

Anonymous. Status of larger wildlife species - cheetah, leopard and lion. 1-7.

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trade

Abstract: The conservation status of cheetah, leopard and lion in Mozambique is described. A distribution map illustrates the regression of the cheetah populations from the 1930s to the 1980s. The situation is due to tremendous poaching in recent years and to the destruction of prime habitat, particularly by wild fires. The occupation of large areas of cheetah's habitat by cattle farmers who kill them as a threat to domestic stock, is also a problem. A few cheetah skins still appear in the illegal trade.

Part II STATUS OF LARGER WILDLIFE SPECIESII.1 MAMMALS

CHEETAH Acinonyx jubatus Schreber 1775

Status: Endangered

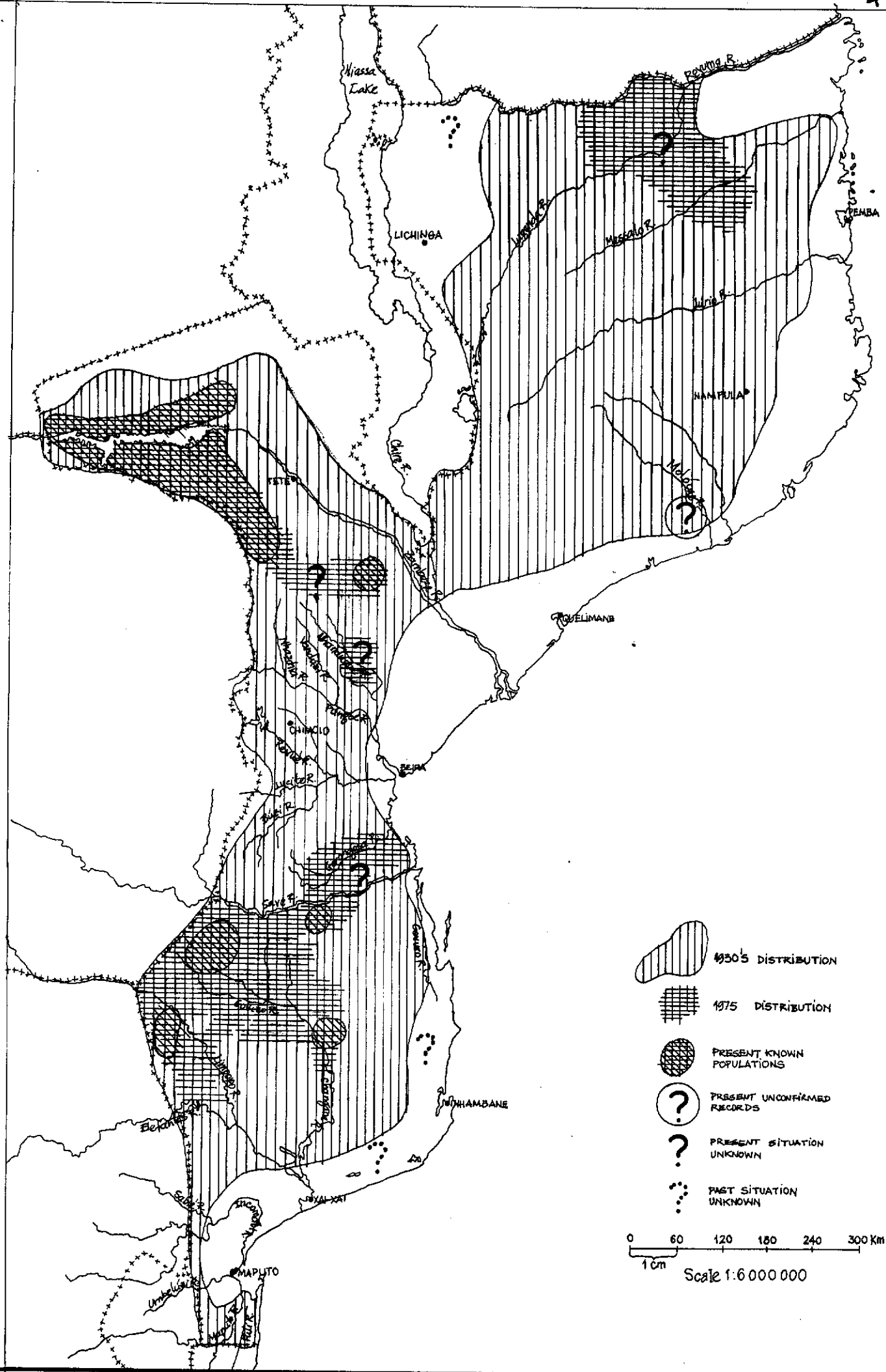
Until about 1950 cheetah were abundant in all suitable habitats, particularly in the dry grasslands and savannas of the Lebombo range of Maputo Province, in the interior of Gaza and Inhambane Provinces, in the south and in the north central areas of Manica and Sofala Provinces, and in the southern regions of Tete Province.

