LEVELS OF ILLEGAL KILLING OF ELEPHANTS, ILLEGAL AND LEGAL TRADE IN ELEPHANT SPECIMENS, THE STATUS OF ELEPHANT POPULATIONS AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AFRICAN ELEPHANT ACTION PLAN: A REPORT TO THE CITES STANDING COMMITTEE

Introduction

1. Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19) on *Trade in elephant specimens* in the section ***Regarding trade in elephant specimens***, directs the Secretariat to:

    a) report on information and analyses provided by MIKE and ETIS at each meeting of the Conference of the Parties and, subject to the availability of adequate new MIKE or ETIS data, at relevant meetings of the Standing Committee; and, in collaboration with TRAFFIC as appropriate, provide other reports, updates or information on MIKE and ETIS as required by the Conference of the Parties, the Standing Committee, the MIKE and ETIS Technical Advisory Group (TAG) or Parties;

    b) prior to relevant meetings of the Standing Committee, invite the United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) to provide an overview of trade in elephant specimens as recorded in the CITES database; the IUCN Species Survival Commission (IUCN/SSC) African and Asian Elephant Specialist Groups to submit any new and relevant information on the conservation status of elephants, pertinent conservation actions and management strategies; and African elephant range States to provide information on progress made in the implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan; and

    c) on the basis of the information specified in paragraphs a) and b) above, recommend actions for consideration by the Conference of the Parties or the Standing Committee;

2. This is the ninth report prepared by the Secretariat and partners for the CITES Standing Committee, with previous reports having been provided for SC61 (Geneva, August 2011), SC62 (Geneva, July 2012), SC65 (Geneva, July 2014), SC66 (Geneva, January 2016), SC69 (Geneva, November 2017), SC70 (Sochi, October 2018), SC74 (Lyon, March 2022) and SC78 (Geneva, November 2024).

Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants

3. This section has been prepared by the CITES Secretariat.

Background

4. The CITES programme for Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants, commonly known as MIKE, was established by the Conference of the Parties (CoP) to CITES at its 10th Meeting (Harare, 1997) and is conducted in accordance with the provisions in Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP18) on *Trade in elephant specimens*. The CITES MIKE Programme is managed by the CITES Secretariat under the supervision of the CITES Standing Committee. Since implementation began in 2001, the operation of the programme in Africa has been possible mainly thanks to the generous financial support of the European Union. In Asia, the Programme has been supported by the European Union and the United States of America over the year.

5. The CITES MIKE programme aims to inform and improve decision-making on elephants by measuring trends in levels of illegal killing of elephants, identifying factors associated with those trends, and building capacity for elephant management in range States. It operates in a large sample of sites spread across elephant range in 32 countries in Africa and 13 countries in Asia. There are 69 designated MIKE sites in Africa, which together hold an estimated 50% of the African elephant population, and 30 sites in Asia.

6. MIKE data is collected by law enforcement and ranger patrols in the field and through other means in designated MIKE sites. When an elephant carcass is found, site personnel try to establish the cause of death and other details, such as sex and age of the animal, status of ivory and stage of decomposition of

the carcass. This information is recorded in standardized carcass forms, details of which are then submitted to the CITES MIKE Programme.

7. The programme evaluates relative poaching levels based on the Proportion of Illegally Killed Elephants (PIKE), which is calculated on an annual basis as the number of illegally killed elephants found, divided by the total number of elephant carcasses found, which includes elephants illegally killed, elephants that died of natural causes, management-related deaths, unintended human related death, as well as deaths recorded as unknown (cause of death could not be determined).

8. Based on reporting by range States, deaths associated with human elephant conflict (HEC) are sometimes categorized as "illegal", while in other cases these are reported as "management related deaths" or other types of death. For Africa, in 2023, of the 1,725 records reported, 232 records (13.4%) were associated with human elephant conflict. This is lower than the number of records reported in 2022 (330 records). Most of these carcasses associated with HEC reported in 2023 were recorded as "management related deaths" (70% or 162 records). In Asia, of the 233 records reported 30 records (12.9%) were associated with human elephant conflict, which is higher than the number reported in 2022 (14 records). 30% of these HEC-related deaths reported in 2023 were categorized as "illegal". Because PIKE is used as an index of poaching, it is important to understand to what extent illegal deaths associated with human elephant conflict, which may not be considered poaching to access specimens for illicit purposes, is included. The CITES Secretariat has continued to collaborate with participating range States and the MIKE- ETIS Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to get further clarification on this matter and refine the MIKE analysis accordingly.

9. PIKE is an index of poaching pressure and provides trends relating to the levels of poaching. It may be affected by several potential biases related to data quality, reporting rate, carcass detection probabilities, variation in natural mortality rates and other factors, and hence results need to be interpreted with caution.

10. In the MIKE report for Africa and Asia, published on the CITES website on 16 November 2020, the new PIKE trend analysis methodology was shared with CITES Parties. As indicated in that report, the TAG recommended the use of the unweighted Bayesian GLMM (**MM.p.uw**) to interpret PIKE trends over time. A weighted Bayesian GLMM (**MM.p.w**) model that includes elephant population estimates from each MIKE site was trialed on an experimental basis but requires further work by the CITES Secretariat to be carried out in collaboration with the TAG. The technical materials and R-code utilized from 2020 onwards can be accessed through the list of GitHub repositories provided in Annex 1b.

Continental PIKE trend analysis – Africa

11. The data set used for this analysis consists of 26,985 records of elephant carcasses found between 2003 and the end of 2023 at 68 MIKE sites in 32 range States in Africa, representing a total of 909 site-years.

12. The PIKE trend analysis presented in this document considers an additional 1,725 records of elephant carcasses encountered in the course of 2023, that were reported by 60 MIKE sites across 30 range States in Africa (see Figure 1A).

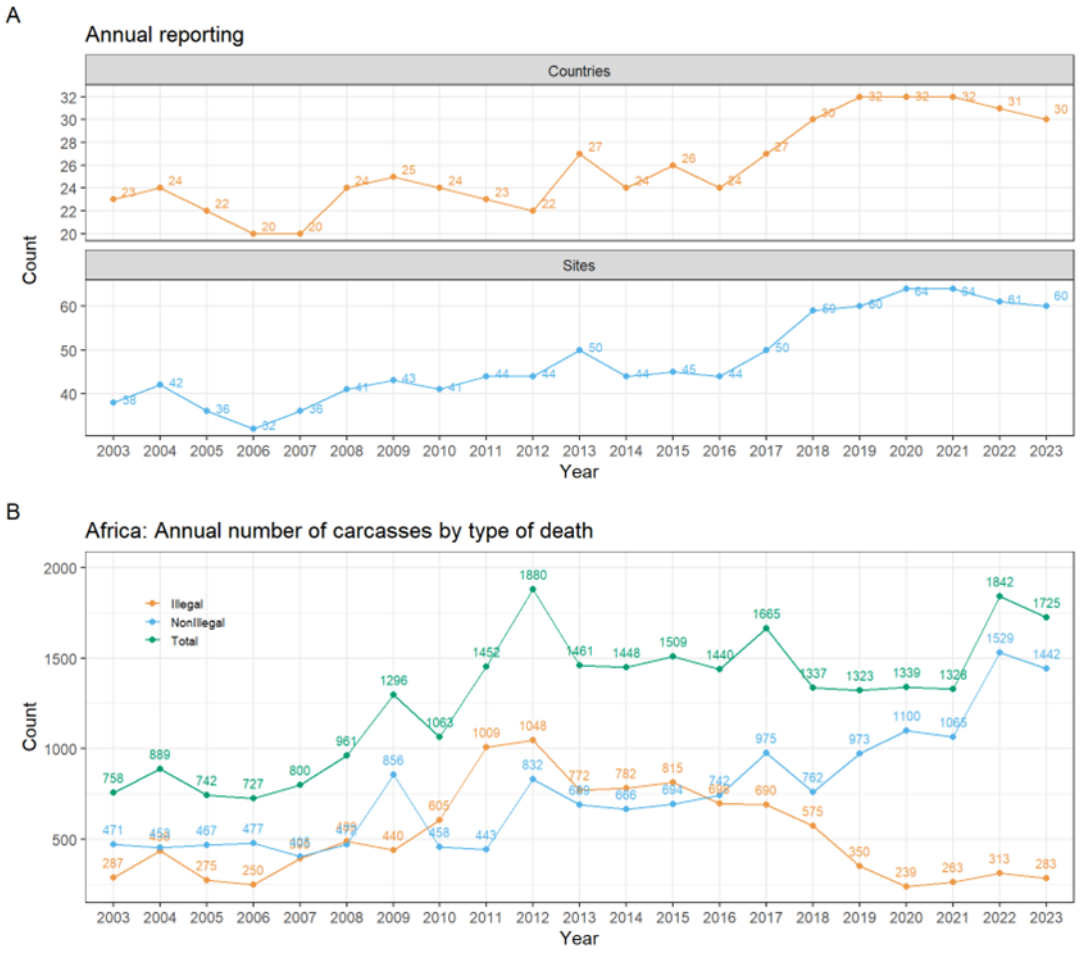

Figure 1: *A. Number of countries and MIKE sites that submitted reports (2003 – 2023). B. The total number of carcasses reported irrespective of cause of death (green), the number of carcasses of elephants illegally killed (orange) and the number not illegally killed (blue) (natural deaths, management related deaths and unknown type of death) reported by year.*

13. In 2023, the number of sites that submitted reports in central Africa were 13 of 16 sites (approximately - 81%); in eastern Africa 15 of 16 sites (approximately 94%); in southern Africa 18 of 19 sites (94%) and in west Africa 15 of 18 sites (approximately 83%). 12 of the sites that submitted data reported zero carcasses found in 2023, three in central Africa and nine in west Africa. Two sites reported being unable to conduct patrols and report their activities due to insecurity.

14. In 2023, there were 117 less elephant carcass records submitted compared to the previous year (2022) as shown in Figure 1B. In terms of total reported carcasses, 2023 had the third-highest count (1,725), with the highest number occurring in 2012 (1880). An unusually large number of carcasses of elephants that died of natural causes were recorded at some sites in southern Africa, with deaths attributed to drought. This aligns with the report from the World Meteorological Organization, which documented a rainfall deficit across Zambia, Botswana and most of Namibia and some area in South Africa and Zimbabwe in 2023 (Source: State of climate in Africa 2023[4]). In 2023, there were 283 illegally killed carcasses out of 1,725 reported, whereas in 2022, there were 313 illegally killed carcasses out of 1,842 reported.

15. As indicated in paragraph 10, the results of the unweighted Bayesian GLMM (**MM.p.uw** – unweighted by elephant population estimate) are used to interpret PIKE trends over time.

[4] *State of the Climate in Africa 2023 (WMO-No. 1360),* https://library.wmo.int/viewer/69000/?offset=#page=23&viewer=picture&o=bookmark&n=0&q=

Continental PIKE trend – Africa.

16. Figure 2 shows the continental PIKE estimate across years based on the unweighted Bayesian GLMM (**MM.p.uw**) analysis. The error bar or confidence/credible interval shows the level of uncertainty in the annual PIKE estimates. In Bayesian analysis, a 95 percent credible interval (CI) is an interval within which a PIKE estimate falls with a 95% probability.

17. Between 2003 and 2010, the annual mean PIKE increased, reaching its highest point in 2011, and then followed a downward trend. Over the past five years, from 2019-2023, the continental PIKE trend shows a downward trend (for more details, refer to Annex 1a and the table containing statistical support for the downward trend). Over this period, the continental PIKE estimate went from 0.43 in 2019 to 0.39 in 2023. The PIKE estimate for 2023 has a 95% confidence interval ranging from 0.33 to 0.44.

Africa

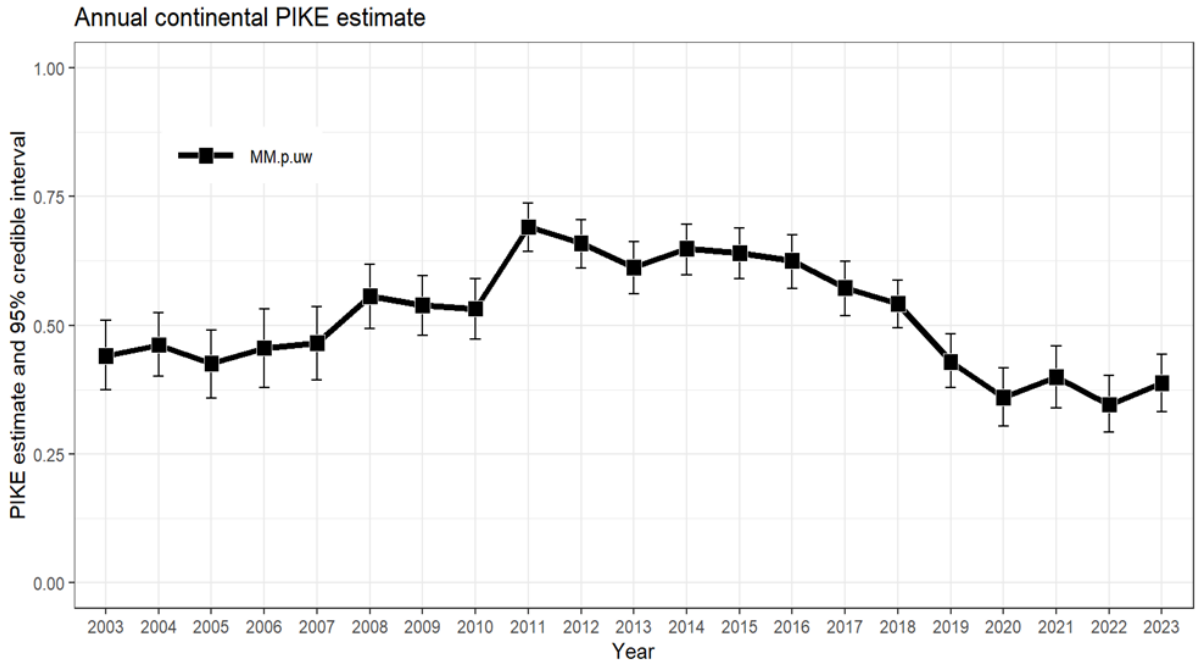

Figure 2: *Continental PIKE estimates for Africa based on the unweighted Bayesian GLMM approach (**MM.puw**). The error bar or the confidence / credible interval (95%) shows the level of uncertainty in the annual PIKE estimates.*

Subregional PIKE trends in Africa

18. Figure 3 (A-D) shows the subregional PIKE estimate across years based on the unweighted Bayesian GLMM (**MM.p.uw**) approach for central, eastern, southern and west Africa. The error bar or confidence/credible interval shows the level of uncertainty in the annual PIKE estimates. Results below show that the PIKE trend differs among different subregions.

