

# Tackling Poaching & Illegal Wildlife Trafficking in Africa



AFRICAN WILDLIFE FOUNDATION®







# AWF's Response to Illegal Wildlife Trafficking

One of the greatest threats to Africa's wildlife comes from outside of the continent. Rising affluence in Asia and elsewhere has created a booming black market for elephant ivory and rhino horn and has led to a poaching crisis on the African continent.

Illegal wildlife trafficking is now estimated to generate more than US\$10 billion annually, closely following the drug trade, arms trade, and human trafficking. The illegal wildlife trade has:

- Fueled poaching of some of Africa's most iconic species;
- Robbed communities of wildlife-related revenue;
- Endangered citizens' lives; and
- Financed some of Africa's most brutal terrorist groups.

The African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) is working with governments and other NGOs to shut down this illicit trade.

## Battle for survival

Africa's elephants and rhinos, caught in the crosshairs of the illegal wildlife trade, are in a battle for their survival:

- More than 100 elephants are killed each day by poachers.
- The poaching of rhinos rose from 13 in 2007 to a staggering 1,004 in 2013 in South Africa alone, the African nation with the highest population of rhinos.

Only about 450,000 elephants and a mere 25,000 rhinos remain on the African continent. If poaching continues at these rates, we may see the extinction of two of Africa's most charismatic species from some of their core habitats in the next 20 years.

## Comprehensive response

Building on its decades of experience combating rhino and elephant poaching in Africa, AWF has shown leadership and foresight in this new war against illegal wildlife trafficking. Our comprehensive response seeks to address the complex, global nature of this crisis through a multi-tiered effort:

- AWF supports the work of protected area authorities and other antipoaching efforts on the ground.
- AWF increases global awareness of the crisis to reduce demand.
- We strengthen law enforcement efforts to crack down on illegal wildlife trafficking and engage with partners and policymakers to ensure broad support in combating this serious issue.

Read on for more details and specific examples of what AWF has done to help halt Africa's epidemic of poaching and illegal wildlife trafficking.



## On-the-Ground Support

### Water for Elephants

Botswana has so far been spared from the worst of Africa's elephant poaching, but few countries are safe from the tentacles of illegal wildlife trafficking. AWF is supporting the Kalahari Conservation Society to create artificial water points during the dry season within Makgadigadi National Park. This will keep elephants within protected areas and will have the added benefit of minimizing the human–elephant conflicts that frequently occur on community lands.

### Aggressive Protection

Save Valley Conservancy in Zimbabwe has lost significant tourism income in the past two years due to unforeseen circumstances—but AWF support is helping the conservancy to protect its populations of black rhino, elephant, and other wildlife. With Aggressive Tracking Specialists—which has been training Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Authority nationwide for the past few years—now contracted by Save to provide anti-poaching protection, the conservancy had minimal poaching losses in 2013, and several poachers have been arrested.

### Census Sees Success

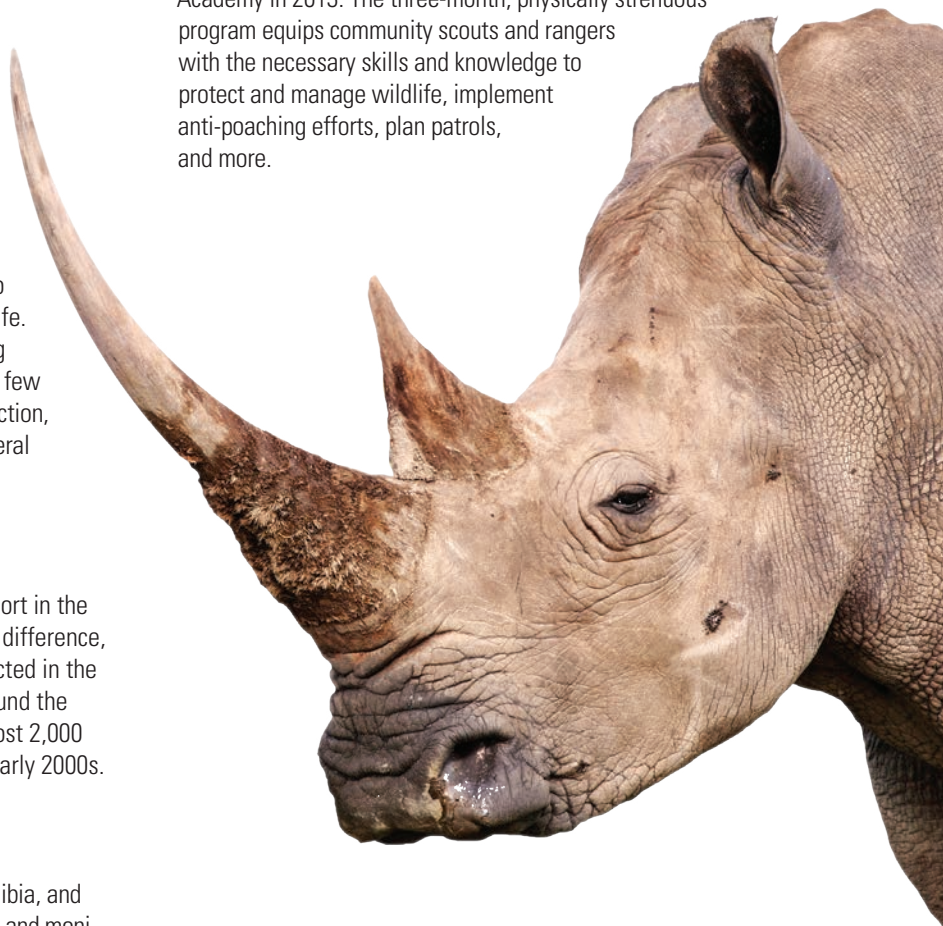
AWF coordination of transborder patrols and other scout support in the cross-border region between Kenya and Tanzania is making a difference, if recent censuses are any indication. An aerial census conducted in the Kilimanjaro landscape in April 2013 during the wet season found the elephant population to be stable—even increasing, with almost 2,000 elephants counted, compared to just more than 1,000 in the early 2000s.

