinonyx jubatus raineyi*
- *Acinonyx jubatus jubatus*



Prost, S. et al. 2022. Genomic analyses show extremely perilous conservation status of African and Asiatic cheetahs (*Acinonyx jubatus*). *Molecular Ecology*, 31, 4208– 4223. <https://doi.org/10.1111/mec.16577>



Cheetahs restricted to only 9% of their historical distribution, global population c. 6,500 adults



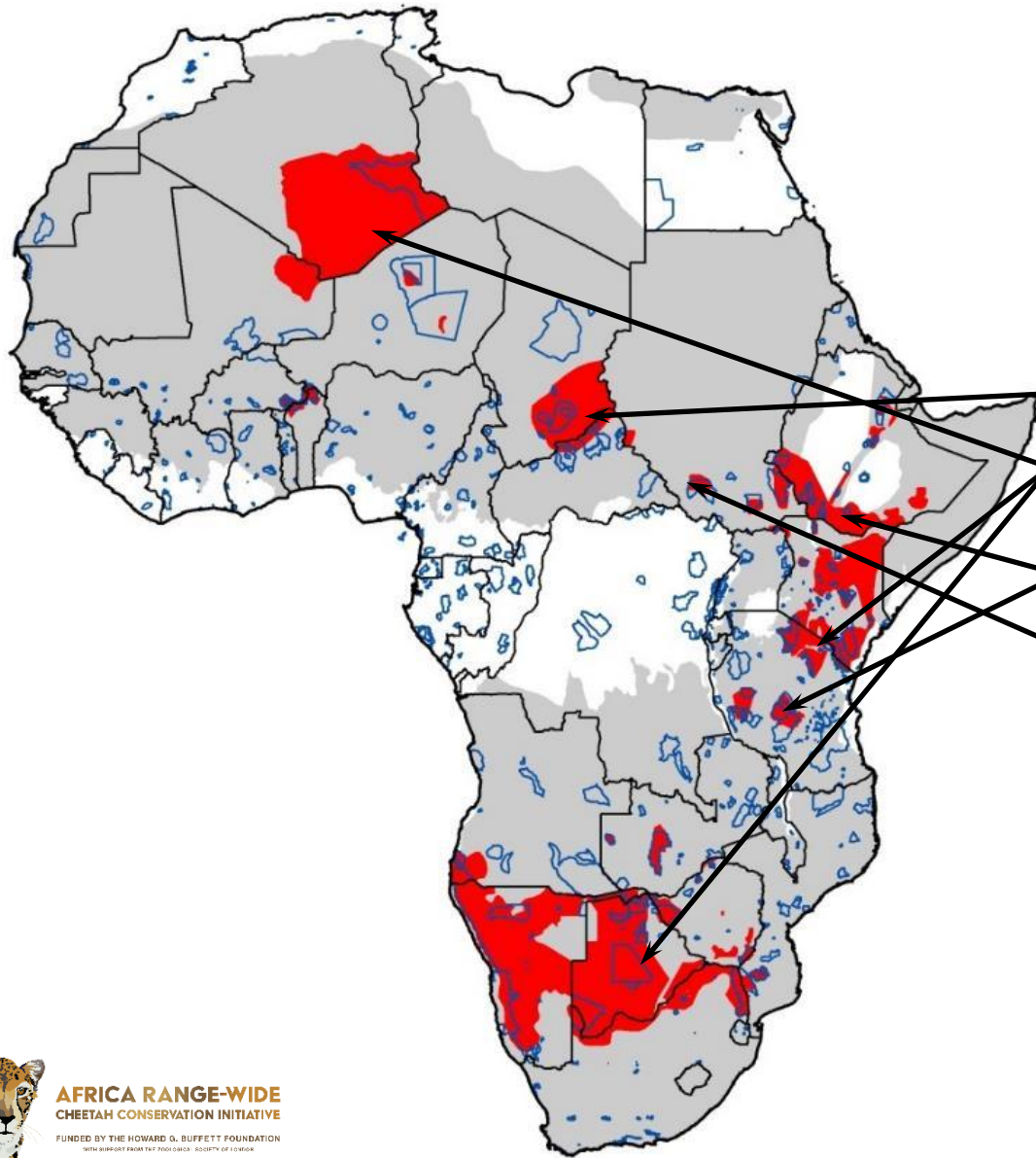
North West African cheetah population estimated at less than 200 adults