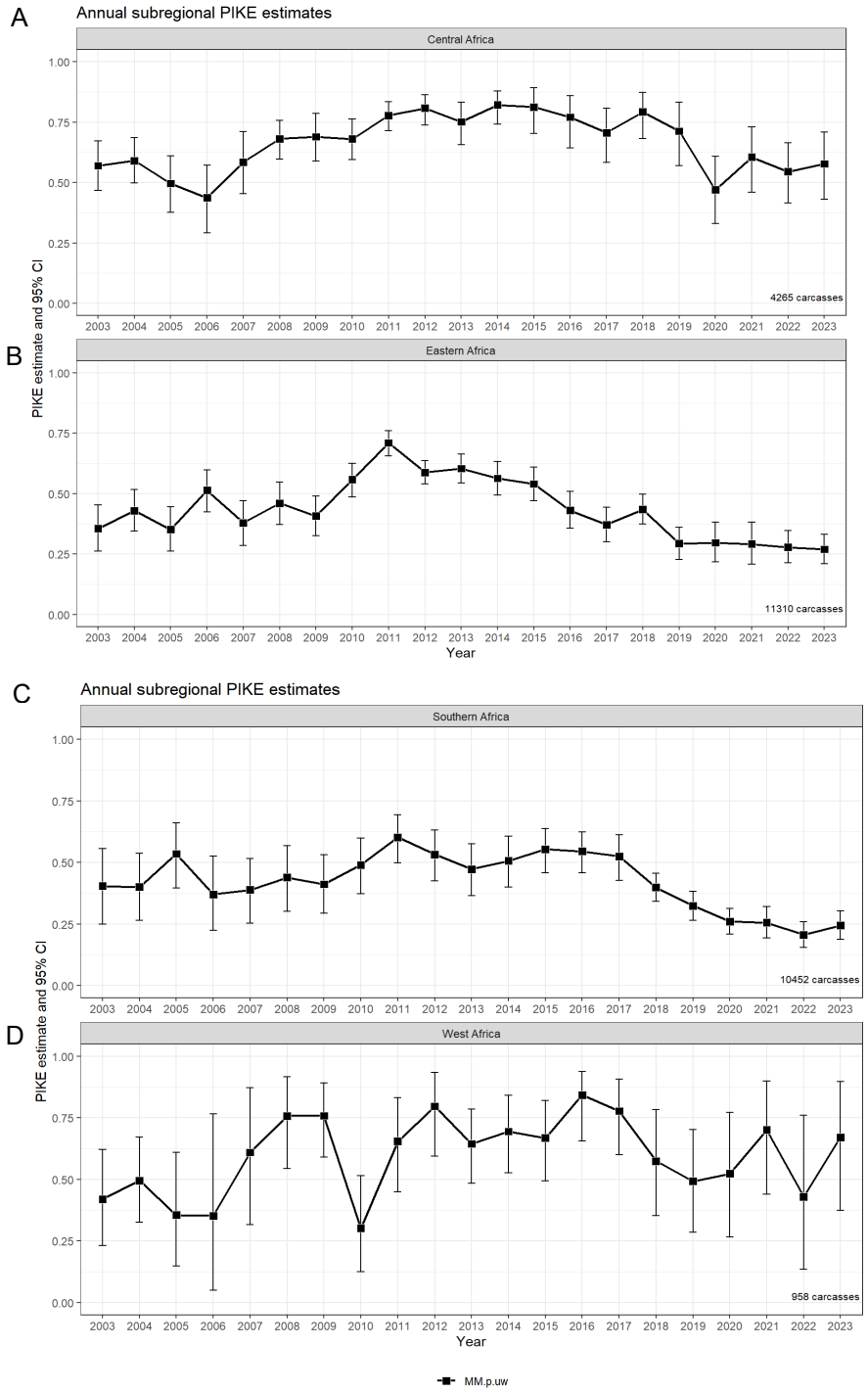

Figure 3: *Subregional PIKE estimates across years based on unweighted Bayesian GLMM approach. The error bar shows the level of uncertainty in the annual PIKE estimates and represent 95% credible intervals. The total number of carcasses (2003-2023) for each subregion is shown in the bottom right corner of each graph. A – central Africa; B – eastern Africa; C – southern Africa and D – west Africa.*

Central Africa

19. Figure 3-A shows the PIKE estimates for central Africa, obtained using the unweighted Bayesian GLMM approach. Based on previous analysis (refer to CoP19 Doc. 66.5), there is strong evidence that the PIKE trend increased from 2003 to 2011, followed by a period from 2011 to 2019 during which PIKE fluctuated around a value of 0.75, indicating it was relatively constant. The trend in the last five years (2019-2023) shows evidence of a downward trend (Table, Annex 1a). The PIKE estimate for central Africa in 2023 however remains high, with an average value of 0.58 (range: 0.43 - 0.71), higher than the average 2023 continental PIKE estimate of 0.39 (range: 0.33 – 0.44).

Eastern Africa

20. Figure 3-B shows the PIKE estimates for eastern Africa. The PIKE trend for the subregion mirrors the continental PIKE trend: an upward trend from 2003 to 2011, followed by a downward trend after 2011. In the last five years, from 2019 to 2023, there is a downward trend (Table, Annex 1a). The unweighted PIKE estimate for eastern Africa in 2023 is 0.27 (range: 0.21 - 0.33) and falls below the 2023 average continental PIKE estimate of 0.39 (range: 0.33 – 0.44).

Southern Africa

21. Southern Africa's PIKE estimates can be seen in Figure 3-C. Throughout the period of the last five years, from 2019 to 2023, there is a clear downward trend (Table, Annex 1a). Over this period, the subregional PIKE estimate went from 0.32 in 2019 to 0.24 in 2023. The unweighted PIKE estimate for southern Africa in 2023 is 0.24 (range: 0.19 - 0.30) and is below the 2023 average continental PIKE estimate of 0.39 (range: 0.33 – 0.44).

West Africa

22. Figure 3-D displays the PIKE estimates for west Africa. The subregion is typically known for having small populations of African elephants, and this, along with other factors, influences the number of carcasses found annually. In 2023, a total of 13 carcasses were reported in the region, originating from six sites, while the remaining 9 sites reported no detection of any carcasses despite patrol efforts being carried out.

23. Due to the small number of carcasses reported over a 20-year period (2003 – 2023), which amounts to a total of 958 records (Fig. 3-D), inferring a subregional pattern is challenging. The limited sample size leads to increased uncertainty in PIKE estimates, resulting in wider credible intervals. A notable increase in PIKE can be seen between 2022 and 2023, with the value increasing from 0.43 (range: 0.13 – 0.76) in 2022 to 0.67 (range: 0.37 – 0.90) in 2023; however, it remains within the confidence interval of the 2022 estimate, signifying no significant change in the PIKE estimate between the two years. Over the last five years (2019 - 2023), there is no statistical evidence to support a downward trend (Table, Annex 1a). The unweighted PIKE estimate in west Africa in 2023 is 0.67 (range: 0.37 - 0.90), higher than the average continental PIKE estimate of 0.39 (range: 0.33 – 0.44).

Asia PIKE Trend Analysis

24. The data set used for this analysis consists of 4790 records of elephant carcasses found between 2003 and the end of 2023 at 30 MIKE sites in 13 range States in Asia, representing a total of 327 site-years. Approximately 94% (=4493/4790) of the carcasses are from MIKE sites in south Asia and the remaining approximately 6% (=297/4790) are from MIKE sites in southeast Asia. In 2023, of the 24 sites, 13 sites reported from south Asia and 11 sites from southeast Asia. Zero carcasses were reported in a total of seven sites, with two sites in south Asia and five sites in southeast Asia in 2023.

25. The PIKE trend analysis presented in this document considers an additional 233 records of elephant carcasses encountered in the course of 2023, that were reported by 24 MIKE sites in Asia (Figure 4A) The total number of carcasses reported slightly increased between 2022 and 2023, with 190 elephant carcasses encountered in 2022 and 233 in 2023.The number of carcasses reported as illegally killed remained constant at 18 in 2022 to 18 in 2023. In Asia, illegal elephant killings are typically linked to human-elephant conflict, and in some cases, to the illegal trade of elephant specimens such as ivory and skin (Gosling J. 2018, Sampson et al. 2018). The detailed MIKE data currently does not capture this information, and the MIKE Programme is working with range States to improve reporting, ensuring it includes the role of conflict in elephant deaths.

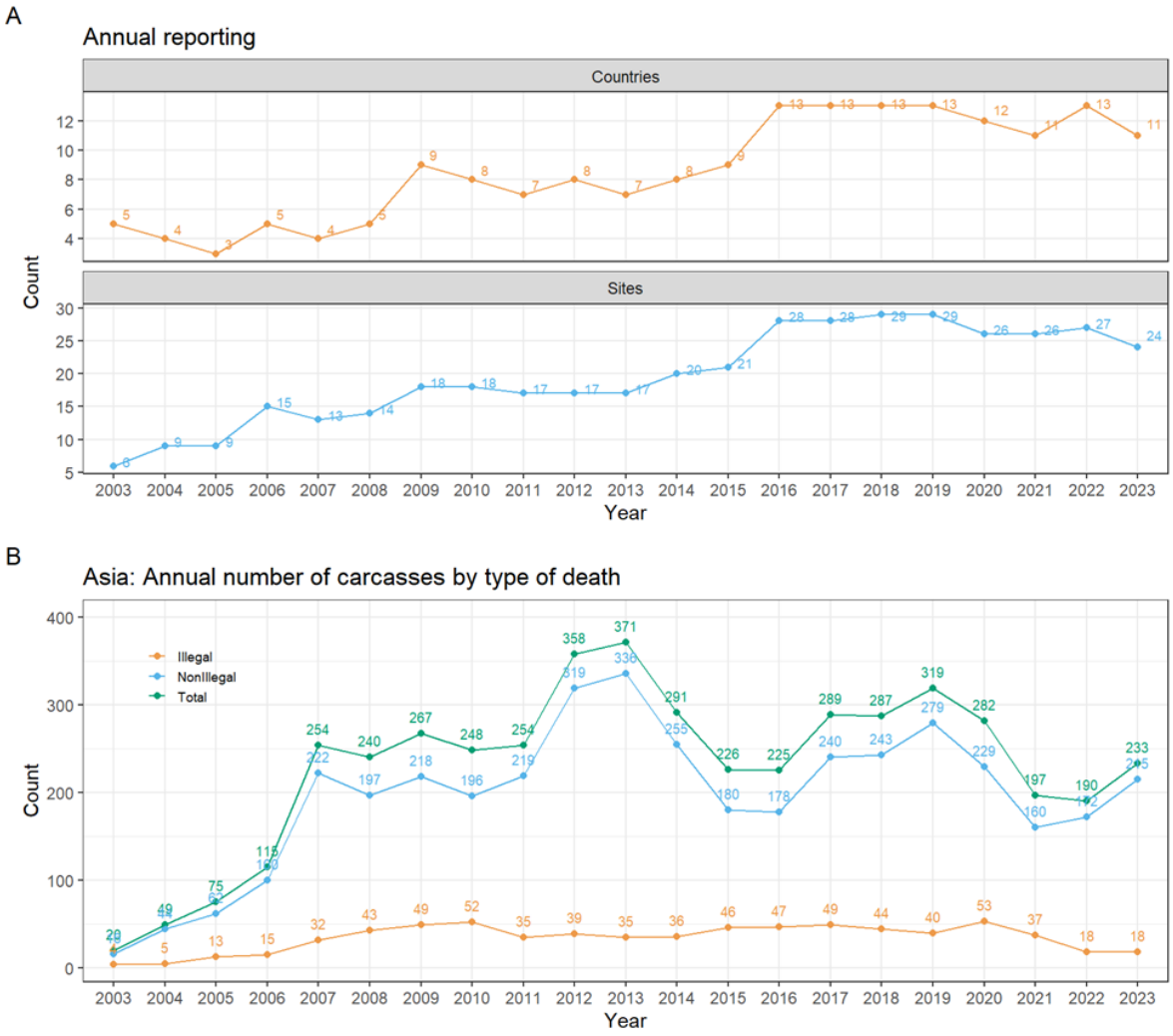

Figure 4: *(A) Total number of countries and sites that submitted reports by year. (B) The total number of carcasses reported irrespective of cause of death (green), the number of carcasses of elephants illegally killed (orange) and the number not illegally killed (blue) (natural deaths, management related deaths, unknown type of death) reported by year.*

26. Figure 5 shows the continental PIKE estimate across years based on the unweighted Bayesian GLMM (**MM.p.uw**) analysis. The error bar or confidence/credible interval shows the level of uncertainty in the annual PIKE estimates. In Bayesian analysis, a 95 percent credible interval (CI) is an interval within which PIKE falls with a 95% probability. The last five-year average value for PIKE is 0.29, and for 2023, the unweighted PIKE estimate is 0.25 (range: 0.16 - 0.36), slightly lower than the 5-year average.

27. Trend analysis disaggregated by subregion is not reported because a large proportion of carcasses are reported from south Asia as stated above. In addition, within south Asia approximately 97% of the records (4339/4493 carcass records) are from MIKE sites in India, which holds the largest population of Asian elephants.

