



Photo credit: Cheetah Conservation Fund/Eli Walker

Cheetah Conservation Fund joins the Population & Sustainability Network

Population & Sustainability Network

The Cheetah Conservation Fund has become the latest conservation NGO to join the Population & Sustainability Network. The Cheetah Conservation Fund and Network coordinator, the Margaret Pyke Trust, have marked the occasion by publishing [*The importance of human reproductive health and rights for cheetah conservation*](#). This is perhaps the first time a paper making the connections between human reproductive health and rights and the conservation of a specific species has been published.

We are delighted to announce not only has the Cheetah Conservation Fund become the latest member of the Population & Sustainability Network, but has also published a paper co-authored with the Margaret Pyke Trust on the importance of considering human reproductive health and rights in cheetah conservation programmes. Dr. Laurie Marker of the Cheetah Conservation Fund, said, “For the last twenty-five years the Cheetah Conservation Fund has worked tirelessly to conserve the global cheetah population. We have always partnered with rural communities to empower and improve their lives, not only because it is the right thing to do, but also because we believe conservation and community development go hand in hand. As the links between conservation, population growth, and barriers to communities accessing sexual and reproductive health services, including rights-based family planning services, have

become increasingly apparent, we knew it was time we took these links into account in our organisational strategy.”

The Cheetah Conservation Fund has therefore joined a growing number of conservation organisations recognising the importance of the sexual and reproductive health and rights of the communities with which they work, and when developing conservation policy and programme design. David Johnson, Chief Executive of the Margaret Pyke Trust, said,

“Programmes integrating family planning improvements with conservation actions have been demonstrated to have greater conservation, health and gender outcomes than traditional single sector ‘health’ or ‘conservation’ programmes, so everyone benefits. We’re excited that the Cheetah Conservation Fund has made the first step to implementing such a project with us, by collaborating on this policy paper.”

Over the last 100 years the global cheetah population has decreased by around 90%, so that today there are only around 7,000 adult and adolescent cheetahs remaining in the wild. Currently classified as “Vulnerable” by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), cheetah face threats including habitat loss, declines in prey, poaching, the illegal pet trade and climate change. Many conservationists believe their status should be reclassified by the IUCN as “Endangered”.

There is very often an overlap of the areas of most conservation significance and where the barriers to family planning services are greatest, and as human needs and settlements grow, so do pressures on cheetah habitat. Improving knowledge of contraception and the provision of rights-based family planning services can only ever be one part of any conservation programme, but it is an important consideration nonetheless. It is exciting that another conservation organisation has recognised these connections, and has committed to collaborating with expert health partner organisations to address human and environmental health in an integrated and holistic way.

[Read the paper: “The importance of human reproductive health and rights for cheetah conservation.”](#)

The Population & Sustainability Network is an active member of the MAHB, you can learn more about PSN’s work through its MAHB Node: [Population and Sustainability Network](#).

The MAHB Blog is a venture of the Millennium Alliance for Humanity and the Biosphere. Questions should be directed to joan@mahbonline.org

MAHB Blog: <https://mahb.stanford.edu/blog/cheetah-conservation-psn/>