North East Africa cheetah population estimated at less than 600 adults

Fewer than 25 Asiatic cheetah remain, all in Iran

The North East Africa cheetah population estimated at less than 600 adults

Key Cheetah populations in Africa



Bots/Nam/SA/Za/Ang/Moz	3,691
Tsavo/Serengeti/Laikipia	1,250
CAR/Chad	218
Ruaha	184
Ahaggar/Ajjar/Mali	175
Kenya/Ethiopia/South Sudan	175
Southern NP	135
Remaining 23 populations	<100

Reference:

Durant, SM et al. 2017. The global decline of cheetah *Acinonyx jubatus* and what it means for conservation. *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. U. S. A.*, 114, 528-533
10.1073/pnas.1611122114



AFRICA RANGE-WIDE
CHEETAH CONSERVATION INITIATIVE
FUNDED BY THE HOWARD G. BUFFETT FOUNDATION
WITH SUPPORT FROM THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON



Trends:

Reference:

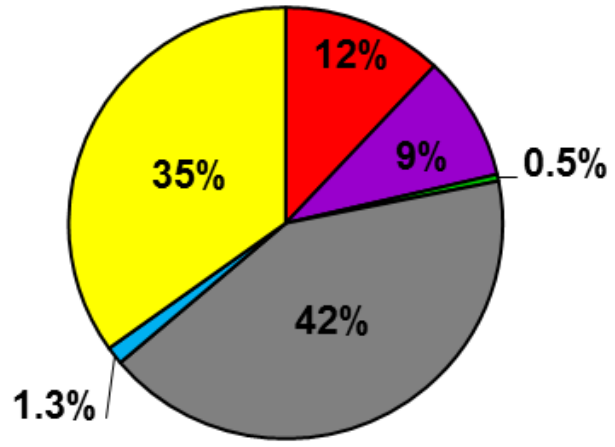
Durant, SM et al. 2017. The global decline of cheetah *Acinonyx jubatus* and what it means for conservation. Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. U. S. A., 114, 528-533 10.1073/pnas.1611122114

18 populations (out of 33 total) where trends can be assessed: 14 decreasing; 3 stable; 1 stable or increasing