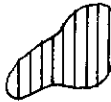





North of the Zambezi River cheetah were less abundant than in the southern region, but appeared to be common in the dry areas of the Rovuma/Lugenda Valleys. Other records are from Maravia and Mutarara in Tete Province; from the districts of Morrumbala, Mocuba, Alto Molocue and Gile in the Zambezi Province and from Ligonha, Lurio and Messalo Valleys.

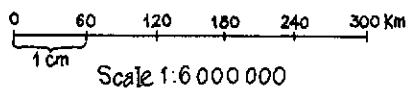
By the 1970s, the cheetah was already an endangered species and only small populations were known in parts of the former range.

At the present time, there is only evidence of relict populations in some parts of the dry areas of the Gaza and Inhambane Provinces, in the north of Manica Province, and in southern regions of Tete Province. During wildlife surveys in 1977/82 in the Niassa and Cabo Delgado Provinces cheetah were recorded by the author, but the species was not seen during the 1982/83 safari hunting seasons in the Lugenda Valley (EMOFAUNA records; pers.obs.; and M. Torrielli pers.comm.). The author believes that there are at present fewer than 100 cheetah in Mozambique.

The situation is due to tremendous poaching in recent years and to the destruction of prime habitat, particularly by wild fires. The occupation of large areas of cheetah habitat by cattle farmers who kill them as a threat to domestic stock, is also a problem. A few cheetah skins still appear in the illegal trade, particularly in the towns of Tete, Beira and Maputo.



-  1950'S DISTRIBUTION
-  1975 DISTRIBUTION
-  PRESENT KNOWN POPULATIONS
-  PRESENT UNCONFIRMED RECORDS
-  PRESENT SITUATION UNKNOWN
-  PAST SITUATION UNKNOWN



CHEETAH PAST AND PRESENT KNOWN DISTRIBUTION

Dr. Tello, J. (1986) Survey of protected areas and wildlife areas in Mozambique with recommendations for the future of the cheetah population in Mozambique.

LEOPARD Panthera pardus (Newman 1900)

