



Addressing Growing Threat to African Wildlife: Gaps, Opportunities and Solutions

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Background

- Wild lands have shrunk and degraded in the face of expanding human populations and agriculture;
- Rifles, fast vehicles, and widespread armed conflict and unrest have helped wipe out wildlife populations across vast areas;
- Previously remote forest and desert areas are exposed to intensive hunting along rapidly spreading networks of logging, oil, mining and road construction projects;
- Pronounced urbanization in Africa and the growing African diaspora abroad has greatly increased the demand for bushmeat;
- rapidly expanding human populations and settlement are creating a surge in human-wildlife conflict especially with 'problem' wildlife populations – lions, elephants, great apes among them;
- the export in live wildlife and animal parts is linked to enormous international demand and largely unregulated and illegal trade networks



Current Situation

- An African Elephant is killed every 15 minutes!
- The number of elephants killed in Africa is in the range of 20,000 to 25,000 per year out of the population of 420,000 – 650,000 (CITES 2013)
- The size of forest elephant population is estimated to have declined by around 62% between 2002 and 2011
- Poaching of Rhinos has increased dramatically from less than 50 in 2007 to over 1000 in 2013
- 94% of rhino poaching takes place in South Africa and Zimbabwe
- Rhino, lion, and elephant populations are today threatened with extinction due to poaching, human wildlife conflict and illegal trade driven by growing demand, in particular from Southeast Asia and China
- Bush meat, live trade, human-wildlife conflict. Illegal Wildlife trade contributes significantly to the problem

Current Situation

- UNEP study estimated that up to 25% of tropical forest wildlife species may become extinct by 2020
- Between 2009 and 2014 we witnessed more than 60 significant seizures comprising of over 92 tons of elephant ivory
- Between 18,000 to 22,000 great apes were taken from the wild in Africa between 2005 and 2011
- The illegal trade in pangolins was estimated at between 40,000 and 60,000 animals in 2011 alone
- Involves multiple dimensions including poverty and governance and often hidden within the legal trade
- Illegal trade is depriving developing economies of billions of dollars in lost revenue and development opportunities

Current Situation

- The resilience of natural ecosystems and their ability to provide ecosystem services to local peoples diminishes as wildlife populations disappear
- Risk of transmission of diseases from wildlife species to humans (that is, zoonosis) or their livestock. Several regions in Africa have been identified as hotspots for emerging disease risk due to human-wildlife interactions. The bushmeat trade has been implicated in the transmission of several serious diseases due to people eating wild animals. (e.g. Ebola)
- Driven by perception of low risk and high profits attracting the greater interest of organized crime groups
- Organized criminal syndicates are moving poached or illegally harvested wildlife with the help of the same sophisticated techniques, technologies and networks used for illicit trafficking in persons, weapons and drugs

Current Situation

- Transnational organized environmental crime worth between \$ 70 billion and \$213 billion (Vs ODA \$135 billion annually)
- It is estimated that between \$48 - \$153 billion of resources is lost through Illegal Wildlife Trade (Vs ODA \$135 billion annually)
- Rhino horns poached in 2013 had a street value of around \$63.8 million to \$192 million
- The finance resulting from this illegal trade is linked to conflicts and terrorism “threat finance” to the tune of \$4 million to \$12.2 million
- Represents a significant economic, environment, security threat
- The short-term, minimal, and inequitable profits of the wildlife trade derived by local communities and economies are vastly outweighed by the damage done to local ecosystem services and sustainable, resilient livelihoods

Gaps

Illegal activities flourish when appropriate governance and regulation is lacking, including failures to protect natural resources, ineffective, inappropriate or weak regulation and corruption

- Disconnect in the fights against wildlife crimes and corruption
- Non existing, weak and/or ineffective Wildlife Law Enforcement
- Poor domestication of regional and international conventions, treaties and agreements in national legislation
- Lack of specie specific legislation in most African countries
- Ineffective judicial process, and non-deterrent penalties
- Some countries' legislation does not treat wildlife crimes as serious crimes within the meaning of United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Gaps

- Weak Policy Coherence (e.g. non-consumptive Vs consumptive utilization of wildlife)
- Lack of adequate training and equipment for rangers and law enforcing agencies
- Lack of political priority
- Lack of cooperation between authorities
- Poor engagement of local communities
- Weak cross border cooperation
- Lack of support from consumer countries
- The massive illegal wildlife trade undermines the authority and efficacy of the regulatory authority of CITIES.

Opportunities

UN/Global

- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC)
- UN Convention on Transnational Crime (UNTOC)
- United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC)
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)
- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).
- International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) – comprising CITES, INTERPOL, UNODC, the World Bank and the World Customs Organization (WCO).
- Rio+20 - recognised the economic, social and environmental impacts of illicit trafficking in wildlife, where firm and strengthened action needs to be taken on both the supply and demand sides
- General Assembly Resolution 68/205 of 20th December 2013 declared 3rd March as World Wildlife Day
- London Conference on Illegal Wildlife Trade, Feb 2014
- Post 2015 Development Agenda Goal 15, Target 15.7 take urgent action to end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna, and address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products
- LEAF Project by INTERPOL and UNEP
- US President Executive Order 13648 on Combating Wildlife Trafficking', (July 2013)
- UNEA Ministerial Dialogue on Illegal Trade in Wildlife (Nairobi June, 2014)