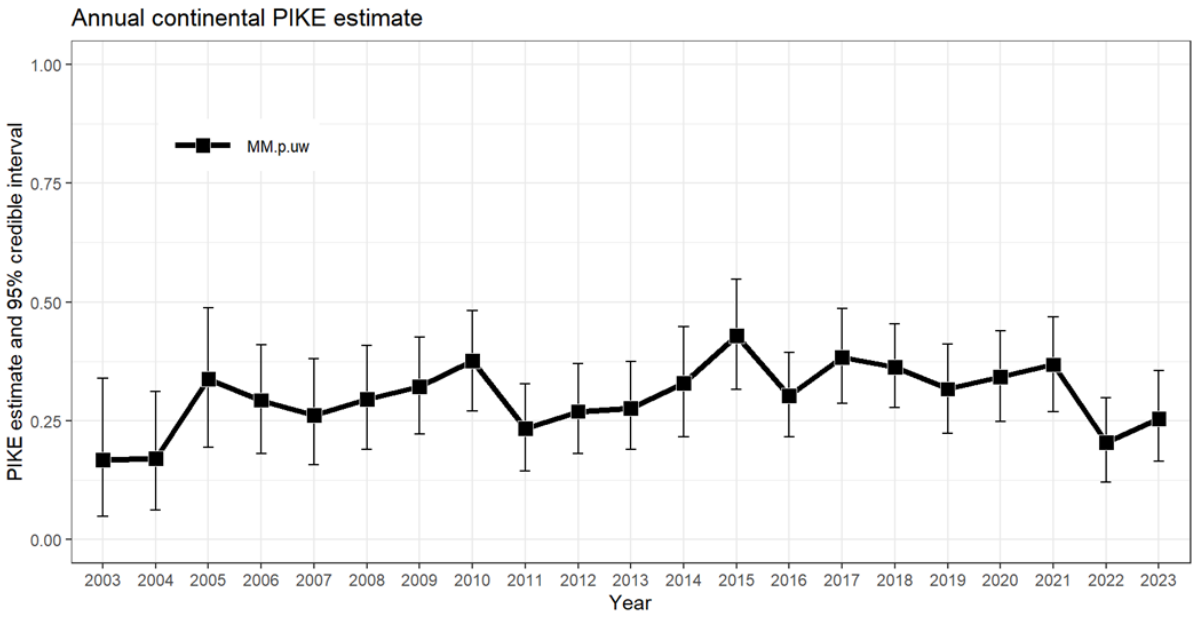

Figure 5: *Continental PIKE estimates for Asia, based on the unweighted Bayesian GLMM approach (**MM.p.uw**). The error bar or the confidence / credible interval shows the level of uncertainty in the annual PIKE estimates.*

ETIS report on Illegal Trade in Elephant Specimens

28. This section has been prepared by TRAFFIC.

29. Paragraph 4 in Annex 1 of Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19) states that "All Parties, through their CITES Management Authorities, following liaisons with appropriate law enforcement agencies, should provide information on seizures and confiscations of ivory or other elephant specimens in the prescribed formats, either to the Secretariat or directly to TRAFFIC within 90 days of their occurrence or by 31 March each year for the submission of data covering seizures in the preceding year." Paragraph 2 of Annex 1 also states that "Parties should validate seizure data relating to their country through ETIS Online or in response to a Notification to be issued by the Secretariat on an annual basis prior to the analysis of the data. TRAFFIC will include seizure data relating to their country in the analysis unless the Party indicates through ETIS Online or within the timeframe specified in the Notification that the data should not be included."

30. The CITES Secretariat published the annual Notification to the Parties No. 2024/029 on 31 January 2024, calling for the submission of ETIS data relating to seizures made in 2023 by 31 of March 2024. Additionally, the Secretariat published on 30 May 2024 the second annual Notification for ETIS data validation calling for the Parties to submit any data validation inquiries by 27 June 2024 (Notification No. 2024/068). As described in Annex 2 of SC78 Doc. 65.2 ETIS data validation cycles completed to date resulted in a high number of unresolved inquiries due to various reasons. The 195 ETIS records with unresolved inquiries spanned as far back as 1989, but the majority were of recently made seizures. Unresolved seizures have accounted for up to 25% of the total weight seized in a given year (e.g., 24.6% in 2019; details in Annex 2 of SC78 Doc. 65.2).

31. The following sections summarize the latest ETIS data collection following Notification No. 2024/029 and provide the latest trend analyses to include data for seizures reportedly made in 2023. Following consultations with the Secretariat, TRAFFIC did not include any records that had a pending unresolved inquiry in the latest trend analysis; however, the impacts of excluding these records is explored. It is noted that due to the timeframe of ETIS data collection and validation and document submission to CoP20, it will not be feasible to update the trend analyses with 2024 data before CoP20. Hence the analyses presented here will likely inform the ETIS report to CoP20, with the exception that if pending inquiries are resolved, unresolved records can be incorporated into the data that informs the trend analysis.

Data collection and validation

32. For 2023, 35 Parties reported seizure data and 30 Parties reported they made no seizures of elephant specimens[5]. Collectively and accounting for submissions after the publication of Notification No. 2024/068 for ETIS data validation, reporting by the Parties slightly increased in 2023 (n = 68 Parties) compared to 2022 (*n* = 67). TRAFFIC continued to encourage reporting with outreach efforts including the publication of the second annual ETIS newsletter in English, French, Spanish and Chinese. Parties' response to the outreach was positive, with added registrations to ETIS Online, which as of 14 October 2024, four years after its launch, has reached 160 data providers from almost half of the signatory Parties to the Convention (*n* = 88).

33. On 8 November 2023, ETIS received 256 records for 2022 seizures from the World Customs Organization (WCO) as part of an annual data exchange. Of these 256 records, 88 consisted of new records of seizures that were not yet reported to ETIS by the Parties and were added to the database. However, after the 2024 ETIS data validation process, 11 were deleted as they were identified as duplicates by Party MAs, 24 were not included as ETIS received a broad exclusion request on non-MA sourced data from two Parties. As detailed here and in Annex 2 of SC78 Doc. 65.2, TRAFFIC did not include these records in the analysis while the data validation inquiry is unresolved.

34. Parties continued to submit data for prior years. A total of 153 new seizure records were added to the database for 2022, representing a 14% increase on the total of 1,066 seizures previously reported for 2022 (SC77 Doc. 63.2 (Rev. 2)). A total of 1,390 new seizure records were added to the database for 2023; the majority of records (*n* = 1,279 or 92%) were submitted by Management Authorities (MAs), or their authorized data providers; of seizures collected from non-MA reporting sources (*n* = 111), 19 were approved by the MA of the reported country of discovery, bringing the total MA-reported or MA-approved data to 93%. The yearly tallies of MA-reported, MA-approved, and non-MA reported seizures since 2008 are shown in Figure 1. It is noted that MA approval of a non-MA reported record changed its status to MA-submitted, and thus has a positive impact on a Party's reporting rate in the ETIS analysis.

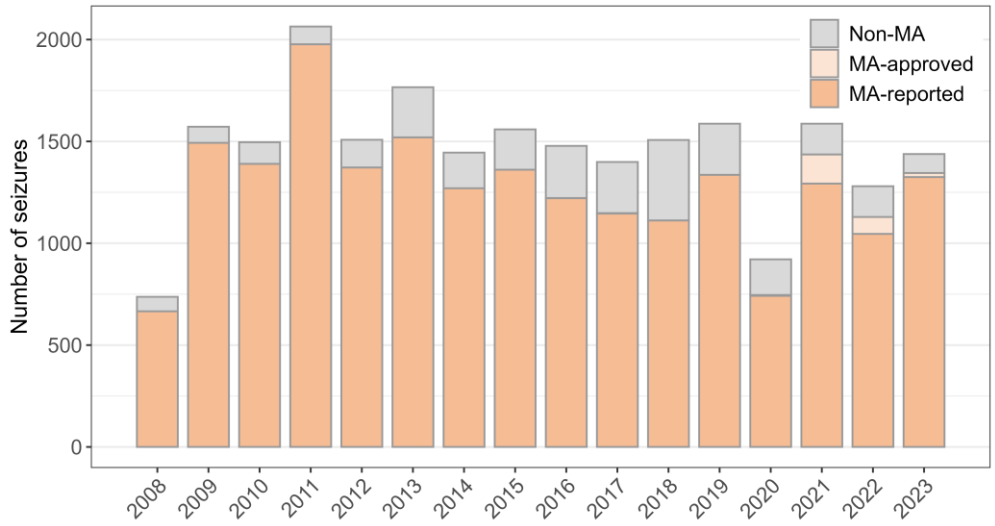

Figure 1. Summaries of ETIS data reported by MA and non-MA sources from 2008 to 2023. Data were downloaded from the ETIS database on 26 September 2024 and include 23,344 records with a status warranting inclusion in the analyses (including non-ivory seizures). Yearly tallies for MA sources (MA-reported) include records submitted by an MA-authorized source as well as those obtained from EU-TWIX with permission from the CITES MA. Yearly tallies for non-MA sources include records exclusively reported by non-MA sources, excluding those also reported by MA sources (as shown with orange bars in Figure 2). MA-approved records refer to records collected from non-MA sources by TRAFFIC that the CITES MA approved during the validation processes.

35. The remaining 7% (*n* = 92) of 2023 seizure records were collected by TRAFFIC from the following non-MA sources (based on classification defined in CoP19 Inf. 40): National (Nat'l) governments (n = 16), NGOs including TRAFFIC and EAGLE network (*n* = 30), and other open source news articles (*n* = 63)[6]. It is noted that while the non-MA source designation represents the channels of communication in reporting the seizures

[5] *Three additional Parties submitted data after Notification No. 2024/068 was published bringing the total number of Parties submitting 2023 data to 38 and the total Parties reporting to ETIS to 68. Given the late submission, these additional seizure records were not included in the tallies provided in this report.*

[6] *Tallies add up to more than 92 as some non-MA records had multiple sources (e.g., NGO and Nat'l government).*

to ETIS (e.g., via reporting to CITES, national agency press release, media article, etc.), the seizures have been reportedly made by the Parties' national authorities (e.g., customs, police, or wildlife agencies). It is further noted that if a seizure was reported both by MA and non-MA sources, it is considered as MA-reported in the ETIS database and analyses. Figure 2 provides the breakdown of non-MA reported data by source from 2008 to 2023: the number of seizures attributed to each non-MA source as described in CoP19 Inf. 40 and the overlap of each with MA-reported data.

36. Data exploration during modelling developments implemented in response to the ETIS review and detailed in SC78 Doc. 65.2 Annexes 3 and 4 highlighted several issues with reporting of data elements related to seized quantities and reported trade routes. Firstly, quantity information is an essential data element to include a record in the database as it informs the classification of each seizure into the small, medium, and large raw ivory, and small and large worked ivory classes that are presented in the ETIS trend analyses. However, an exploration of the quantity information for raw and worked ivory seizures spanning 2008 – 2023 showed that only 34% of the records report full quantity information (weight and number of pieces). Secondly, issues with the reporting of trade route information have also been identified. Trade route data are essential for the ETIS trend modelling as they inform the calculation of the law enforcement ratio which is used in the bias-adjustment modelling of seizure rate. However, it is noted that only around 50% of records informing the latest trend analysis include any trade route information. Fuller details of data element reporting, including trends by Parties over time, are provided in Annex 1c of this document. Amendments to ETIS data collection forms are proposed in Annex 1d of this document to support an improved reporting of the data elements essential to the production of reliable ETIS trend estimates.

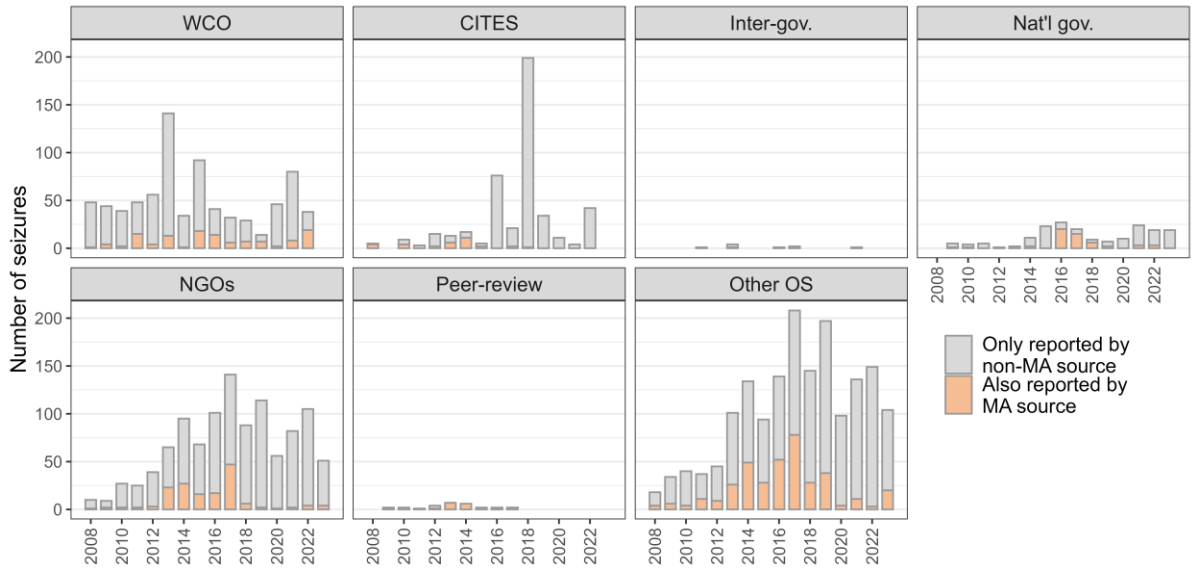

Figure 2. Summaries of ETIS data by non-MA sources from 2008 to 2023. A breakdown of seizures reported by each non-MA source, showing the number of seizures reported solely by the non-MA source (grey) and the number also reported by an MA source (orange). It is noted that seizures may be reported by multiple sources and hence counted in more than one of these figures, leading to yearly tallies that may exceed the non-MA tallies seen in Figure 1. Non-MA source classifications are defined in CoP19 Inf. 40.