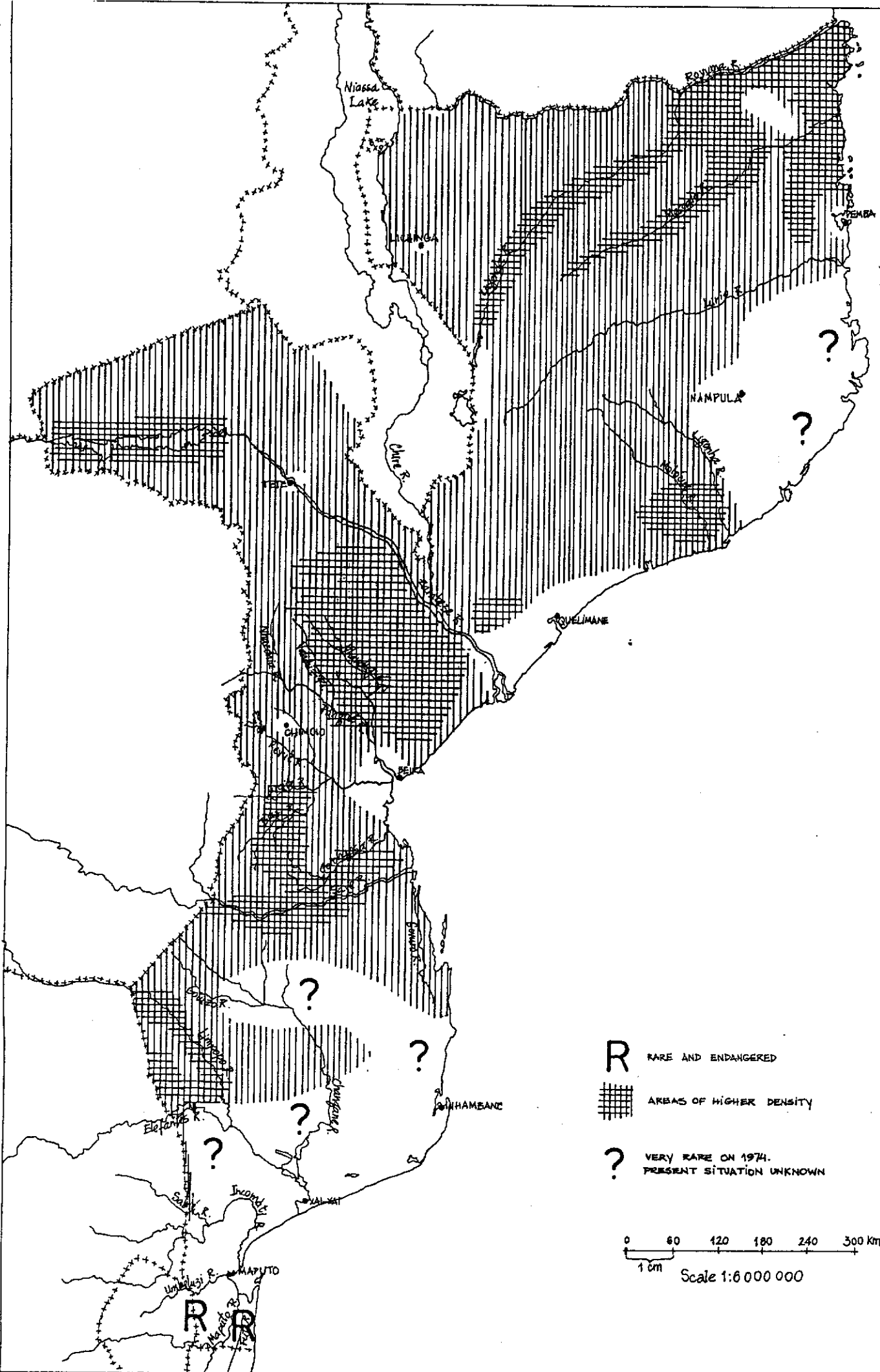
Status: Secure

The species still occurs everywhere in Mozambique, but it is endangered in Maputo Province, as well as in the coastal belt up to about the Lurio River. Leopards are very adaptable, and can be found from the low grasslands, particularly those with termite and palm thickets, to the mountain forests. Leopards also take advantage of secondary habitats, such as degraded grasslands with scrub invasion, degraded prime forests with invasion of dense scrub, sugar cane plantations etc.

Leopards are particularly abundant in the Upper Limpopo Valley in the Gorongosa National Park and adjacent areas; in the Zambezi Valley Wildlife Utilisation Unit; in the Lugenda Valley; and in the coastal belt of the Cabo Delgado Province.

However, poaching is heavy, although the military situation in the country does not permit the deadly night poaching of leopard. The majority of leopard skins seen by the author are from animals killed by traps or by rural poachers. It also looks as though many of these leopards were killed near traditional villages to protect small domestic stock. Leopard skins appear often in the illegal trade and many are illegally taken out of the country. In spite of this, the author does not believe that poaching is organised.

Since it is well distributed, and has excellent habitat and availability of prey, leopard is not at all threatened in Mozambique.



LEOPARD PRESENT KNOWN DISTRIBUTION

LION Panthera leo (Linnaeus 1758)

Status: XXXXXX

Up to 1975 lions were widely distributed throughout Mozambique. They were extinct in the coastal belt south of the Save River, but some vagrants from western and northern regions appeared from time to time in the interior of Inhambane Province. They were also extinct in Maputo Province, except as vagrants from the Kruger National Park. In Manica Province lions were almost extinct; they were decreasing in Zambezia Province; and endangered in Nampula Province. In the rest of the country lions were common to abundant.

The situation at present, so far as is known, is as follows:

Maputo Province - vagrants from Kruger National Park occur in the northwestern sector.

Upper Limpopo Valley - lions appear to be increasing, and are still common in the northwestern sector of Gaza Province. In the rest of the Province, including the Banhine National Park, lions are decreasing.

Inhambane Province - lions are extinct, except in the Zinave National Park and in the extreme western region of the Massinga/Govuro districts. But even here they are rare and endangered.

Manica and Sofala Provinces - in the southern area of these provinces lions have decreased, and they have not been recorded in western Manica Province. They still occur, apparently in good numbers, in north-central Manica Province, as well as in the north-central areas of Sofala Province. In 1978 there were about 300 lions in the Gorongosa National Park. In the Zambezi Valley Utilisation Unit lions have been increasing since 1976 and the author's estimate is about 150. Lion poaching in the Gorongosa and the Zambezi Unit have never been serious.