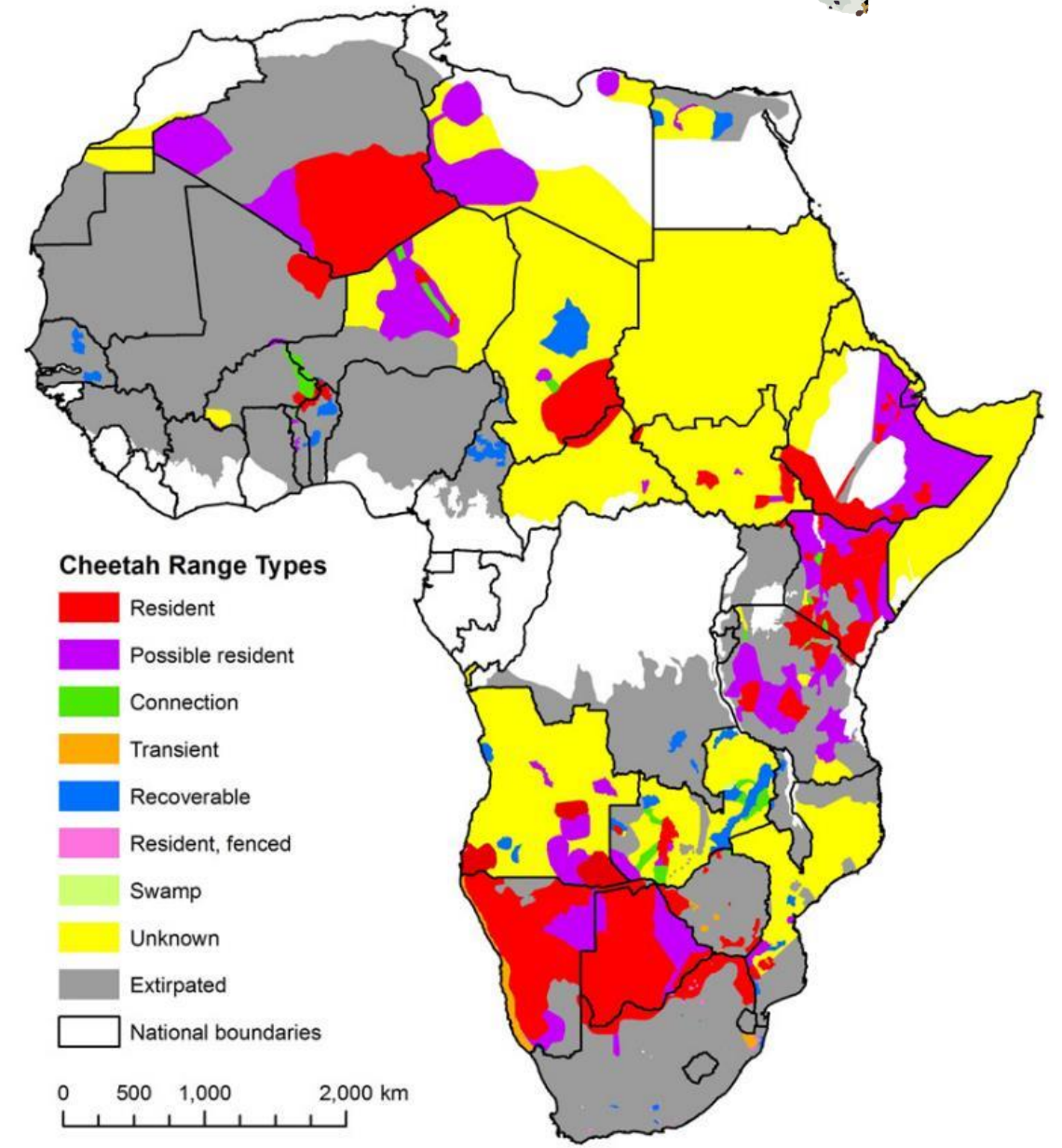
Area Name	Countries	Resident range km ²	Population size (adults and adolescents)	Overall increase↑ /stable↔/decrease↓
Southern Africa 6 country polygon	Angola/Botswana/Mozambique/ Namibia/South Africa/Zambia	1,153,898	3,963	↓
Pandmatenga/Hwange/Victoria Falls	Botswana/Zimbabwe	25,926	50	↓
Malilangwe/Save/Gonarezhou	Mozambique/Zimbabwe	9,922	46	↔
Liuwa	Zambia	3,170	20	↔
Bubyana-Nuanetsi-Bubye Conservancies	Zimbabwe	8,816	40	↓
Zambezi valley	Zimbabwe	3,612	12	↓
Matusadona	Zimbabwe	1,422	3	↓
Midlands Rhino Conservancy	Zimbabwe	318	4	↓
Afar	Ethiopia	4,480	11	↓
Blen-Afar	Ethiopia	8,170	20	↓
Ogaden	Ethiopia	12,605	32	↓
Yangudi Rassa	Ethiopia	3,046	8	↓
Serengeti/Mara/Tsavo/ Laikipia/Samburu	Kenya/Tanzania	280,114	1,362	↓
Ruaha ecosystem	Tanzania	30,820	200	↔
Maasai Steppe	Tanzania	20,409	51	↓
Central and Eastern Landscapes	Iran	107,566	20	↔
Northern Landscape	Iran	33,445	22	↓
Kavir	Iran	5,856	1	↓



There are still areas where we can't be sure whether cheetahs are present or not



- resident
- possible
- connecting
- extirpated unrecoverable
- extirpated recoverable
- unknown



Up to date maps available from <https://cheetahconservationinitiative.com/cheetah-maps/>



Cheetah threat assessment

- Currently categorised as Vulnerable under IUCN based on past range reduction and ongoing decline (A4b C1)



Decreasing

- Most recent classification recommended it to be a **species under observation** – requiring regular reassessments
- Asiatic cheetah (*A.j. venaticus*) and North West African (*A. j. hecki*) cheetah **Critically Endangered**



Decreasing

- North East African cheetah assessment (*A. j. soemmeringii*) is currently undergoing review but based on available data is likely to be **Endangered**



Thank you!



© Sarah Durant, Serengeti Cheetah Project

2nd Meeting of Range States of the Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivore Initiative, 1-4 May 2023, Entebbe