Overview of seizure data

37. Reported data for number of seizures and weight seized are summarized in Figure 3, but should not be interpreted as a trend, nor are they suggestive of absolute quantities of ivory seized over time, because of inherent bias in the seizure data stemming from variable seizure and reporting rates that are likely not similar for a given country between years, or for a given year between countries. That noted, there were more seizures reported for 2023 (*n* = 1,390) compared to those reported for 2022 (n = 1,221) and the overall reported weight seized also increased from a total of 17.0 tonnes in 2022 to a total of 18.2 tonnes in 2023 (Figure 3).

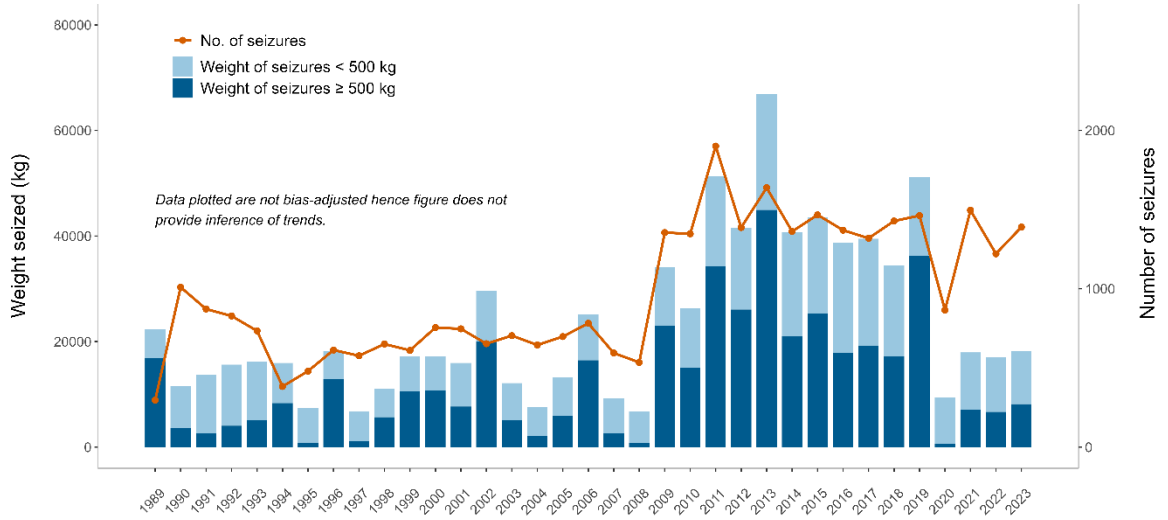

Figure 3. Number of ivory seizure cases reported and weight seized by year from 1989 to 2023. Summaries are based on data downloaded from the ETIS database on 26 September 2024. Number of seizures includes seizures and confiscations reported to ETIS. Weight seized refers to the total ivory weight from the reported data, the estimated weights for records with number of pieces but no weight[7], and the Raw Ivory Equivalent (RIE) weights for both reported or estimated worked ivory seizures weights (based on methods described in Annex 1c of SC74 Doc. 68).

38. The number of reported large seizures with seized weight greater than 100 kg also increased (Figure 4). The largest seizure made in 2023 was reported by Viet Nam, where authorities seized approximately 7 tonnes of illegal ivory that was shipped as sea freight exported from Angola. While data suggest that the number of large seizures reported to ETIS, and their cumulative weight seized as depicted in Figure 3, are lower than the period before the COVID-19 pandemic, seizures of large illegal consignments of several tonnes are reported each year since 2021, which may indicate that organized criminal activity in illegal ivory trade is still evident post-COVID-19 pandemic.

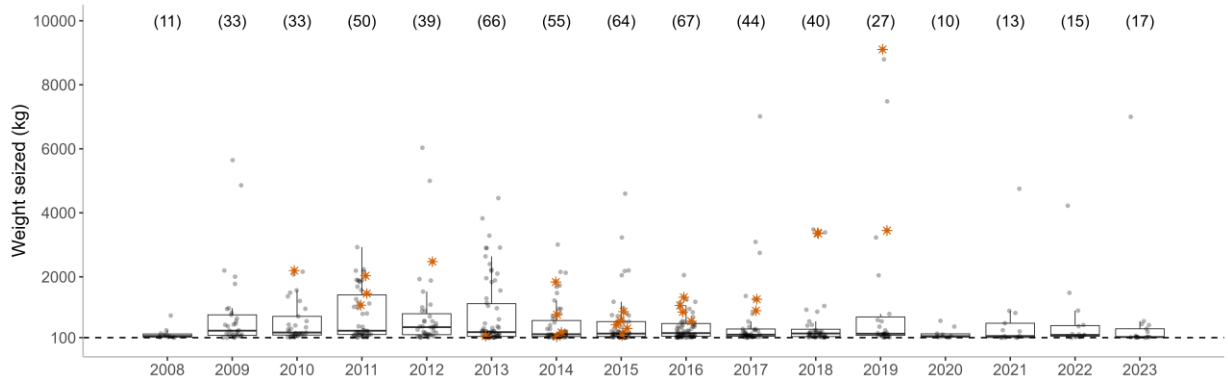

Figure 4. Yearly distributions of ivory seizure weights for large seizures totalling 100 kg or more. Points represent the individual ETIS seizure records with weight exceeding 100 kg. The boxplots represent the central 50% of the distributions, while the outlying points illustrate the occurrence of large seizures of several tonnes. Points with an orange asterisk indicate records which have unresolved inquiries and are therefore currently excluded from analysis as detailed in Annex 2 of SC78 Doc. 65.2 Numbers in parentheses are the sample sizes for the boxplots: the numbers of seizures reported to ETIS for the given years, for which the weight seized was greater than or equal to 100 kg. Weight seized refers to the total ivory weight from the reported data, the estimated weights for records with number of pieces but no weight, and the Raw Ivory Equivalent (RIE) weights for both reported and estimated weights of worked ivory (based on methods described in Annex 1c of SC74 Doc. 68). Data are based on a download from the ETIS database on 26 September 2024.

Trends and levels of illegal ivory trade

39. Updated trend analysis included ETIS data spanning from 2008 to 2023, including 21,395 validated seizure records from 60 countries and territories. Results for the Transaction Index incorporating the modelling

[7] *The methodologies used to derive data summaries and modelling results are as published in CoP Doc. 66.6 and Annex 1c of SC74 Doc. 68.*

improvements outlined in Annex 3 of SC78 Doc. 65.2 are shown for each ivory type and weight class as well as for the composite index across all categories (Figure 5).

40. While analysing the Transaction Index results, large variability was noted for small raw and worked ivory classes and in the composite plot for 2017. Upon examination of the input data, it is noted that following its identification in the CoP19 report as a NIAP Category C, South Sudan, a non-Party, reported a large number of seizures (*n* = 246) spanning 2016 – 2018 in their report to the Standing Committee (SC75 Doc. 7.4 A11); since these records were not submitted to TRAFFIC, ETIS staff collected them from the CITES report and entered them as non-MA data from CITES sources. Of the collective 246 seizures reported by South Sudan, 98 seizures were reported in the small (< 10 kg) raw ivory class and 140 in the small (< 1 kg) worked ivory class. However, there are no reports or additional seizure records submitted by South Sudan in these ivory classes outside of 2016 – 2018. This created a large variability in the input data that informed the trend analysis and is reflected by the large credible intervals in Figure 5. Excluding these seizures from South Sudan confirmed the effect as it reduced the magnitude of peak trends from 2016 – 2018 and resulted in smaller credible intervals (grey trend in Figure 5). It is interesting to note that, because the more flexible spline trend modelling approach was used following the ETIS modelling improvements (see Annex 3 of SC78 Doc. 65.2), the differences were localized to the relevant time periods and ivory classes in question.

41. Updated results for the Weight Index are shown for the composite index across all categories (Figure 6) and for each ivory type and weight class (Figure 7). A comparison is made between the inclusion and exclusion of seizures with unresolved review requests. Because the number of unresolved seizures is small compared to the total number of seizures reported, the impact of withholding the unresolved seizures data on the Transaction Index is mild (not shown). However, an effect is noted in the Weight Index results as some of the unresolved seizures are of large weight, including the largest seizure ever reported to ETIS (seizures marked with an asterisk in Figure 4).

42. It is noted that an interpretation of seizure data with regards to the trends of illegal ivory trade should be viewed with caution. Nonetheless, the updated Transaction Indices (Figure 5) appear to show continuing downward trends in the raw small and raw medium ivory classes. In the raw large and worked large classes, the downward trend that accompanied the global COVID-19 pandemic appears to be levelling off. The class of small worked ivory (now presented using a 1 kg threshold following TAG recommendations; Annex 3 of SC78 Doc. 65.2) indicates a slight increase in recent years, although a large overlap of credible intervals is noted. Lastly, the composite Weight Index (Figure 6) also shows a levelling off, or even a slight reversal, of the steady declines observed over the past decade.

43. The observed patterns in the Transaction and Weight Indices warrant the continued monitoring of illegal ivory trends, especially as they relate to large raw ivory seizures that can indicate the persistence of organized criminal activity, as well as to small worked ivory seizures which have shown a possible increase in recent years.

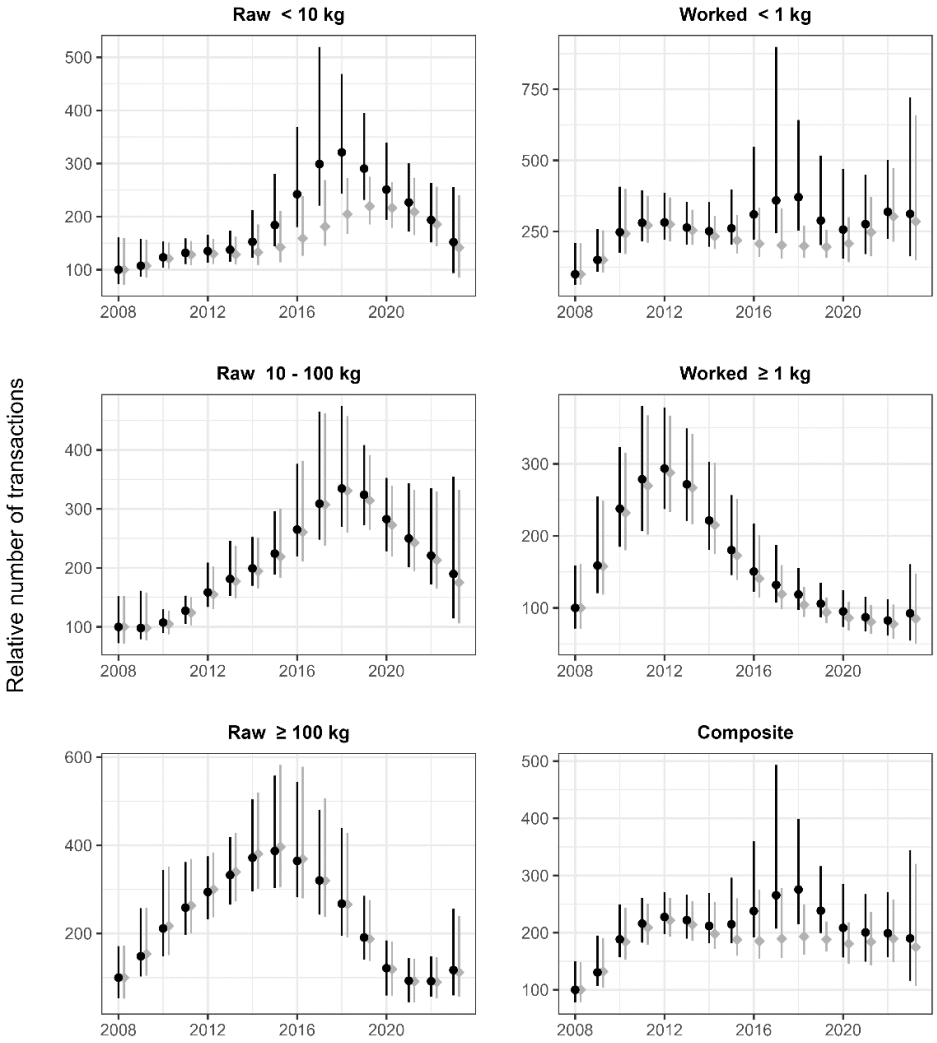

Figure 5. Transaction Index by ivory type and weight classes. Transaction Index estimates are shown for small (< 10 kg), medium (10 - 100 kg), and large (≥ 100 kg) raw ivory classes, small (< 1 kg) and large (≥ 1 kg) worked ivory classes, and the composite index across all ivory types and weight classes. Median estimates are shown with 90% quantile-based credible intervals for models incorporating the methodology developments presented in detail in Annex 3 of SC78 Doc. 65.2 The trend model including all countries and territories in analysis, according to inclusion criteria outlined in Annex 1c of SC74 Doc. 68, is shown with black circles, while the same methodology excluding seizures reported by South Sudan is shown with grey squares. It is noted that indices are presented relative to the first year in the time series, or 2008, which is set to a value of 100, and thus should not be interpreted as absolute values. Results are based on ETIS data downloaded on 26 September 2024.

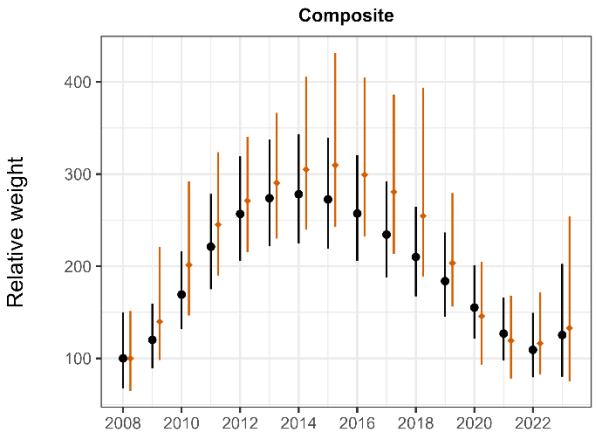

Figure 6. Weight Index composite trends. Composite Weight Index estimates are shown across all ivory types and weight classes. Median estimates are shown with 90% quantile-based credible intervals. Comparison is presented between the models excluding (black) and including (orange) seizure records with unresolved review requests. Results are based on ETIS data downloaded from the database on 26 September 2024.