### Desert Patrols

About 95 percent of the desert black rhino can be found in Namibia, and AWF partner Save the Rhino Trust plays a critical role in patrolling and monitoring the species in the northwest part of the country along the Skeleton Coast. An AWF grant enables a tracking team to patrol the Kunene region monthly to identify individual rhino and collect ecological data.

### On the Front Lines

To help Africa's scouts and rangers better protect themselves and wildlife, AWF sent 62 individuals from the Samburu landscape for paramilitary and ecological training at the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) Law Enforcement Academy in 2013. The three-month, physically strenuous program equips community scouts and rangers with the necessary skills and knowledge to protect and manage wildlife, implement anti-poaching efforts, plan patrols, and more.



*AWF's new Species Protection Grants Program has increased protections for critical rhino populations in Kenya, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.*



### Ghosts of Central Africa

More than 65 percent of the forest elephant populations in Africa has been killed in the last 10 years for their ivory, but AWF camera traps have captured forest elephants roaming through some of our project sites. AWF has since provided CyberTracker ecological monitoring units and training to wildlife authorities in Cameroon and Democratic Republic of Congo, and has begun working with communities to create a new reserve in the Congo landscape. In addition to protecting great apes, these interventions will help prevent forest elephants from permanently becoming the ghosts of Central Africa.





# Hidden in Plain Sight

*Behind the legal, domestic ivory trade, a black market flourishes*

In 1989, after a decades-long spate of elephant poaching, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) made the decision to list the African elephant as an Appendix I species, a classification reserved for the world's most threatened species. This essentially shut down international trade in African elephant ivory. In the years following, the outflow of illegal ivory from Africa slowed considerably.

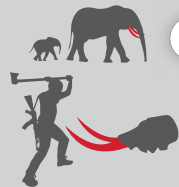
Yet many countries continued to allow the legal trade in ivory within their own borders—and CITES eventually allowed a few African countries with well-managed elephant populations to sell their stocks of accumulated ivory to Japan (in 1999) and China and Japan (in

## IVORY from bush to market

Ivory taken from an elephant in Africa travels along an elaborate trade chain that spans countries, oceans, and continents, and comprises a network of poachers, traffickers, fixers, kingpins, and consumers. Tackling the multibillion-dollar illegal wildlife trade will require interagency cooperation within government, strengthened law enforcement, punitive legislation, increased education, and a commitment by governments, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, communities, and the local citizenry to work together.

Following is an example of how ivory might be taken from the African bush and transported thousands of miles to be sold to consumers in Asia.

Local people living near wildlife are often commissioned by ivory traffickers to find, kill, and de-tusk elephants. **AWF is working with local communities to create jobs based on conservation, rather than exploitation, of wildlife resources, thus creating an alternative livelihood to poaching.**



1



2



DAR ES SALAAM

3

DEMOCRATIC  
REPUBLIC  
OF THE CONGO

TANZANIA

Ivory is then smuggled via different methods of transport across country borders to an airport or seaport. **AWF is helping equip, train, and support rangers and scouts in and around parks and reserves to better defend wildlife against well-armed poachers.**

Customs and border agents often lack the capacity or the desire to detect and seize trafficked ivory. **AWF is supporting sniffer dogs and other enhanced law enforcement efforts to increase the rate of detection of contraband wildlife products before they leave African ports.**

