

World Environment Day 2016

'Go Wild for life, Zero Tolerance for Illegal Wildlife Trade'

The United Nations Secretary General's Message



Mr. Ban Ki-Moon –
The United Nations Secretary General

This year's observance of World Environment Day shines a much-needed spotlight on the illegal trade in wildlife. There is grave cause for alarm. Elephants are being slaughtered for their ivory, rhinos for their horns, and pangolins for their scales. From sea turtles to tigers to rosewood, thousands of species of wild animals and plants are being driven ever closer to extinction.

The businesses and individuals involved are motivated solely by short-term gain at the expense of long-term benefit to communities and habitats. In many instances, they act in collusion with transnational organized crime networks and groups actively involved in destabilizing nations.

The United Nations and its many partners have resolved to tackle this illicit trade, including by setting clear targets to put an end to poaching in the Sustainable Development Goals, adopted last year by all 193 Member States. Last month, at the second United Nations Environment Assembly in Nairobi, we launched a UN "Wild For Life" global campaign, led by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the

UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Convention on the International Trade in Wild Species of Fauna and Flora (CITES).

The campaign asks everyone to pledge to end the illegal trade in wildlife, from ordinary citizens, who can ensure they do not buy prohibited products, to governments, who can pursue change through implementing effective policies to protect species and ecosystems.

Angola, which is this year's World Environment Day global host, has served notice that it will no longer tolerate the sale of illegal wildlife products, and is strengthening legislation and increasing border controls as part of efforts to restore elephant populations that were devastated by the country's civil war. Such action sends a strong message that wild species of plants and animals are a precious commodity that must be sustainably managed and protected from illegal trade.

On this World Environment Day, I urge people and governments everywhere to overcome indifference, combat greed and act to preserve our natural heritage for the benefit of this and future generations.

UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative's Message



Ms. Rosa Malango - The United Nations Resident
Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative

safety and security of all people. In Uganda, wildlife crime affects national efforts to achieve Vision 2040's goal to reach middle income status since it affects the general state of our environment and tourism - one of the priority sectors for the country's second National Development Plan. According to the Travel and Tourism Economic Impact Report by the World Travel and Tourism Council, the sector contributed 9.9% (UGX 6,395.4 billion) to Uganda's GDP in 2014 up from 7.9% (UGX 5,495.0 billion) in 2013 and 8.8% (UGX 4,993.6 billion) in 2012. Receipts from tourism have also increased from USD 802 million in 2010 to USD 1.4 million in 2014 with tourist arrivals having increased from 946,000 to 1,266,000 visitors during the same period.

To turn this tide, more people need to understand the damage this illicit business does to our environment, economy, communities and security. Understanding can only be brought about by encouraging parents, local leaders, religious leaders, teachers and youth leaders to lead a conversation about the dangers of this illicit trade for the country. Every voice counts if we are to increase the pressure on governments and international bodies to introduce and enforce tougher laws and bring to justice those still willing to break them.

This is why this year's theme for World Environment Day (WED) – 'Go Wild for life, Zero Tolerance for Illegal Wildlife Trade' – encourages us to celebrate all species under threat and take action to safeguard them for future generations. The national theme in Uganda – "Conserve wildlife, sustain livelihoods" – brings this global theme to communities whose livelihoods depend on wildlife and biodiversity. I would like to share a few examples of existing good practice in the country.

UNDP through its various programmes has supported communities living close to the Kidepo National Park in North Eastern Uganda, Queen Elizabeth National Park in Rubirizi District in Western Uganda and the Rhino Fund in Nakasongola District in Central Uganda to protect various animals in these parks. Our programmes educate communities on the importance of these wildlife, involving them in conservation and supporting them to start up alternative sources of livelihood based on their knowledge of the area and the wildlife. In Rubirizi, the Kataara Women's group is using elephant dung from the National Park to make paper which is popular with the tourists visiting the park. The earnings enable the women to support their families without having to poach the elephants.

I invite you to use cultural events, family reunions, playdates, meetings and other social gatherings to mark this World Environment Day by sharing information about the importance of protecting our wildlife and encouraging discussions about the far-reaching nature of wildlife crime.

We all can encourage family, friends, colleagues and officials to change their habits to reduce demand for illegal wildlife products and to do what they can to stop the trade. I firmly believe that individual actions can collectively bring about the transformation in attitudes and policies required to protect our planet, our wildlife and our plants. Let's make the world a better place and transform Uganda while protecting its beautiful landscape.

