

### Kenya's long-awaited Wildlife & Conservation Act

We are pleased to report that Kenya's President signed the long-awaited Wildlife and Conservation Management Act at the end of December 2013. For years, conservationists in Kenya and the rest of the world have been calling for more stringent penalties for those involved in poaching and the illegal wildlife trade. In recent decades, poachers have got away with minimal fines and short prison sentences for slaughtering the country's wildlife.

Under the new Act, poachers, traffickers and those committing wildlife crimes will now face much more severe penalties. This includes substantially higher fines, confiscation of property and longer prison terms. The new law carries a minimum fine of one million Kenyan shillings (GBP £7,000) or five years in jail. The most serious offenders caught killing or smuggling endangered wildlife now face fines of up to 20 million shillings (GBP £140,000) and life imprisonment.

### 1,004 rhinos poached in South Africa during 2013



SARAH NELSON

The South African Department of Environmental Affairs has revealed that a shocking 1,004 rhinos were poached in South Africa alone during 2013; this equates to nearly three rhino killed per day.

South Africa has been hardest hit by the poaching crisis, particularly Kruger National Park, which lost 606 rhinos in 2013. The Park has a long, shared border with Mozambique, from where the majority of poachers come. Criminal syndicates are becoming increasingly involved in the illegal trafficking of rhino horn, which is smuggled to east Asian countries, predominantly Vietnam.

Outside South Africa, at least another 100 rhino were poached during 2013, with Kenya and India recording the next highest losses. Experts have warned that the escalating poaching crisis is pushing rhino populations closer to the critical tipping point, when deaths will begin to outnumber births, driving rhinos into a dangerous decline.

### Namibian auction controversy

The Ministry of Environment and Tourism in Namibia has been under pressure recently over its decision to allow one of the five annual black rhino trophy hunting permits (as authorised by CITES) to be auctioned in the USA, at the Dallas Safari Club's annual convention.

Limited black rhino trophy hunting in Namibia (and South Africa) has been allowed since 2004, although many commentators seemed unaware of this. The permit eventually went for \$350,000; an increase on the previous highest bid of \$225,000 when auctioned in

Namibia, but substantially down on estimates that the auction could raise \$750,000 for black rhino conservation efforts in Namibia. The Ministry's sustainable use policy is supported by the IUCN SSC African Rhino Specialist Group, and from the IUCN Sustainable Livelihoods initiative, which point to the history of white rhino trophy hunting and the corresponding increase in overall white rhino numbers.

This issue is discussed in detail on our website: See [Rhino info/Thorny issues/trophy hunting](#) for more information and comment.

### Putting Zimbabwe's 'Rhino policy and management framework 2011-16' into practice

In 2011, with funding and technical support from USFWS and ourselves, a series of stakeholder workshops in Harare led to the production of a new national rhino strategy. Some two years later, Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority signed it off.

We now want to assist ZPMWA, NGOs and other rhino organisations working in Zimbabwe to implement the monitoring and measuring of progress towards the Key Performance Indicators identified in the framework.

To that end, we have made a grant of £3,725 from our core funds to Dambari Wildlife Trust, to cover the costs of a 2-day workshop in March 2014.



# PUTTING THE ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE ON THE POLITICAL AGENDA

In February 2014, London hosted several high profile meetings aimed at tackling the illegal wildlife trade, now one of the biggest threats to global security facing the world today.

**Susie Offord** | Deputy Director

**T**he illegal wildlife trade is reaching unprecedented levels; it is now worth an estimated £6 billion per year, and is the main threat to the survival of many endangered species, particularly rhinos, elephants and tigers. Historically, governments have seen poaching as simply an environmental or animal issue, which has been given to under-resourced environment agencies to tackle along with NGOs; it has not been given the appropriate attention and resources it has desperately needed. This is slowly beginning to change.

The illegal wildlife trade is now operated by organised criminal gangs who see it has a low-risk, high-reward trade. However, some countries still only give minor punishments for poaching, with few convictions of top-level criminals. Yet over the past 10 years, an estimated 1,000 rangers have been killed trying to do their job. Local people and rangers are threatened and intimidated by armed criminal gangs; communities are having their natural heritage and resources robbed from them. Some of the world's most majestic animals are currently threatened with extinction.

On the 11–12 February experts from across the conservation community including TRAFFIC, WWF, CITES, IUCN, Save the Rhino International and many more, gathered at the Zoological Society of London for a two-day symposium led by Prince William's new foundation, United for Wildlife. The symposium's aim was to find new ways to tackle this problem.

After several talks, including one from John M Sellar, Anti-Smuggling, Fraud and Organized Crime Consultant, it became clear that many nations do not currently treat wildlife trafficking as a serious crime, and it requires global co-operation from governments to tackle such a huge criminal problem. It is important that agencies already dealing with drug, human and arms trafficking are engaged, so that they include illegal wildlife trafficking on their remit and their capacity is built up to tackle this crime. Reducing the demand for illegal wildlife products in consumer countries was also highlighted as a key instrument in tackling this growing problem.

The symposium was followed by a high-level conference at Lancaster House in London, hosted by the UK government and attended by HRH the Prince of Wales, and his sons, Princes William and Harry. Recommendations from the symposium were documented and provided for the conference.

46 nations were represented at the meeting including Vietnam and China, who are identified as the main user countries of rhino horn. Rhino range states including Indonesia, Namibia, Kenya, Zambia and Tanzania were also represented.

The conference concluded with the signing of the London Declaration which outlines the steps needed to tackle the illegal wildlife trade. These steps include:

- Eradicate the consumer demand for illegal wildlife products
- Strengthen legal frameworks and improve law enforcement
- Amend legislation to make poaching and wildlife trafficking 'serious crimes' under the terms of the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime
- Strengthen cross-border co-ordination and support for regional wildlife law enforcement networks
- Further analysis to better understand the links between wildlife crime and other organised crime, corruption and terrorism
- Address problems of corruption and money laundering related to wildlife crime with legislation and a zero tolerance policy

Recently wildlife trafficking has been raised up the political agenda in meetings such as Rio+20, the G8 summit and the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting. We sincerely hope that the London Conference marks a turning point in the battle against illegal wildlife crime and that all countries that have signed the London Declaration will immediately undertake and implement the actions they have committed to. Without urgent action, rhinos and other threatened wildlife could be poached to extinction within our generation.



BIG LIFE FOUNDATION/REXNA



LEFT & MAIN IMAGE: UK FCO

By signing the London Declaration, 46 nations vowed to take decisive and urgent action against the illegal wildlife trade.

Prince William (*below*) was a key speaker at the conference.



  
LONDON  
CONFERENCE ON  
THE ILLEGAL  
WILDLIFE TRADE  
12-13 FEBRUARY 2014