Zambezia Province - lions are endangered. They are rare (<>10) in the Gile Game Reserve (S. Bonito pers.comm.) and are still recorded in Mopeia and Morrumbala districts. In Nampula Province lions are sometimes recorded in the littoral of Pemba district and in the east Lurio River (F. Coats 1979).

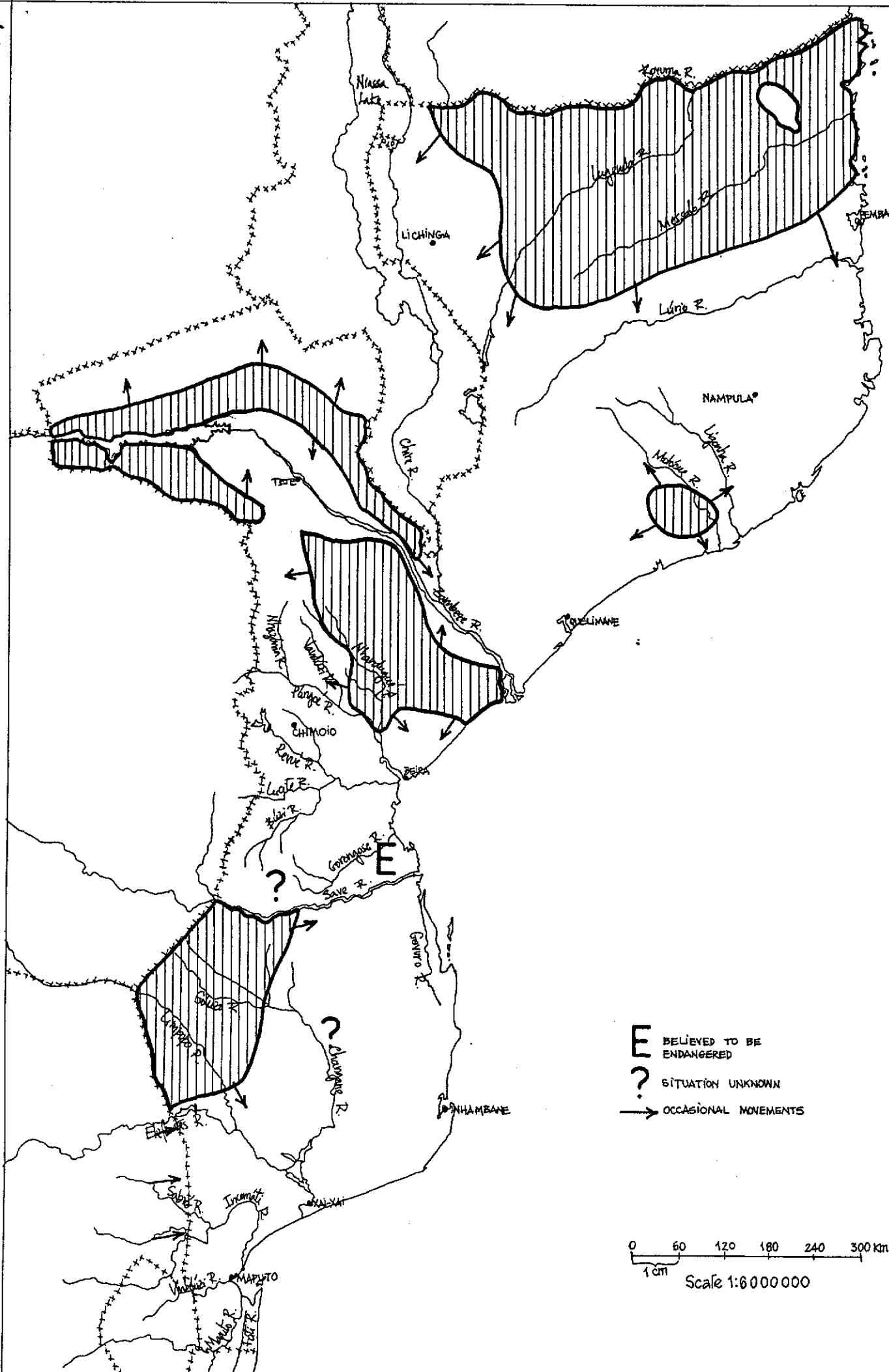
Tete Province - Lions still appear to be relatively common in the Mutarara and Macanga Districts, as well as in the southern regions. They are still recorded in other areas, but are decreasing because of poaching.

Niassa Province - Many records exist of lions in this province. During the 1982/83 hunting season the author found lions common.