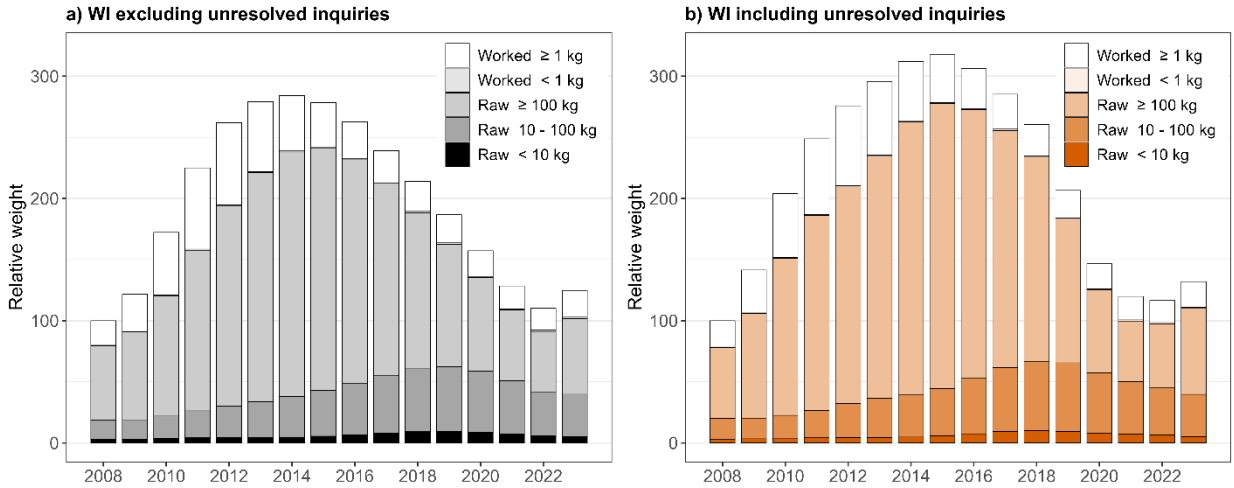

Figure 7. Weight Index trends by ivory type and weight classes. Weight Index median estimates are presented for models that (a) excluded and (b) included seizure records with unresolved review requests. Exclusion resulted in a reduction in the magnitude of the peak in relative WI (from > 300 to < 300); a slight shift in the peak to earlier years in the time series (from 2014 – 2016 to 2013 – 2015); and a marginally different shape of the resulting WI trend over the recent years 2020 – 2023. The observed effects are expected as most of the weight excluded from the trend analysis related to seizures reportedly made in later years, including the seizure with the largest weight ever reported to ETIS (9.2 tonnes in 2019). Results are based on ETIS data downloaded from the database on 26 September 2024.

Report on ETIS financial and operational sustainability

44. Review recommendation # 18 was directed to the CITES Secretariat with support from TRAFFIC to ensure that financial resources are available for the implementation of review recommendations and for the operation of ETIS. This is in line with amendments made to paragraph 7 Annex 1 of Res. Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19) stating that "Regular funding should be secured to ensure that ETIS can meet minimum operational requirements to deliver on the objectives in paragraph 27 a) of the Resolution" and in line with review recommendation # 17 directed at the CITES Secretariat and the Parties to ensure that ETIS' minimum operating budget to "keep the lights on" is secured. The ETIS review concluded that the lack of financial sustainability is an impediment for the ETIS programme to achieve its objectives, enhance its functionality and ensure its robustness (SC74 Doc. 12).

45. The current financial standing of the TRAFFIC budget for the ETIS programme for 2025 to 2027 is summarized in Table 1. The TRAFFIC budget for the ETIS programme is currently funded by grants received directly by TRAFFIC from the governments of Germany and the United States of America; these grants will expire in December 2025 and April 2029 respectively. Remaining funds received from the EU, UK and China as part of grant agreements with the CITES Secretariat, will expire on 17 December of 2024. Additional support is anticipated in 2024 from the government of Belgium, and in 2025 from funds provided by Parties to implement the ETIS review recommendations.

Table 1. ETIS budget shortfall for calendar years 2025 – 2027*.

USD	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**
Budget	448,000	483,000	501,000
Secured Funding	375,000	242,000	241,000
Shortfall	**73,000**	**241,000**	**260,000**

*Figures are rounded to the nearest USD 1000.

46. The longer-term commitment by the government of the United States of America to provide TRAFFIC with a 5-year grant support for their ETIS programme budget is extremely important in establishing a more regular and sustainable source of funding to ETIS, as recommended in the amendments to Res. Conf. 10.10. (Rev. CoP19). Additionally, support from the European Commission to the TRAFFIC budget for the ETIS programme is expected to continue with a new multi-year MIKES+ grant to commence in 2025 as reported by the CITES Secretariat. Despite further regular support by the German and Belgian governments, budget shortages remain. Hence, TRAFFIC continues to expend substantial resources in securing operating funds of the programme, which distracts from the delivery of review implementations and analyses anticipated by the Parties.

Acknowledgements

47. The TRAFFIC budget for the ETIS programme is entirely dependent on donor and grant support. TRAFFIC is grateful for generous contributions over the years by: The Darwin Initiative, a U.K. government grants scheme; The European Union; The German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection; The Belgian Federal Public Service for Food, Health, and the Environment; The Ministry of Agriculture, Nature, and Food Quality of the Netherlands; The Netherlands Federal Public Service, Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment; University of Reading; The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; The U.S. Agency for International Development; WWF.

Trade in elephant specimens

48. This section has been prepared by UNEP-WCMC

49. An overview of reported trade in *Loxodonta africana* using CITES annual report data over the period 2019-2022 is provided herein. At the time of writing (October 2024), complete trade data for 2023 are not yet available[8]. Over the four-year period, there was reported direct wild-sourced[9] trade in *L. africana* ivory (including trophies, tusks, and ivory carvings[10]) from nine range States, as reported by both exporters and importers. Of these, CITES annual reports had been received from all range States for all years 2019-2022, with the exception of one report from Mozambique (2022) that had not yet been received. All trade statistics are based on data held within the CITES Trade Database[11].

50. Reported legal direct trade in *L. africana* ivory by range States over the period 2019-2022 principally comprised 798 wild-sourced sport-hunted[12] trophies and 450 wild-sourced tusks. Direct trade in wild-sourced ivory carvings reported by range States in 2019-2022 totalled 6 kg, all traded for personal purposes, and 973 items (of which 99% were reported as for personal purposes). Approximately two-thirds of ivory carvings traded by weight were reported in 2019 (4 kg), whereas the 973 items reported by number ranged from 121 (in 2020) to 327 (in 2021) items per year.

51. In total, for 2019-2022, range States reported the direct export of 450 tusks and 13,101 kg of wild-sourced tusks (Tables 1 and 2). Over the same period, countries of import recorded lower levels, with the import of 271 tusks and 571 kg of tusks. Trade in tusks reported by number increased almost four-fold between 2019 and 2022 (from 51 to 235) according to data reported by range States, while the number of tusks reported by importers more than doubled (from 53 to 108; Table 1). The observed increase in reported tusks was primarily due to an increase in exports from Botswana. All trade in tusks reported by weight was exported from Zimbabwe and almost entirely reported for hunting trophy purposes (purpose code 'H'). Zimbabwe reported the export of 3,923 kg of tusks in 2022, which represented a 24% reduction compared to 2021 (5,159 kg; Table 2). In addition to tusks, a total of 798 wild-sourced sport-hunted trophies were reported by exporters and 758 reported by importers 2019-2022 (Table 3).

52. Discrepancies in the number of tusks and/or trophies reported in trade by range States compared with the number reported by importing countries can in part be explained by differences in reporting. For example, Zimbabwe reported exports of tusks primarily by weight, whereas countries of import largely reported trade in tusks from Zimbabwe by number. Discrepancies may also occur where annual reports have not yet been received from importing countries and/or in cases where importers and exporters reported trade in different years due to year-end trade[13].

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8 *The deadline for submission of 2023 annual reports to CITES is 31 October 2024 and there is often a delay in receiving all reports.*

9 *For the purposes of this analysis, 'wild-sourced' trade includes CITES source codes 'W' and 'U', as well as trade without a source specified (represented as a blank source in the CITES Trade Database).*

10 *'Ivory carvings' includes trade reported in the CITES Trade Database as ivory carvings, jewellery, ivory jewellery, and piano keys.*

11 *CITES Trade Database 2024. Compiled by UNEP-WCMC for the CITES Secretariat. Available at: trade.cites.org. Accessed 08/10/2024.*

12 *'Sport-hunted trophies' consist of trade in 'trophies' reported as purposes 'H', 'P' and 'T' as well as those without a purpose specified. Ninety-eight percent of the 798 trophies were reported with purpose 'H'.*

13 *Where the exporter reports the permit issued at the end of one year, and the importer reports the transaction having occurred in the next year. This could lead, for instance, to some trade reported in 2021 by exporters that is reported by importing countries in 2022, resulting in discrepancies in both years.*

Table 1. Direct trade in wild-sourced tusks of* Loxodonta africana *from range States, 2019-2022 (all purposes).*

		Number of tusks				
Exporter	**Reported by**	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**Total**
Botswana	Exporter	10	0	36	175	221
	Importer	0	0	5	55	60
Cameroon	Exporter	4	0	0	0	4
	Importer	0	0	0	0	0
Kenya	Exporter	0	0	2	0	2
	Importer	0	0	2	0	2
Mozambique	Exporter	6	2	2	NR	10
	Importer	2	0	2	0	4
Namibia	Exporter	16	20	52	30	118
	Importer	14	4	8	12	38
South Africa	Exporter	12	18	12	15	57
	Importer	0	6	32	2	40
United Republic of Tanzania	Exporter	1	2	0	2	5
	Importer	2	2	0	0	4
Zambia	Exporter	2	3	12	13	30
	Importer	0	0	0	0	0
Zimbabwe	Exporter	0	2	1	0	3
	Importer	35	9	40	39	123
Total	**Exporter**	**51**	**47**	**117**	**235**	**450**
	Importer	**53**	**21**	**89**	**108**	**271**

Source: CITES Trade Database 2024. Compiled by UNEP-WCMC for the CITES Secretariat. Available at: trade.cites.org. Accessed 08/10/2024.
NR= No report received at the time of writing (October 2024).
* All 'wild-sourced' direct trade in tusks was reported with source 'W' and 'U' over this period; no trade was reported without a source specified.

*Table 2. Direct trade in wild-sourced** Loxodonta africana *tusks as reported by weight (kg) from range States, 2019-2022 (all purposes), rounded to the nearest kilogram.*

		Tusks reported by weight (kg)				
Exporter	**Reported by**	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**Total**
Zimbabwe	Exporter	2144	1875	5159	3923	13101
	Importer	26	163	264	118	571

Source: CITES Trade Database 2024. Compiled by UNEP-WCMC for the CITES Secretariat. Available at: trade.cites.org. Accessed 08/10/2024.
* All 'wild-sourced' direct trade in tusks reported by weight (kg) was reported with source 'W' over this period; no trade was reported with source 'U' or without a source specified.

Table 3. Direct trade in wild-sourced sport-hunted** trophies of* Loxodonta africana *from range States, 2019-2022.*

		Number of trophies				
Exporter	**Reported by**	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**Total**
Botswana	Exporter	1	0	54	75	130
	Importer	2	0	26	84	112
Cameroon	Exporter	5	3	2	0	10
	Importer	7	1	0	0	8
Mozambique	Exporter	3	2	5	NR	10
	Importer	6	9	6	0	21
Namibia	Exporter	33	24	0	63	120
	Importer	26	8	25	58	117
South Africa	Exporter	54	22	60	22	158
	Importer	11	3	26	5	45
United Republic of Tanzania	Exporter	9	5	3	4	21
	Importer	10	2	9	4	25
Zambia	Exporter	4	7	8	15	34
	Importer	20	11	14	20	65
Zimbabwe	Exporter	70	62	100	83	315
	Importer	105	77	93	90	365
Grand Total	**Exporter**	**179**	**125**	**232**	**262**	**798**
	Importer	**187**	**111**	**199**	**261**	**758**

Source: CITES Trade Database 2024. Compiled by UNEP-WCMC for the CITES Secretariat. Available at: trade.cites.org. Accessed 08/10/2024.
NR= No report received at the time of writing (October 2024).
* All 'wild-sourced' direct trade over this period was reported with source 'W' or without a source specified; no trade in trophies was reported with source 'U'.
** All 'Sport-hunted trophies' over this period were reported with purpose codes 'H', 'P', or 'T'; no trophies were reported without a purpose specified. 'Sport-hunted trophies' includes the term 'trophies' only and does not include trade reported for other potential trophy items with these purpose codes, such as skins, skulls, ears, tails, etc.

Estimates of numbers of individuals and tusks in trade

53. When the number of individual elephants involved in the trade is estimated (by assuming that for the tusks presented in Table 1 two tusks equal one individual, and that each trophy presented in Table 3 equals one individual), exports reported by half of the range States increased in 2022 compared to 2019 (Table 4): Botswana (from six individuals in 2019 to 163 individuals in 2022), Namibia (41 to 78 individuals), Zambia (from five to 22 individuals) and Zimbabwe (from 70 to 83 individuals). Exports reported by Kenya remained the same (zero individuals in both 2019 and 2022), whilst exports reported by Cameroon (from seven to zero individuals), South Africa (from 60 to 30 individuals) and the United Republic of Tanzania (from 10 to five individuals) all showed a reduction in the number of individuals traded. Note that these estimates do not consider trade reported by weight (only applicable to Zimbabwe, Table 2). The 2022 annual report for Mozambique was not available at the time of writing and so it is currently unknown how exports have changed between 2019 and 2022, but trade reported by Mozambique ranged between three to six individuals per year 2019-2021.

54. When the export quotas for tusks as sport-hunted trophies are compared with exporter-reported and importer-reported data for both tusks and hunting trophies (assuming that one trophy includes two tusks),

four exporting range States appear to have exceeded their export quotas (published as zero quotas[14]) over the period 2019-2022 (Table 4)[15]. These quotas appear to have been potentially exceeded by the following range States: Cameroon (2019-2021), Kenya (in 2021), Mozambique (in 2019), and South Africa (in 2019). These range States had not informed the Secretariat of a quota for the year 2019, in which case zero quotas were established for that year (as outlined by Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19)).

