



MEDIA RELEASE

WeQare: Qatar Airways Cargo Returns Seven Rescued Lions To Their Natural Habitat For Free

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Doha, Qatar – By helping the NGO Warriors of Wildlife (WOW), Qatar Airways Cargo kept its promise to fly lions to their natural habitat for free. It took six months of hard work involving no less than a dozen departments and over 50 employees to ensure a successful operation.

On Thursday, April 29, the Kouga and Swinburne nature reserves in South Africa welcomed three lions, one lioness and three cubs. This involved a three-day trip from Kiev to Doha and Johannesburg so that the lions could walk on grass for the first time in their lives. All are in good health.

Transporting wild animals back to their natural environment for free at the request of wildlife protection bodies is a promise made by Qatar Airways Cargo as part its “Rewild the Planet” initiative. This is Chapter 2 of the airline’s WeQare sustainability programme.

“Repatriating wild animals is a major undertaking, especially over such a great distance. But we were able to count on the Qatar Airways Cargo teams who are 100% behind us and the work we do. They played a critical role. Without them, these seven lions would still be in captivity in atrocious conditions. So thank you on their behalf,” said Lionel De Lange, Founder and Director of WOW.

Transporting wild animals requires close cooperation between the specific services involved within Qatar Airways Cargo and the NGO staff. The NGO staff looks after the animals’ well-being during the entire journey. Handlers from the Qatar Airways Cargo’s Live Animals facility are present at every stage. Naturally, the NGO was authorised to stay with the lions in special holding areas to maintain a constant link with them.

“I have great admiration and respect for Lionel and his staff, for all their efforts to ensure wild animals can return to nature,” commented Guillaume Halleux, Chief Officer Cargo, Qatar Airways Cargo.

These lions have lived in captivity for years. They will never be able to adapt in the wild. They will spend the next few months in a protected area in which they will simply learn to explore nature.

They will then be transferred to a much larger nature reserve where they will be protected and taken care of for the rest of their lives.

“This is something for us all to be proud of. Whether it’s our staff who fully support our wish to give back to communities, or those who have contributed their expertise and enthusiasm, we are extremely proud to be able to do our bit towards a fairer future,” Halleux added.

Qatar Airways Cargo has pledged to continue this programme so that transport costs of logistics will never prevent NGOs from Rewilding the Planet.

About Warriors of Wildlife

Rescuing, relocation and care of abused wild animals in Ukraine. WOW Ukraine was established in 2014 and now concentrates on the rescue and relocation of animals to sanctuaries around the world and within Ukraine. Website: <https://www.wowukraine.org/>

About Qatar Airways Cargo

Qatar Airways Cargo, one of the world’s leading international air cargo carriers, serves more than 60 freighter destinations worldwide via its world-class Doha hub and also delivers freight in the belly-hold deck of passenger aircraft to an extensive network. The Qatar Airways Cargo fleet includes two Boeing 747-8 freighters, 24 Boeing 777 freighters and six B777-300ER mini freighters.

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