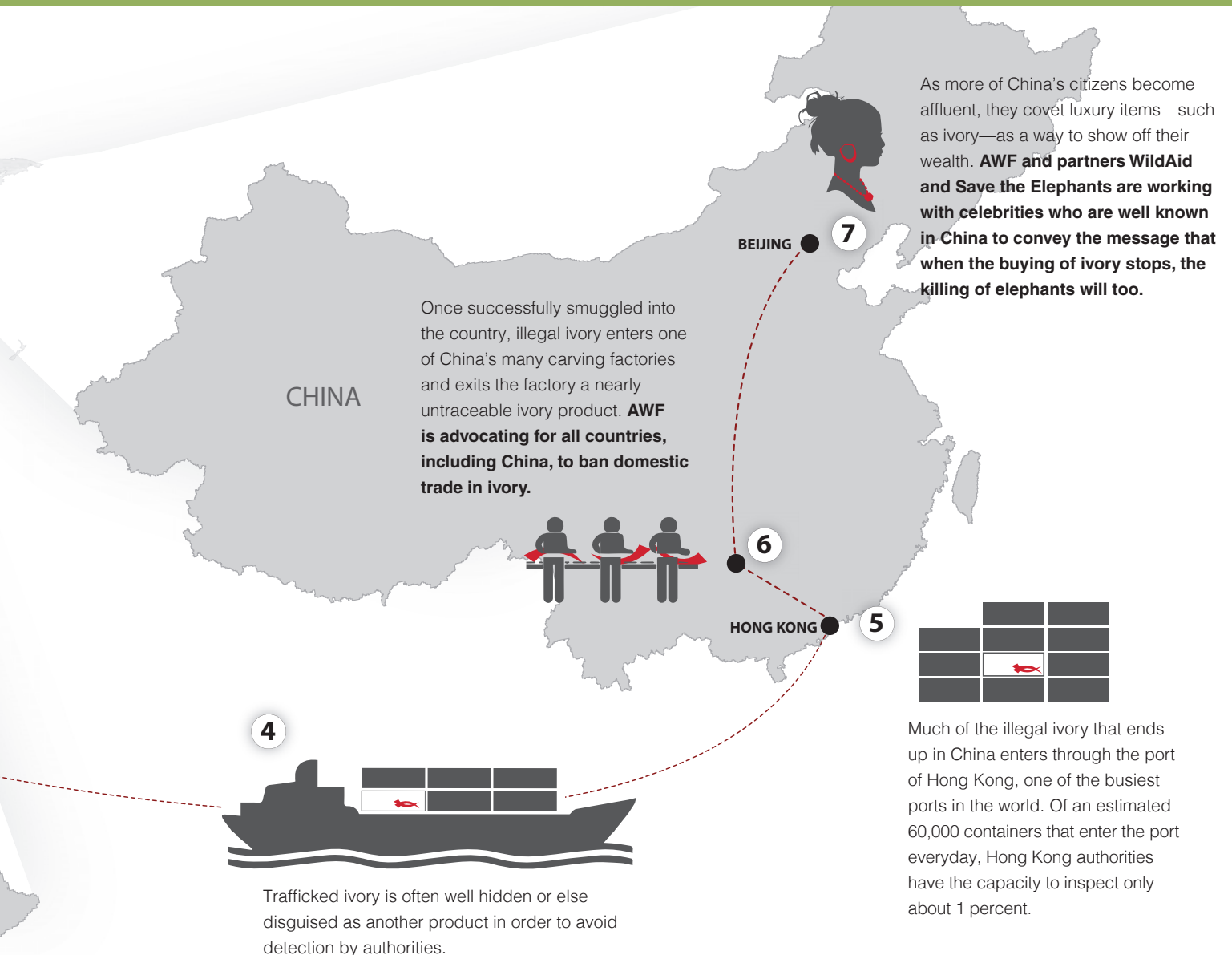
2009). The one-off sales coincided with rising affluence in many parts of Asia, especially China, where the nouveau riche craved the kind of culturally significant luxury item that would show off their new wealth. The sales also created confusion in the marketplace by conveying the message that ivory was plentiful and that it was all legal. In China, it was like lighting the fuse to a firecracker. Demand exploded.

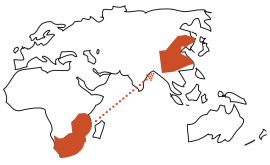
### Buyer beware

Today, more than 70 percent of the world's illegally trafficked ivory ends up in China. The Environmental Investigation Agency estimates 90 percent of ivory for sale in China is illegal. Mainstream conservation organizations, including AWF, now believe that, to halt the poaching epidemic in Africa, consumer countries must institute national bans on the ivory trade to prevent illegal ivory from being

laundered into the legal domestic markets. With its connections to organized crime, terrorism, and corruption, combating elephant poaching and ivory trafficking is no longer the sole concern of the conservation community. Governments, international law enforcement agencies, the private sector, revenue agencies, global financial institutions, and others have joined the fight, and many countries are deploying new legislative and law enforcement tools to fight wildlife crime. Several countries, including China and the United States, have also destroyed their stockpiles of confiscated ivory, sending a clear message that there is no economic future in ivory.