55. The zero quotas published for Cameroon for 2019-2021[14] appear to have been exceeded as reported by both Cameroon and the countries of import in 2019-2020, and by Cameroon alone in 2021. In 2019, the zero quota appears to have been exceeded by 14 tusks (seven individuals) as reported by both Cameroon and importers. In 2020, the zero quota was apparently exceeded by six tusks (three individuals) as reported by Cameroon, and by two tusks (one individual) as reported by importers. In 2021, the apparent excess was four tusks (two individuals) as reported by Cameroon only (Table 4). All trade was reported by Cameroon and importers as wild-sourced (source code 'W') and for hunting trophy purposes (purpose code 'H').

56. Kenya appears to have exceeded the zero export quota[14] published for 2021 by two tusks (one individual) according to data reported by Kenya and the country of import (Table 4); these tusks were reported as wild-sourced (source code 'W') and for personal purposes (purpose code 'P').

57. Mozambique appears to have exceeded the zero export quota[14] published for 2019 by 12 tusks (six individuals) according to data reported by Mozambique, and by 14 tusks (seven individuals) as reported by importing countries (Table 4). All trade reported by Mozambique and importers was wild-sourced (source code 'W'). Six of the tusks reported by Mozambique were for hunting trophy purposes (purpose code 'H') and the remaining six were reported with purpose code 'T' (commercial purposes) along with other trophy parts. Importers reported the trade as for hunting trophy purposes (12 tusks) and personal purposes (purpose code 'P'; two tusks).

58. The zero quota published for South Africa for 2019[14] appears to have been exceeded by 120 tusks (60 individuals) as reported by South Africa and by 22 tusks (11 individuals) as reported by importers (Table 4). Both South Africa and importers reported this trade as wild-sourced (source code 'W'); South Africa reported trade for hunting trophy or personal purposes, while importers reported trade for hunting trophy purposes.

59. In accordance with CITES Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19), it is recommended that Parties communicate their export quotas to the CITES Secretariat in writing by 1 December if they intend to trade in the following calendar year.

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[14] *The CITES Resolution on 'Trade in elephant specimens' (currently CITES Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19)) stipulates that if a range State does not submit its export quota to the CITES Secretariat in writing by the relevant deadline for the following calendar year, a zero export quota is issued.*

[15] *These apparent quota excesses are the same as those summarised in the previous analysis of legal trade in ivory (covering the years 2018-2021) in SC77 Doc. 63.1 (Rev. 2).*

*Table 4. Estimated direct trade by range States in wild-sourced** Loxodonta africana *tusks calculated based on the total number of reported tusks combined with an estimate of the number of tusks reported in trade as 'sport-hunted trophies'** 2019-2022, and export quotas for* Loxodonta africana *tusks as sport-hunted trophies 2019-2022 established in compliance with Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19) on trade in elephant specimens. Potential quota excesses based on the estimated tusks are indicated in **bold**. Trade data for 2023 were not yet available at the time of writing. All quantities were reported by number; tusks reported by weight have been excluded from the estimates (applies to exports from Zimbabwe only). Only sport-hunted trophies (reported as purpose 'H', 'P' or 'T' or without a purpose specified) have been included in the estimates; trade in other potential trophy items with these purpose codes (i.e. reported as skull, skin, etc.) has been excluded.*

Exporter	Reported by	2019		2020		2021		2022	
		Estimated No. of tusks*	Quota (# tusks)	Estimated No. of tusks*	Quota (# tusks)	Estimated No. of tusks*	Quota (# tusks)	Estimated No. of tusks*	Quota (# tusks)
Botswana	Exporter	12	200	0	800	144	800	325	800
	Importer	4	200	0	800	57	800	223	800
Cameroon	Exporter	**14**	0	**6**	0	**4**	0	0	0
	Importer	**14**	0	**2**	0	0	0	0	0
Kenya	Exporter	0	0	0	0	**2**	0	0	0
	Importer	0	0	0	0	**2**	0	0	0
Mozambique	Exporter	**12**	0	6	24	12	66	NR	66
	Importer	**14**	0	18	24	14	66	2	66
Namibia	Exporter	82	180	68	180	52	180	156	180
	Importer	66	180	20	180	58	180	128	180
South Africa	Exporter	**120**	0	62	300	132	300	59	300
	Importer	**22**	0	12	300	84	300	12	300
United Republic of Tanzania	Exporter	19	100	12	100	6	100	10	100
	Importer	22	100	6	100	18	100	8	100
Zambia	Exporter	10	160	17	160	28	160	43	160

	Importer	40	160	22	160	28	160	40	160
Zimbabwe	Exporter	140	1000	126	1000	201	1000	166	1000
	Importer	245	1000	163	1000	226	1000	219	1000

Source: CITES Trade Database 2024. Compiled by UNEP-WCMC for the CITES Secretariat. Available at: trade.cites.org. Accessed 08/10/2024.

* 'Wild-sourced' includes trade reported as source codes 'W' or 'U', or without a source specified.

** Total number of tusks estimated based on the number of tusks reported plus two times the number of trophies reported (with the assumption that one trophy corresponds to one individual and therefore contains two tusks).

NR= No report received at the time of writing (October 2024).

Reporting issue

60. The analysis of hunting trophy data is complicated by the variety of ways in which hunting trophies can be reported. The *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports*[16] states that all the trophy parts of one animal, e.g. an elephant's two tusks, four feet, two ears and one tail, constitute one 'trophy' if they are exported together on the same permit. However, in practice, many Parties do not follow the *Guidelines* consistently and this can potentially lead to double-counting of trophies. The annual report data are therefore processed in accordance with the *Guidelines*: where multiple constituent parts are reported with the same export permit, these are generally recorded in the CITES Trade Database as one shipment using the term trophy ('TRO') according to the number of individuals reported. However, standardisation in reporting of hunting trophies through application of the *Guidelines* by Parties, in particular for species such as *L. africana* where export quotas have been established, is crucial to assessing compliance with the provisions of the Convention.

61. Serial numbers provided within annual reports can provide valuable insight for verification of quota compliance and this information could be collected more systematically through the CITES Trade Database to support CITES implementation if Parties request this. Adoption of electronic permitting and automated transfer of trade data to the CITES Trade Database in near real-time would facilitate this and should be considered as a means for enhancing transparency and traceability for all species with quotas and tagging/marking systems. These compliance considerations may be relevant for continued discussions by the Standing Committee and its Electronic Systems and Information Technology Working Group.

African elephants (Loxodonta Africana): Conservation status

62. This section has been prepared by the IUCN/SSC African Elephant Specialist Group (AfESG).

Status, Threats, Conservation Strategies and Action Plan

Reporting of the Forest and Savanna elephants

63. The IUCN AfESG is drafting separate Status Reports on the African forest elephant (*Loxodonta cyclotis*) and African savanna elephant (*Loxodonta africana*). These reports continue the tradition established by the African Elephant Status Reports of 1995, 1998, 2002, 2007, and 2016, which documented the changing status of elephant populations, tracking trends, threats, and conservation efforts over the past three decades. Notably, the reports from 1995 to 2016 did not differentiate between the two species.

African Forest Elephant (*Loxodonta cyclotis*) (in press)

64. Presented in this section are preliminary results from the IUCN AfESG's African Forest Elephant Status Report 2023 (AFESR, *in press*) and African Savanna Elephant Status Report 2024 (ASESR, *in prep*).

    i. *Range States*- Twenty-two range States are known to contain African forest elephants: West Africa (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo); Central Africa (Cameroon, Central African Republic, Republic of the Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Equatorial Guinea and Gabon); Southern Africa (Angola); and Eastern Africa (Rwanda, South Sudan and Uganda).

    ii. *Population* - The estimated number of forest elephants, as determined by the last reliable survey for each area between 2016 and 2022 is 135,641 (95% C.I. 99,290-172,254). An additional 8,004 to 10,374 elephants are Guesses for areas not systematically surveyed in the same period

    iii. *Changes in population numbers since 2015* - The total number of forest elephants (Estimates + Guesses) in Africa was an estimated 16% higher in 2022 than in 2015 (121,414 as reported in the African Elephant Status Report (AESR) 2016), largely due to a new survey technique that was

[16] *The current guidelines are those published under CITES Notification No. 2023/132 on 24/11/2023.*

used in Gabon across more than 250,000 km^2 of habitat[17]. This technique– spatial DNA capture-recapture, used a systematic sampling design across the whole country (i.e., not only in protected areas) and produced an estimate of elephant numbers that was based on elephants, rather than their dung (with the associated proxies of decay and production rate), and as such, roughly doubled the previous estimate for that range State.

iv. *Distribution* - Over 94% of the continent's forest elephants are found in Central Africa - an Estimated 131,030 elephants (95% C.I. 94,690 - 167,629) plus Guesses of between 4,756 – 6,635 animals. A further 5% are found in West Africa (an Estimated 4,498 elephants (95% C.I 3,603 - 5,513) plus Guesses of between 2,834 - 3,105 animals; and about 0.5% in Eastern and Southern Africa (around 640 elephants in total, of which 17% were Estimates and the rest Guesses). A summary of country populations is given in Table 1.

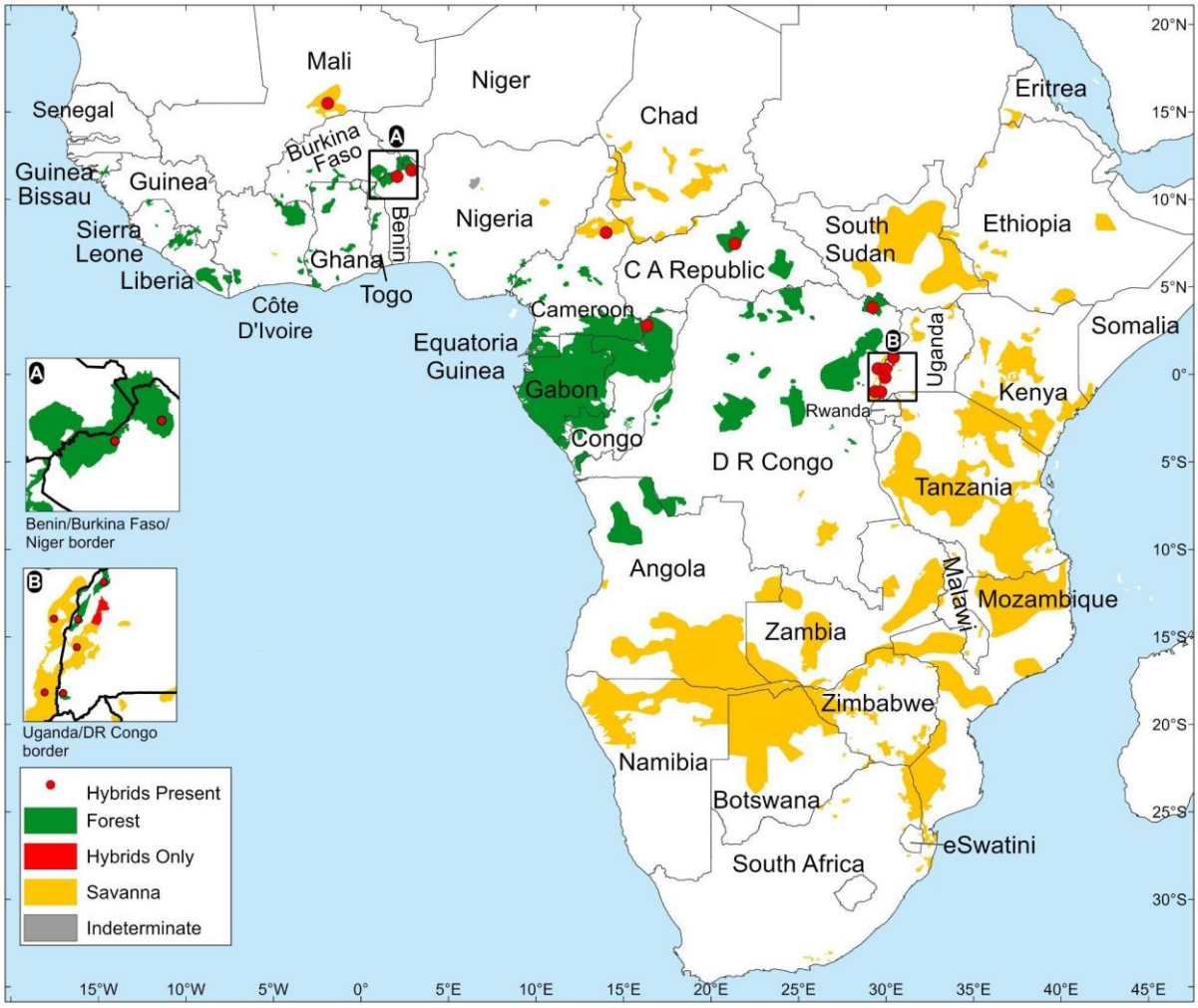
Table 1: Numbers of African forest elephants at national, regional, and continental levels, (AFESR 2024 *in press*).