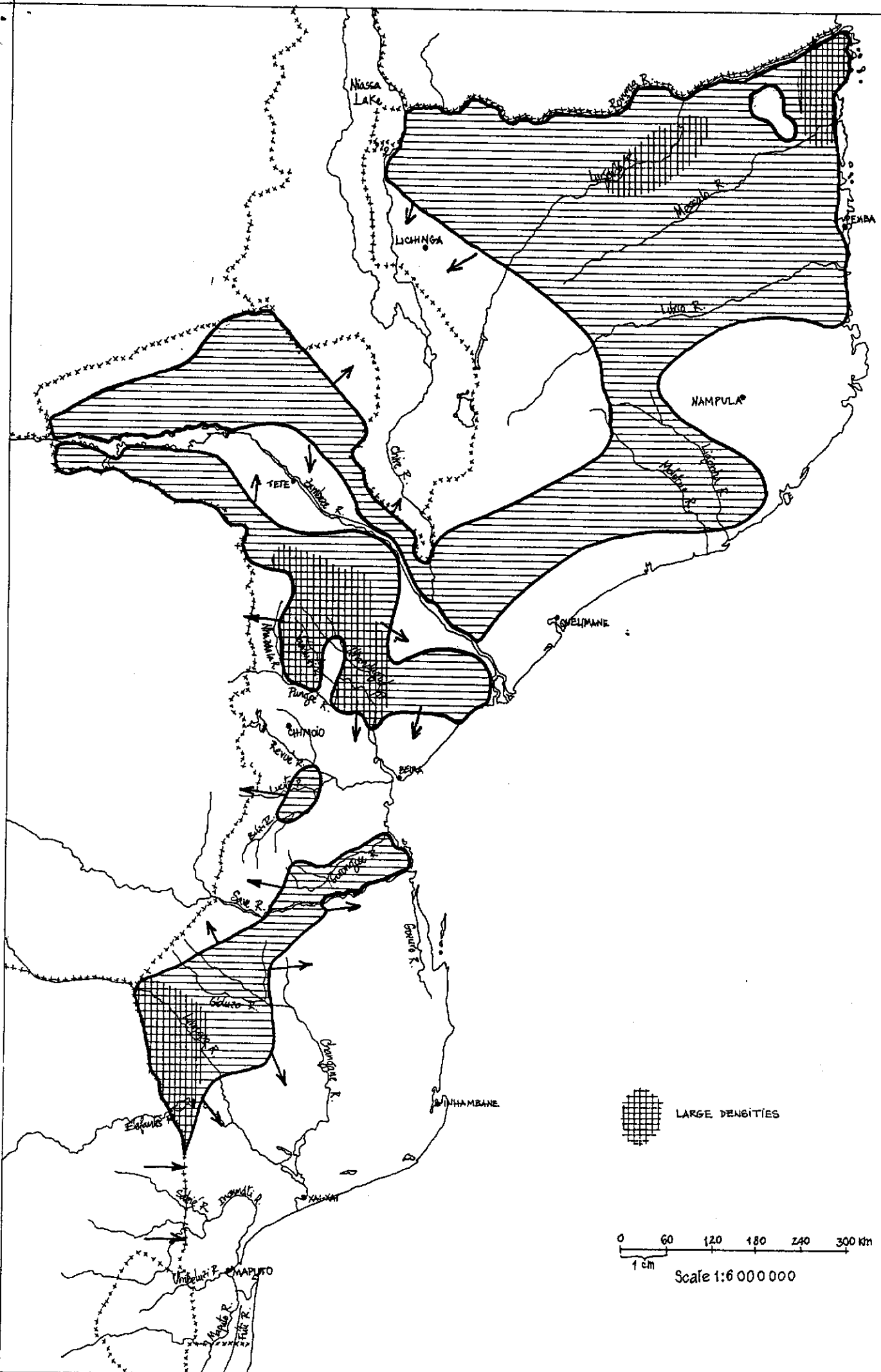
Cabo Delgado Province - Lions still occur in most of the province, but are vulnerable in the coastal belt.

While lions are not endangered as a species in Mozambique, their future in the region south of the Save River depends on the recuperation of the Limpopo Wildlife Utilisation Unit, as well as of the Banhine National Park. In addition, the establishment of conservation areas in Provinces where they do not exist is necessary if lions are to survive.

The author estimates that there are between 1,000 and 2,000 lions at present in Mozambique. There are no signs of organised commercial poaching, but many lions are killed by wire snares at watering places, and many lions have been killed to protect people and livestock. Rehabilitation of the larger wildlife species is also necessary to conserve lions outside conservation areas.



LION PRESENT KNOWN DISTRIBUTION



LION KNOWN DISTRIBUTION IN 1974