"We want elephants or we want ivory, but we cannot have both," says Philip Muruthi, AWF's senior director of conservation science. "It's time the world cured itself of its ivory addiction."





# Building Awareness

## Asian Stars Step Up

AWF has partnered with WildAid and Save the Elephants to launch a multimedia awareness campaign in Asia, featuring popular Asian celebrities. Through radio ads, public service announcements (PSAs) on TV and the Internet, and large billboards in high traffic areas throughout China and Vietnam, these celebs are using their star power and influence to educate Asian populations about how their demand for ivory and rhino horn is killing innocent wildlife halfway across the world.

*Martial arts star Johnny Nguyen is a household name in his home country of Vietnam. He points out in his PSA that consuming rhino horn is akin to chewing one's fingernails.*



*Former NBA star Yao Ming helped kick off the campaign in April 2013.*



*Li Bing Bing, a Goodwill Ambassador for the UN Environment Programme, is one of the most popular actresses in China.*

## African Voices Make Themselves Heard

"In the history of conservation, the African voice has never been heard," observed Beatrice Karanja, awareness campaign manager for AWF and herself a Kenyan. "Tourism is No. 1, 2, or 3 of the GDP for many African countries. Africans should care about elephants being lost and rhinos being killed." AWF is thus launching "African Voices for Wildlife," a pan-African call to action for Africans from all walks of life to end the senseless slaughter of elephants, rhinos, and other endangered wildlife. From heads of state to local farmers, the campaign will give Africans the chance to take ownership of the anti-poaching message and be an active part of wildlife conservation discussions—and decisions.

The campaign will feature everyday Africans expressing outrage, distress, and sorrow about the current poaching epidemic and the impact this could have on them and future generations. They will also include sobering statistics related to poaching. Ads—to be placed on billboards, at airports, and on buses—will be in various African countries in the near future.







# Law Enforcement & Policy



## U.S. Bans Ivory, Horn Trades

In February 2014, the U.S. government released its National Strategy for Combating Illegal Wildlife Trafficking, which, in addition to proposing a whole-government approach to combat the issue, took the bold step of banning the commercial trade in ivory and rhino horn in the United States. In addition, U.S. President Barack Obama named AWF CEO Dr. Patrick Bergin to the Advisory Council on Wildlife Trafficking to help provide guidance on implementing the strategy. "Right now, Africa is hemorrhaging elephants" says Bergin. "I'm honored to serve on the Advisory Council and help ensure we wipe out demand for ivory and rhino horn through trade bans and other efforts."



## Public Support

AWF joined with other conservation groups in May 2014 and took out a full-page ad in one of the top U.S. daily newspapers, The Washington Post, to show support for the Obama Administration's proposal to ban the U.S. commercial ivory trade. The ad also launched a petition drive to garner support for the ban from the American public, collecting more than 300,000 signatures in the first 10 days. Signatures will be delivered to the Administration sometime in June or July 2014, when the U.S. government will make a final ruling on the ban.

## Animals Saving Animals

AWF also supports the use of canines, such as tracker and sniffer dogs, in anti-poaching efforts. Tracker dogs pursue criminals by tracking human scents through national parks and sanctuaries. These canines are being employed at Manyara Ranch Conservancy in Maasai Steppe landscape to address the elephant poaching taking place in the region.


Sniffer dogs are used by law enforcement to root out elephant ivory, rhino horn, and illegal weapons at airports and seaports. AWF provided funding to Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) to strengthen its Canine Detection Unit, and KWS began training eight puppies in early 2013. KWS' canine unit is said to boast a 90 percent accuracy rate in detecting these illegal substances hidden in luggage and cargo.

AWF is keen to work with other countries to employ dogs for conservation and anti-trafficking.

## An African Solution

For the past several years, NGOs and wildlife authorities had been implementing efforts to address the dramatic rise in poaching. What was missing in these piecemeal measures, however, was a comprehensive response to an issue that had reached crisis levels. In April 2012, AWF took the lead in developing a continent-wide approach to fight illegal wildlife trafficking, convening a Rhino Summit with Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS). The Summit was attended by stakeholders from Africa's key rhino range states.





*The African Wildlife Foundation,  
together with the people  
of Africa, works to ensure the  
wildlife and wild lands of Africa  
will endure forever.*

**For more information AWF's efforts to combat the poaching and  
illegal wildlife trafficking in Africa, visit [www.awf.org](http://www.awf.org)**

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