REGION	COUNTRY	NUMBER OF ELEPHANTS			GUESSES	
		ESTIMATE	95% lcl	95% ucl	lower limit	upper limit
Central Africa	Cameroon	6,153	5,405	7,746	1,247	1,767
	Central African Republic	685	528	981	200	375
	Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)	3,667	2,873	4,426	897	1,590
	Equatorial Guinea				444	884
	Gabon	95,110	58,872	131,349		
	Republic of the Congo	25,415	22,926	30,210	1,968	2,019
	Regional total	**131,030**	**94,690**	**167,629**	**4,756**	**6,635**
Eastern Africa	Rwanda				40	60
	South Sudan				40	40
	Uganda	96	64	145	84	84
	Regional total	**96**	**64**	**145**	**164**	**184**
Southern Africa	Angola	17			250	450
	Regional total	**17**			**250**	**450**
West Africa	Benin	2,864	2,082	3,701	0	0
	Burkina Faso	974	556	1,520	604	621
	Côte d'Ivoire	358	283	505	81	110
	Ghana	142	110	174	813	898
	Guinea	15	0	0	33	33
	Guinea Bissau	6	0	0	0	0
	Liberia	0	0	0	800	900
	Niger	127	37	217	0	0
	Nigeria	0	0	0	250	290
	Senegal	1	0	0	0	0
	Sierra Leone	11	0	0	64	64
	Togo	0	0	0	189	189
	Regional total	**4,498**	**3,603**	**5,513**	**2,834**	**3,105**
Continental total		**135,641**	**99,290**	**172,254**	**8,004**	**10,374**

[17] Laguardia, A., S. Bourgeois, S. Strindberg, K. S. Gobush, G. Abitsi, H. G. Bikang Bi Ateme, F. Ebouta, J. M. Fay, A. M. Gopalaswamy, F. Maisels, E. L. F. Simira Banga Daouda, L. J. T. White, and E. J. Stokes. 2021. Nationwide abundance and distribution of African forest elephants across Gabon using non-invasive SNP genotyping. *Global Ecology and Conservation 32:e01894.*

v. *Range* - African Forest elephants' known, and possible range is approximately one million km^2 (Map 1) Just under three-quarters (72%) of the entire range has now been surveyed up to 2022. There have been some areas where known range has increased owing to better information from the field, particularly in the Chinko area of the Central African Republic, much of Gabon outside the protected areas, and southeastern Cameroon.

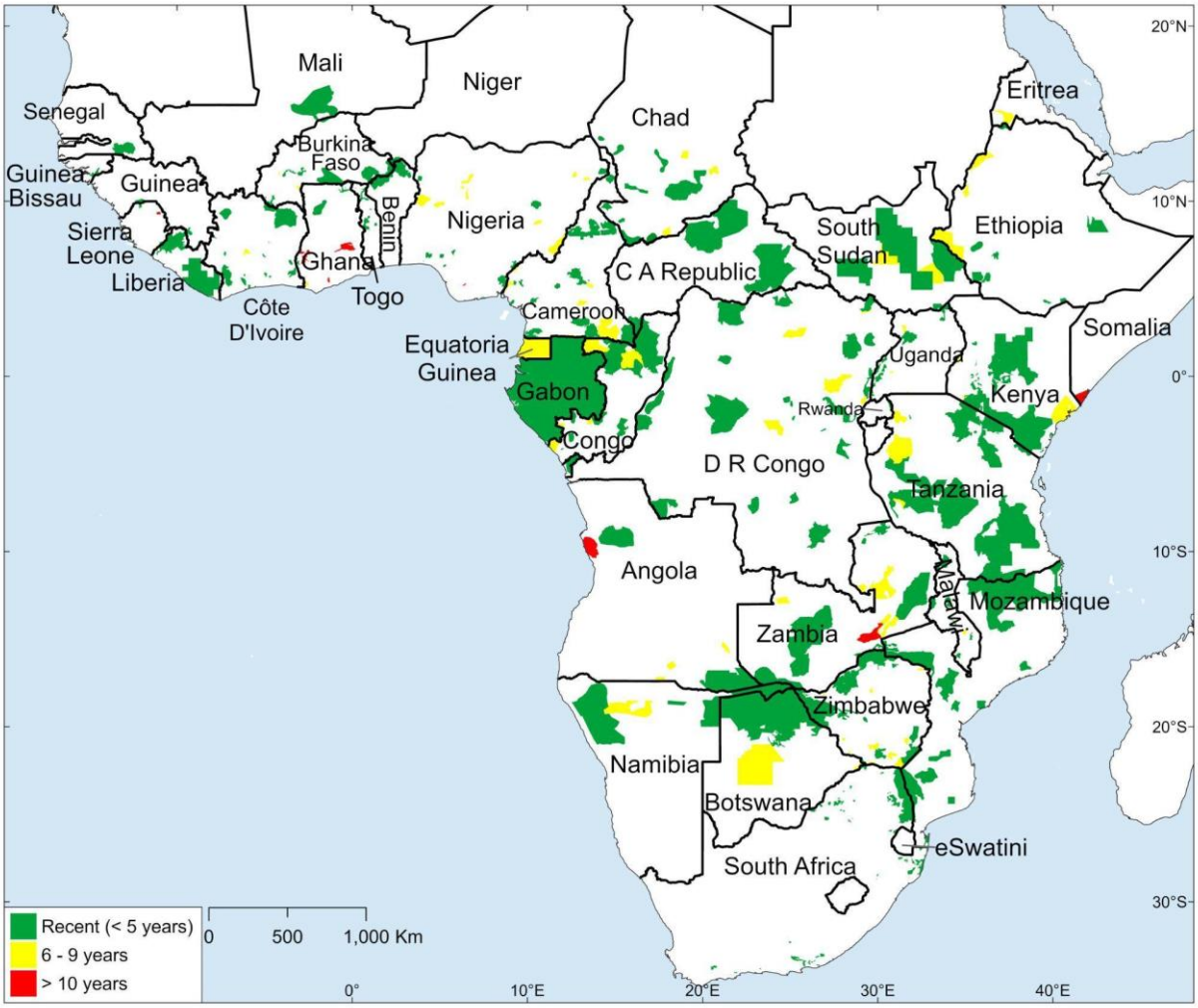
vi. This is a major accomplishment by survey partners in the field (especially government agencies, ministries, non-governmental organizations, researchers, individuals, and collaborators). Much of the species' habitat is characterised as dense forest and/or difficult and remote terrain.



Map 1: Distribution range of forest elephants updated in 2023 for the AFESR 2024 and the savanna elephant based on data through 2016 (*Source: AED July 2024).*

vii. Future surveys should prioritize input zones that have not been surveyed in the last decade (red colored areas – see Map 2), as well as some sites with very small, isolated elephant populations. Such input zones, many of which are in West Africa, have so few elephants that surveys were not carried out, obliging Guesses to be made as opposed to Estimates. However, these small, isolated populations may be important from a species conservation perspective.

viii. Expected publication date of the IUCN African Forest Elephant Status Report: before the end of 2024.



Map 2: Map of Africa showing the status of AED updates of 37 elephant range States as of December 2023. The green shaded areas are input zones updated in the last 5 years, yellow shaded areas are those updated 6 - 9 years ago, and red shaded areas are those updated 10 or more years ago (*Source: AED July 2024).*

<u>African savanna elephant (*Loxodonta africana*) (in prep)</u>

65. The IUCN AfESG is currently drafting the African Savanna Elephant Status Report (ASESR). By August 2024 the DRWG had received data from 257 input zones compared to data received from 236 input zones by 2015 for the AESR 2016. Review of these survey data and reports is underway, as is the drafting of range State narratives and the overall report. This process will include data verification and compilation of regional and continental totals. Of the 257 input zones, about 80% have been categorised as systematic surveys or other reliable Estimates of elephant population numbers.

66. Central to the production of the ASESR is the successful completion in 2022 of the survey of the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA) spanning five countries: Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The KAZA savanna elephant population represents over 50% of the overall remaining species population. The survey reported an estimated 227,900 elephants (95% C.I. 211,157 – 244,643[18]) total (site-specific and country-specific totals are also reported). The production of the ASESR was delayed relative to the AFESR to allow inclusion of these up-to-date estimates given their importance.

67. *Range States*- Twenty-two African countries are recognized as range States for the African savanna elephant: Eastern Africa (Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Uganda); Central Africa (Cameroon, Chad, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo -

[18] Bussière, E.M.S. and Potgieter, D. (2023) KAZA Elephant Survey 2022, Volume I: Results and Technical Report, KAZA TFCA Secretariat, Kasane, Botswana.

DRC); Southern Africa (Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Eswatini, Zambia, and Zimbabwe); and West Africa (Mali and Nigeria) (Refer Map 1).

68. Expected publication date of the ASESR is early 2025.

Priority for future elephant surveys

69. Future surveys for African forest elephant surveys should prioritize West and East Africa, particularly areas with small elephant populations, as many of the current numbers are classified as guesses rather than estimates. These small populations could be crucial for species conservation and may hold important genetic diversity. In some areas, elephant ranges have expanded due to better field data, but more resources are needed to systematically survey these regions to ensure accurate data collection and inform conservation strategies.

70. The current African Elephant Database (AED) provides updates on new surveys conducted after the release of the 2016 report for all range countries. As of July 2024, data indicate that forest elephant populations in Equatorial Guinea, Uganda, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, and Sierra Leone have not been surveyed since 2016. Similarly, savannah elephant populations in Cameroon, Chad, Eritrea, Nigeria, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda, Angola, and Eswatini remain under-surveyed. Many of these populations are vulnerable due to the lack of recent data, making them difficult to monitor and protect effectively.

71. We are working with the elephant range countries to ensure that national censuses of elephants are conducted regularly.

Threats

72. African elephants face several significant threats, the foremost being poaching for ivory, habitat loss due to human expansion, and human-elephant conflict. Poaching rates were especially high before 2016, but fewer incidents have been reported since then, suggesting a potential recovery in elephant populations. However, as elephant numbers grow, they increasingly come into conflict with humans encroaching into their habitats, resulting in retaliatory killings. This tension is particularly pronounced in areas where human populations and agricultural activities expand into former elephant ranges.

73. The impact of poaching and human-elephant conflict varies across Africa's four geographical regions: Central, West, Southern, and Eastern Africa. In West Africa, where elephant populations are small, fragmented, and isolated, they account for only about 5% of the total forest elephant population. The region has seen significant habitat loss due to mining, logging, and agricultural transformation. Between 1900 and 2013, approximately 90% of the Upper Guinean forests were destroyed, putting immense pressure on natural habitats and increasing human-elephant conflicts.

74. In Central Africa, forest elephants have been severely affected by poaching since 2003, with evidence showing illegal killings had become a major problem by that time. While poaching rates have declined since 2016, falling below the sustainable threshold in 2020, there was a resurgence of illegal killings in 2021. Despite the decline, large amounts of ivory continued to be seized until at least 2019, indicating that the threat of poaching still lingers in the region. Without strong conservation measures, these factors could hinder elephant recovery efforts across Africa.

75. Another key factor affecting elephant populations is climate change. Shifting climate patterns are altering water availability, vegetation, and food resources across Africa, which can force elephants to move into new areas, often bringing them into conflict with human communities. Prolonged droughts and other climate extremes degrade habitats, reducing their carrying capacity for elephants. The combination of climate stress and human expansion into elephant ranges creates a more challenging environment for long-term elephant conservation, making it essential for future surveys to also consider how climate impacts habitat availability and population sustainability.

Conservation Action Plans and Strategies for elephant conservation

76. Progress made by range States in the development or review of their national elephant action plan is summarised bellow:

Table 2: Progress made by range States in the development or review of their national elephant action plans (in red updated) from 2021 MIKES report

Elephant management plans			
Central Africa	Eastern Africa	Southern Africa	West Africa
Cameroon: • AWF to work with national wildlife agency to renew Cameroon National Elephant Action Plan during 2023/2024 fiscal year.	*Ethiopia:* Elephant Action plan (2015 – 2025) was endorsed by the Prime Minister. Implementation is being undertaken by relevant conservation authorities and partners.	*Angola:* Elephant management plan updated in March 2020, version 3.0, launched (2018 – 2028). Ministry of Environment (MINAMB) and National Institute of Biodiversity and Conservation Areas (INBAC)	*Cote d'ivore:* 2003 plan is being updated with the most recent information.
Chad: Elephant management plan was completed in 2018 and refined in 2019 and will be implemented when funds become available. NEAP developed (2018 – 2027).	*Kenya:* Kenya launched National Elephant Action Plan 2023 – 2032 on 3rd March 2023 by Cabinet Secretary Peninah Malonza Four of AfESG members participated in the development of the strategy.	*Botswana:* Elephant Management Plan 2021-2026 was launched by Vice President Mr. Slumber Tsogwane in Maun. Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources Conservation and Tourism	*Liberia:* Liberia National Elephant Action Plan (2020 – 2029). Forestry Development authority (FDA) and Fauna & Flora International (FFI),
Congo: Republic of Congo launched National Elephant Action Plan (2019 - 2028). Ministry of Forest Economy.	*United Republic of Tanzania:* United Republic of Tanzania NEAP report is almost complete waiting national validation by stakeholders. TAWIRI is leading the exercise.	*Malawi:* 2015 – 2025 plan not properly aligned to AEAP, but has been extensively used and implemented	*Nigeria:* • Nigeria National Elephant Action Plan Launched (2024 - 2034) by The Minister of State for Environment, Dr Iziaq Adekunle Adeboye Salako on Tuesday 13th August 2024
Gabon: NEAP was finished in early 2019 and is being implemented. Gabon NEAP launched (2018 – 2028).	*Uganda:* Elephant Conservation Plan for Uganda 2016-2026. Being implemented by Uganda Wildlife Authority.	*Mozambique:* Draft plan produced in 2017 following a workshop in Maputo, but is yet to be finalized	
		Namibia: • Namibia National Elephant	

Elephant management plans			
Central Africa	Eastern Africa	Southern Africa	West Africa
		Conservation and Management Plan 2021/2022-2030/2031. Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism.	
-	-	*South Africa:* • South Africa does not have a NEAP. They have a national norms and standards for the management of elephants that governs elephant management and are currently in the process of developing a national elephant heritage strategy.	-
		Zambia: • Strategic Elephant Conservation and Management Plan for Zambia, 2021-2025. Department of National Parks and Wildlife.	
-	-	*Zimbabwe*: • 2021-2025 National Elephant Management plan - Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority	-

77. AfESG will continue to provide inputs and technical support to the NEAP processes. NEAPs are important frameworks for conserving elephants and for facilitating reporting of elephant status across Africa and increasing the robustness of data used for a wide range of decisions. Range States are encouraged to develop and implement their NEAPs.

CITES Taxonomic Nomenclature issues related to Africa's elephants

78. The IUCN AfESG has worked with the CITES Nomenclature Specialist on Decision 19.276[19] through the 32nd and 33rd meetings of the Animals Committee, as well as the 77th meeting of the Standing Committee, to provide scientific and other information on each species to make progress on this decision.

