

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee**

Answers to questions on notice
Environment and Energy portfolio

Question No: 66
Hearing: Supplementary Budget Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1
Program: Wildlife Heritage and Marine Division (WHM)
Topic: Tiger importation - ZooDoo Tasmania – Pay and Play
Hansard Page: n/a
Question Date: 31 October 2016
Question Type: Written

Senator Rhiannon, Lee asked:

ZooDoo in Tasmania has been breeding white lions and using the cubs for zoo visitors to ‘pay and play’.

- a) Does this breach any permits for keeping lions?
- b) The breeding of lions and other big cats in Australia by private facilities has no conservation value, why is such breeding being allowed to occur?
- c) What happens to ‘surplus’ animals?

Answer:

a) Permits for keeping lions are the responsibility of the Tasmanian state government. There are usually no conditions on import permits issued by the Department under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* that prevent breeding, or prevent interaction with members of the public.

b) Most big cat species are listed under Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). Under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act), the import by zoos of CITES Appendix I listed live animals is generally only permitted as part of a cooperative conservation program.

A cooperative conservation program is a breeding and/or management program that aims to conserve a species (in the wild or in captivity, or both) and applies best practice to the management of husbandry, genetics, biology and behavioural needs of the species. The program's objectives must be based on the conservation status and needs of the species, and the program must not be detrimental to the survival of the species in the wild.

c) There are very few instances of surplus animals under cooperative conservation programs. Within recognised conservation programs big cats are highly sought after both domestically and internationally. Where big cats are surplus to a conservation program, they are either retained by the zoo or transferred to another zoo within Australia.