As we prepare to commemorate World Environment Day this year, curbing illegal wildlife trade and conserving both our unique animal and plant species are important if we are to successfully implement the Agenda 2030 and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals as part of Uganda's transformation. Every citizen is needed to if we are to transform every community into a development hub, capable of providing a conducive environment for inclusive business, innovative entrepreneurs and local champions particularly for Goal 15 that calls for the protection of life on land.

Whoever you are, and wherever you live, I invite you to show zero tolerance for the illegal trade in wildlife in word and deed, and make a difference today.

The booming illegal trade in wildlife products is eroding Earth's precious biodiversity, robbing us of our natural heritage and pushing whole species toward extinction. The killing and smuggling is also undermining economies, fuelling organised crime, and feeding corruption and insecurity across the globe. In Uganda, this trade endangers elephants, rhinos, tortoises, pangolins and various other animals and plants. The loss of animal and plant species, is an erosion of the biodiversity that underpins the natural systems upon which we all depend to live. We must evolve and we must protect our planet.

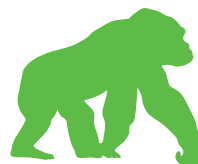
Despite several national and international campaigns, efforts to protect many species remain at risk. We need every citizen to become a champion if we are to influence policy and mobilise sustainable investments in conservation and law enforcement. Protection of wildlife is everyone's business.

In developing countries, wildlife crime also represents a serious and growing threat to economies and communities by fostering corruption and challenging law enforcement. We must work together to strengthen institutions at local and national level and avert opportunities for wildlife crime that threaten the

FACTS AND FIGURES ABOUT THE ILLEGAL TRADE IN WILDLIFE

THE BENEFITS OF ACTION

Protecting wild animals and ecosystems would benefit tourism, which brought sub-Saharan Africa over **\$36 billion** and contributed over 7% of its GDP in 2012.



Each live gorilla is bringing Uganda about **\$1 million** per year in tourism revenues, while Rwanda, famous for its mountain gorillas made \$304 million in eco-tourism in 2014, a \$10 million increase over 2013.

Zero tolerance approach to wildlife crime and related illicit activities, including corruption, money laundering, organized crime, illicit firearms, drugs and terrorism would create a powerful deterrent.

Preventing trafficking by **strengthening cooperation** between source, destination and transit countries will disrupt the illegal trade and raise the costs of illicit activities.

Reducing human-wildlife conflict and engaging communities in conservation would increase the social support for wildlife protection and reduce incentives for poaching.

THE STATE OF PLAY



100,000 African elephants were killed in 2010-2012, out of a population estimated at less than 500,000.

An estimated **170 tonnes of ivory** was illegally exported out of Africa between 2009 and 2014.

Poachers in Africa killed at least **1,338 rhinos** in 2015, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).



Rhino poaching in South Africa increased by almost **%9,000** or 90-fold between 2007 and 2015 from 13 rhinos killed in 2007 to **1,175 rhinos** killed in 2015.



Chimpanzees are now **extinct** in Gambia, Burkina Faso, Benin and Togo.

3,000 great apes are lost from the wild every year; over **70% of all great ape seizures** are orangutans.



With over **one million animals** taken from the wild in the past decade, pangolins are the **most illegally trafficked** mammal in the world.

Illegal trade in wildlife is worth **\$15-20 billion** annually, and is one of the largest illegal trades in the world, along with trafficking of drugs, arms and humans.

According to the Thin Green Line, over the last decade, **individuals associated with the illegal trade in wildlife have killed 1,000 park rangers**.

Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing is estimated at **11-26 million tonnes of fish each year**, worth between \$10 and \$23 billion, causing depletion of fish stocks, price increase and loss of livelihoods for fishermen.

%40 of all intrastate conflicts in the last 60 years were linked to natural resources and over **%80** of major armed conflicts in the last 50 years occurred in biodiversity hotspots.

CHANGE ACROSS THE GLOBE



In September 2015, two of the largest ivory markets in the world, **US and China**, announced they would be **closing their international and domestic trade in elephant ivory**.

UNEP's Champions of the Earth, the mostly female South African Black Mamba Anti-Poaching Unit has **reduced snaring by 76 per cent**, removed **over 1,000 snares** and put 5 poachers' camps and 2 bush meat kitchens out of action in the Balule Reserve, which they protect.



Tougher penalties for poaching and a streamlined judicial system have helped Nepal to achieve **zero rhino poaching** in 3 out of the last 5 years, allowing the rhino population to **grow by 21 per cent**. There are now **645 rhinos** as compared to 534 in 2011.

In May 2015, the cross-continent Operation Cobra III brought together enforcement agencies from range, transit and destination countries, resulting in **139 arrests** and more than **247 seizures**, which included elephant ivory, medicinal plants, rhino horns, pangolins and many more.