

CHEETAH IN ZIMBABWE

Viv Wilson is to survey the status of cheetah in Zimbabwe following presentation to the National Parks Board by the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation of a discussion paper on whether hunting "by high paying foreign sportsmen" should be permitted because of "heavy predation on domestic livestock". It was argued that, because of the stock losses, some 200 cheetah were known to have been destroyed illegally and left to rot. In the circumstances it was better to permit hunting to offset financial losses and to encourage landholders to tolerate cheetah on their land. Viv, a member of the Board, opposed the suggestion on the grounds that the cheetah population was not as plentiful as suggested, although there might be local concentrations. He was asked to make a survey of cheetah distribution and status and report back. Meanwhile there will be no cheetah hunting.

Leopard hunting is permitted and trophies can be taken out of the country. CITES has established a quota of 350 trophy skins a year for Zimbabwe, with the condition that an individual can transport only one skin a year for non-commercial purposes.

CHEETAH IN SOUTH AFRICA

Clive Walker reports that the South African authorities are considering removing the cheetah from the list of endangered species in South Africa and Namibia. He says cheetah are prolific in Namibia, and are a serious problem in terms of predation on livestock. The question is what to do with the large number of cheetah which may either wind up in captivity or be shot. The situation in South Africa itself is not serious, he adds.