

Lion bone export quotas 'constitutionally invalid'

In what a [Pretoria News](#) report calls a ground-breaking judgment, Gauteng High Court (Pretoria) Judge Jody Kollapen has set aside former Minister Edna Molewa's quotas set in 2017 and 2018 for the exportation of lion bones. **Kollapen declared the quota set in 2017 on 800 lion bones and the 2018 quota of 1 500 lion bones as unlawful and constitutionally invalid.** The judge said the reality was that the trade export has been completed in lion bone arising out of 2017 and 2018 quota determinations and it would be impossible to reverse those processes. His order only pertains to the decisions which were under review. Kollapen criticised the government for its lack of consideration towards animal welfare issues in deciding on the export quota. The judge said when one has regard to the connection between the welfare interests of animals and conservation, it was inconceivable how the state could have ignored the welfare considerations of lions in captivity in setting the annual export quota. It was illogical, irrational and against the spirit of the Constitution in regard to the welfare concerns of animals. 'Simply put, if as a country we have decided to engage in trade in lion bone, which appears to be the case for now, then at the very least our constitutional and legal obligations require the consideration of animal welfare issues,' the judge said.