Opportunities

Regional

- **African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (African Convention) - ratified by all 54 African countries** requires contracting member states to ensure conservation, wise use and development of faunal resources and their environment, within the framework of land use planning and of economic and social development.
- **COMESA Member States (art. 126)** undertake to develop a collective and coordinated approach to sustainable development and management rational exploitation and utilization and the protection of wildlife in the Common Market.
- **ECOWAS establishes eight technical commissions among them environment and natural resource commission (art. 22)**. On environment (art.29), member states undertake to protect, preserve and enhance natural environment of the region by adopting policies, strategies and programmes at natural and regional level, and establish appropriate institutions to protect, preserve and enhance environment.
- **SADC developed the Protocol on Wildlife Conservation and Law Enforcement (1999)**. The objectives of the protocol on Wildlife Conservation and Law Enforcement emphasize the need for regionally-agreed approaches to conservation, management, and the enforcement of illegal uses of wildlife.

Opportunities

Regional

- **EAC protocol has provisions (art. 116) for Wildlife Management** by partner states with expectations of developing a collective policy for the conservation and sustainable utilization of wildlife.
- **IGAD developed an Environmental and Natural Resource Strategy in 2007.** The strategy recognizes the region as rich biological diversity area which, if sustainably exploited could literally put the region on the road to prosperity.
- **New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Sub-Regional Environment Action Plan (SREAP)**
- **The African Elephant Action Plan of 2010**
- **Lusaka Task Force**
- **RAMSAR**
- The Marrakech conference on combatting illicit wildlife trafficking (Morocco May, 2013);
- The African Elephant Summit (Gaborone December, 2013);
- Regional CSOs

Opportunities

National

- Effective Wild Law Enforcement
- Tourism
- Engagement and involvement of local communities (Inclusive Natural Resources Management)
- Alternative Livelihoods Programmes options
- Effective and Sustainable Human-Wildlife Conflict Management Mechanisms
- Cooperation amongst government departments and institutions
- Domestication and enforcement of International Conventions
- Training and Technology (trackers, cameras, sensors, drones)
- Economic, Social and Environmental benefits accruing from effective and sustainable wildlife management
- National CSOs

Solutions

- Ratify the international conventions and regional agreements domesticating them in member countries' principal wildlife legislation to manage international and regional illegal wildlife trade
- Eradicate the Supply and Demand for Illegal Wildlife Products
- Strengthen the legal framework and facilitate law enforcement and deterrents
- Consider Illegal Wildlife Trade as a serious crime
- Capacity building to strengthen law enforcement, awareness and education
- Adopt a zero tolerance policy on corruption associated with the illegal wildlife trade
- Monitoring trade - Support the development of a mechanism on the traceability wildlife products in trade to ensure they are legally sourced
- Sustainable Livelihoods and Economic Development
- Harmonize conflicts in existing national legislations
- Develop specie specific legislation
- Foster Cross-border and regional wide partnership in Africa on Wildlife Crimes

AFRICA COMMON STRATEGY ON COMBATING ILLEGAL TRADE IN WILD FLORA AND FAUNA

- 23rd Africa Union (AU) Summit in June 2014 in Malabo adopted a Decision EX.CL/Dec.832 (XXV) on African wild flora and fauna conservation and Illegal trade in wildlife.
- The Decision recognizes the need to strengthen environmental governance and prevent illegal trade and trafficking of wildlife that threaten global peace and security.
- The decision called for development of an African Common Strategy on Combating Illegal Trade in Wild Flora and Fauna.

AFRICA COMMON STRATEGY ON COMBATING ILLEGAL TRADE IN WILD FLORA AND FAUNA

SCOPE

It complements the ongoing initiatives and guides common, coordinated responses as well as actions at national, regional and international levels towards safeguarding all species of wild fauna and flora in Africa. The strategy addresses issues relating to source, transit and destinations of illegally traded specimens of wild fauna and flora. In particular, **it aims at turning words into actions** in implementing the decisions reached at various international fora, and mobilization of funding to support its implementation.

AFRICA COMMON STRATEGY ON COMBATING ILLEGAL TRADE IN WILD FLORA AND FAUNA

- The Problem, Gaps and Challenges of Illegal Wildlife Trade in Africa
- The Strategic Framework to Combat IWT in Africa 2015-2024

Proposed Goal: *To provide a common framework to prevent, combat and eradicate illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products in Africa.*

Specific Objectives

The Strategy's objectives are to:

- Increase political commitment to prevent, combat and eradicate illegal wildlife trade;
- Enhance collective action the region and inter-regional cooperation on fighting IWT;
- Increase capacity and public awareness of IWT;
- Improve regional and national governance of IWT

AFRICA COMMON STRATEGY ON COMBATING ILLEGAL TRADE IN WILD FLORA AND FAUNA

Strategies:

- Increasing Commitment by Africa's Governments and international community
- Enhancing Cooperation amongst source, transit and destination countries
- Strengthening Capacities for existing institutions in Africa and local communities affected by IWT and dependent on wildlife
- Strengthening Governance, Enforcement and Compliance
- Strengthening Awareness for targeted groups
- Strengthening Knowledge and Information Management
- Strengthening Collaboration with international Partners
- Strengthening Regional Legal Framework

Thank You

