



**OCT 31, 2019**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**KWS CALLS FOR NEW WAYS TO STOP DECLINING CARNIVORE NUMBERS**

Kenya Wildlife Service Director General, Brig. (Rtd) John Waweru, has called on delegates attending an annual carnivore conference to recommend ways of tackling challenges facing the meat-eating mammals.

He noted that the conference's theme of "***Carnivore conservation in changing landscapes***" resonated well with the current situation "as our landscapes has changed drastically over the years due to increase of human population, sedentary lifestyles to once nomadic communities and increased demand for modern infrastructural facilities."

He was speaking at Nairobi Safari Walk in Nairobi yesterday while presiding over the opening of the 13th Annual Carnivore Conference which aims to share information and knowledge on carnivore conservation and management in Kenya.

The conference brought together key conservation players including community representatives, wildlife managers, local and international scientists, as well as members of International Union for Conservation of Nature Carnivore Committees and the African Lion Working Group.

The two-day forum, which has been meeting for the last decade, this year seeks to explore a wealth of knowledge and experience that will ensure better understanding of carnivores, their conservation, management, scientifically standardized information sharing methodologies and policy formulation in relation to changing landscapes in protected areas.

Land loss and encroachment, unpalatable infrastructural development syndicates and lack of good will from communities along wildlife protected areas have been cited as major setbacks in population growth of the carnivores

Currently, carnivore population is estimated to be above 2000 individuals in Kenya, according to the last conducted survey. They as well plays essential role of herbivore population control, which brings about balanced ecosystem in the wild.

Cheetah populations are said to have suffered a 2 per cent decline in the last decade and 90 per cent reduction in lion range across Africa.

This year's meeting also aims at employing standardized, modern and technologically advanced methods of survey in mapping and monitoring of both large and small carnivores in Kenya and across Africa.

In line with the National Wildlife Conservation and Management Strategy 2030, Kenya Wildlife Service together with conservation partners are currently undertaking a national lion and other large carnivore survey which will provide updated population status of carnivores as well as Recovery and Action Plan for Lion and Spotted Hyena in Kenya (2019-2024).

Brig. (Rtd) Waweru applauded the partnership exhibited by other conservation enthusiasts in aiding KWS achieve its mandates "as an agency mandated to conserve wildlife, KWS will continue to build avenues for collaboration and ensure the best practice is employed in management of carnivores for future prosperity in the country."

The carnivore conservation and management will continue to contribute to the development of adaptive mechanisms for harmonious co-existence with people so as to mitigate the ever increasing human-carnivore conflicts.