79. Outcomes so far include: 1) an acknowledgement (at AC32 and reconfirmed at AC33) of the scientific merit of recognizing the two species of African elephants; 2) a recommendation to update the standard nomenclature reference to Wilson & Reeder 2005 that specifies the two different elephant species as such; and 3) defer to SC78 and CoP20 considerations on how to reflect these taxa in the CITES Appendices, noting the discussions of SC77.

80. In addition, and relevant to taxonomic issues related to African elephants, the Animals Committee (at AC33) agreed to propose to CoP20 an amendment to Resolution Conf. 12.11 (Rev. CoP19) on *Standard Nomenclature* related to higher taxon listings and how to handle changes in taxon name (by considering whether changes in the scope of protections would occur or not with the name change).

81. The recognition of the two species will enhance legal protection and conservation strategies tailored to the distinct needs of each species.

African Elephant Action Plan

82. The African Elephant Action Plan (AEAP) 2023[20] is a contemporary framework of continental priorities and objectives for the conservation of the African elephant developed, owned, and implemented by the range States. It "represents the issues identified and experienced by Africans, and the objectives that need to be addressed, in order to effectively conserve elephants in Africa across their range"[21]. The 2023 revision builds on the experience of the first 12 years of implementing the AEAP 2010[22] and draws on the collective expertise and experience of the range States as well as technical support from members of the IUCN AfESG.

83. Across the continent, major challenges related to elephants and their socio-ecological roles include illegal killings (primarily for ivory and occasionally for meat), the damage elephants cause to communities, and habitat loss, transformation and/or fragmentation resulting from a growing human population, impact of climate and increased human footprint.

84. The CITES MIKES Programme focuses on monitoring the illegal killing of elephants and the IUCN AfESG Human Elephant Conflict and Coexistence Task Force (HECx TF) (see item 9) addresses issues related to conflict and damage. As such, and going forward, the IUCN AfESG AEAP Task Force (AEAP TF) seeks to contribute expertise to assist range States in addressing some of the remaining conservation issues within the AEAP's objectives, namely habitat transformation, fragmentation, and connectivity. Specifically, the AEAP TF plans to provide an evidence base in support for range States in implementing the following AEAP strategies and activities:

> ***STRATEGY 1.1:*** *Apply adaptive management approaches in addressing HEC mitigation, ensuring capacity building for managers and local communities.*
> *Activity 1.1.4. Undertake appropriate land use planning to minimize HEC including harmonization across sectors and among range States.*
>
> ***STRATEGY 2.1:*** *Ensure, maintain, and restore connectivity, where possible, between elephant ranges within and between range States.*
> *Activity 2.1.1. Identify and prioritize opportunities for range expansion and creation of connectivity corridors within the broader land use planning within and between range States.*

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[19] CITES Decision 19.276 on *Taxonomy and nomenclature of African elephants (Loxodonta spp.)* directs the Animals Committee
a) in consultation with the IUCN African Elephant Specialist Group, review the taxonomic-nomenclatural history of African elephant Loxodonta africana in CITES and the nomenclature that reflects accepted use in biology, at its 32nd meeting; and
b) if appropriate, make a recommendation on adopting a new standard nomenclature reference for African elephants, for decision at the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

[20] cms_cop14_res.12.19_rev.cop14_annex_african-elephant-action-plan_e_0.pdf

[21] https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/prog/elephant/E-SC77-Inf-03.pdf

[22] african_elephant_action_plan_eng.pdf (cites.org)

Activity 2.1.2. Identify ways to incentivize local communities to secure, maintain and rehabilitate connectivity corridors between elephant populations.
Activity 2.1.3. Create and / or restore, where possible, the connectivity between areas of elephants within, between and among range States especially within Transfrontier Conservation Areas.

85. AfESG is planning to cover these activities between 2021-2025 and 2026-2030 Species Survival Commission (SSC) quadrennium plans for the specialist group.

Asian elephants (Elephas maximus): Status, Threats and Conservation actions

86. This section has been prepared by the IUCN/SSC Asian Elephant Specialist Group (AsESG).

87. The Asian Elephant Specialist Group (AsESG) is a global network of specialists studying, managing, monitoring, and conserving Asian elephants (*Elephas maximus*) across their 13 Range States in Asia. The overall aim of the AsESG is to promote the long-term conservation of Asia's elephants and, where possible, recover populations to viable levels; provide sound scientific and technical advice to aid decision-making and conservation actions; and build the capacity of Asian Elephant Range States to manage the species and the challenges it faces.

88. This report provides an update since the report submitted to the 77th Standing Committee report.

89. Asian elephants are found across 13 range countries, with nearly 60% of the population found in India (Williams *et al.,* 2020). Other countries with notable populations include Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Smaller populations exist in Cambodia and Lao PDR, while Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, and Viet Nam host very limited numbers, often just a few hundred individuals or fewer. Estimates of the total wild Asian elephant population is around 50,000 (AsESG Meeting 2023). Approximately 15,000 of the world's Asian elephants live in captivity, including the 3000 captive elephants found in zoos and ex-situ facilities in the non-range countries (AsESG Meeting 2023).

90. In 2018, global estimates suggested a wild population of 48,323–51,680 individuals across all range countries (Menon & Tiwari, 2019). While the overall population remains relatively stable, localized declines raise significant concerns. Data from the *Asian Elephant Range States Meeting* (2022) and the 11th meeting of the *Asian Elephant Specialist Group* (2023) highlight population decreases in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Sabah (Malaysia), and Myanmar compared to 2019 baselines. The recent classification of the Bornean elephant (*Elephas borneensis*) as "Endangered" on the IUCN Red List (https://iucn.org/press-release/202406/bornean-elephant-endangered-iucn-red-list) underscores the critical decline in its population, which has dwindled to approximately 1,000 individuals (Cheah and Yoganand, 2022)).

91. Small populations in several countries, including Viet Nam, Nepal, Bangladesh, China, and Cambodia are particularly alarming. These small populations face heightened risks of genetic bottlenecks, human-wildlife conflict, and poaching pressures, underscoring the need for targeted conservation interventions.

92. The current population of wild Asian elephants is as below:

Sl. No.	**Country**	**Wild elephant population 2019** **Source: William *et al.*, 2020**	**Wild elephant population 2023 and 2024** **Source: 11th AsESG meeting 2023 and Range states HEC workshop, March 2024**
1	Bangladesh	289–437	268 (210-330)
2	Bhutan	605–761	678
3	Cambodia	400–600	400-600
4	China	300	300*
5	India	29964	29964
6	Indonesia	1,784–1,804	928-1379
7	Lao PDR	500–600	300-400

8	Peninsular Malaysia	1,223–1,677	1223-1677
9	Sabah Malaysia	2040	1000
10	Myanmar	2,000–4,000	1500-2000
11	Nepal	109–145	227
12	Sri Lanka	5879	5879
13	Thailand	3,126–3,341	4013-4422
14	Viet Nam	104–132	104-134

93. Asian elephants still face significant threats from poaching, as well as habitat loss, and human-wildlife conflict. Recent growth of human settlements and agricultural activities throughout Asia has led to the extensive depletion of elephant habitats, degradation of their food sources, diminished landscape connectivity, and a significant decline in elephant populations (Calabrese *et al*., 2017; Rani *et al.*, 2024). Anthropogenic pressures, such as land use changes, socio political changes (Chan *et al.,* 2022*),* linear infrastructure (Ghosh *et al.,* 2022; Ahmed and Saikia, 2022), climate change (Bai *et al.,* 2022) also pose a significant threat to Asian elephants.

94. Poaching remains a persistent issue, with selective removal of male elephants being a major concern in several regions (Sampson *et al.,* 2018). However, recent reports indicate that poaching for elephant skin and meat is becoming an emerging threat, affecting not only males but also females and juveniles (Aung 2018; Thant et al., 2023). In Myanmar, poaching for skin and bones is widespread, with elephant skin being processed into medicinal paste, used for making bracelets, and transformed into furniture or decorative items from the feet and trunks of elephants (Sampson *et al*., 2018; Budd *et al.*, 2021). These practices contribute to the further decline of elephant populations, especially in regions where poaching is rampant (Aung, 2018).

95. ***Ivory trade-*** Poaching of elephants for ivory trade occurs in Asia. In 2023-2024, Asian countries have made significant ivory seizures, underscoring the ongoing demand and complex trafficking networks despite stringent international restrictions. According to the report of Center for Advanced Defense Studies (https://wildlifedashboard.c4ads.org/home), between 2023-24, ivory seizures have been reported from 10 of the 13 Asian elephant range countries *viz.* Bangladesh (2 cases), Bhutan (1 case), China (74 cases), India (82 cases), Indonesia (7 cases), Malaysia (3 cases), Nepal (1 case), Sri Lanka (3 cases), Thailand (2 cases) and Viet Nam (15 cases). One of the largest seizures this year occurred in Viet Nam, where authorities intercepted 1.6 tonnes of elephant ivory smuggled from Nigeria (https://english.haiquanonline.com.vn/hai-phong-customs-seizes-16-tons-of-smuggled-ivory-29481.html). This massive haul highlights how smugglers exploit transcontinental routes and weak regulatory checks to move ivory from Africa to Asia.

96. Meanwhile, Japan, one of Asia's largest domestic ivory markets, is undergoing a critical review of its legal framework. Currently, the Japanese Government is undertaking a statutory review of the 2017 amendments of the Japan's Law/Act for Conservation of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora that will continue through 2026 (https://eia.org/blog/japan-is-revising-its-law-on-ivory-trade-time-to-finally-close-the-market/). Mr. Masayuki Sakamoto, Executive Director JTEF & IUCN SSC AsESG member, attended the meeting with the Ministry of Environment on 10th April, 2024 to prioritize review of the domestic ivory trade controls, eliminate the broad ivory trade exemptions, and enact amendments to close Japan's domestic ivory market with truly narrow exemptions.

97. In India, ivory seizures have continued to be a major concern (2021-22 Report, 2022). In 2024, significant seizures of ivory occurred in the northern and north-eastern states (https://www.indiatodayne.in/assam/story/assam-poacher-apprehended-3731-kg-ivory-seized-in-joint-operation-in-tamulpur-888892-2024-02-17; https://www.sentinelassam.com/north-east-india-news/assam-news/assam-customs-seize-nearly-28-kg-of-ivory-in-assam-in-a-major-wildlife-smuggling-bust; https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/guwahati/ivory-smuggling-racket-busted-with-seizure-of-2-elephant-tusks/articleshow/107129927.cms) due to its proximity to international borders with Nepal, Myanmar, Bhutan, and China. In India, the *Wildlife Protection Act of 1972* establishes a comprehensive legal framework, including a ban on ivory trade since 1986 for safeguarding elephants and is supported by enforcement agencies like the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB). The WCCB has successfully intercepted significant quantities of illegal ivory in multiple seizures along India's borders (Baidwan, 2023).

However, enforcement faces persistent challenges due to constrained resources and the country's vast and diverse geography, which complicates monitoring and disrupting illicit wildlife trade networks.

98. In Bangladesh, while the trade in ivory has traditionally been less widespread compared to other countries in South and Southeast Asia, recent developments have raised alarms. Ivory seizures in Bangladesh, especially in the port city of Chattogram, have been on the rise in recent years, suggesting a potential increase in the illegal ivory trade route passing through the country. In 2023, authorities in Chattogram confiscated 35 kg of ivory hidden in a shipping raising concern among Bangladesh may officials due to weak enforcement of wildlife protection laws in some border regions (Bangladesh FD, 2023).

99. ***Illegal killing -*** Illegal killing of Asian elephants have been reported from all Asian elephant range countries (reports of the FD of the countries to IUCN SSC AsESG, 2023.No report received from Viet Nam). According to data from the Forest Departments of these countries submitted to the IUCN SSC Asian Elephant Specialist Group (AsESG) in 2023, these killings are not exclusively linked to poaching or the ivory trade. Many unnatural elephant deaths are caused by human-wildlife conflicts, including electrocution, gunshots, use of explosives in bait, snares, road and rail accidents, and retaliatory or accidental poisoning.

100. From 2018 to 2023, approximately 9% of unnatural Asian elephant deaths were attributed to poaching. In the past year alone, 42 elephants were poached across several range countries: India (14), Lao PDR (12), Myanmar (10), Thailand (2), Bhutan (2), and Bangladesh (1). This underscores the need for intensified efforts to mitigate human-elephant conflicts and combat poaching through targeted conservation measures and law enforcement interventions.

101. ***Online ivory trade –*** Illegal online ivory trade in Asia in 2024 remains an ongoing concern, with traffickers increasingly using digital platforms despite bans and monitoring efforts. Though not much information is available with IUCN SSC AsESG on this, it is reported that Viet Nam and Thailand have updated their wildlife laws to cover online trade, to prevent online ivory sales effectively.

102. To tackle the broader challenge of illegal wildlife trade on digital platforms, organizations such as the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) who also are the conservation partners of IUCN SSC AsESG, and TRAFFIC launched the *Coalition to End Wildlife Trafficking Online* in 2018. This initiative collaborates with 47 major tech companies, including Alibaba, eBay, Google, and TikTok, to identify and remove listings of endangered wildlife products, including ivory.

103. ***Trade in other body parts-*** Asian elephants, once primarily targeted for their tusks, now face escalating threats due to growing demand for their skin and meat, particularly for use in traditional medicine and decorative items (Budd *et al.,* 2021). Female Asian elephants lack tusks, and the male tusks are smaller than those of African elephants. However, their body parts are now being sought after for medicinal products, jewellery, and furniture, leading to indiscriminate killing that affects not only larger males but also females and calves (Elephant Family, 2019).

104. Myanmar has emerged as a critical hotspot for this illicit trade (Budd *et al.,* 2021). Poaching incidents have increased since 2014, with elephants being killed for their skin, which is processed into beads, powders, and other decorative or medicinal products (Myanmar FD during the HEC workshop in India in March 2024). The trade is facilitated through online platforms and border markets, with Mong La serving as a key hub (Thant *et al.* 2023). If the current rate of illegal hunting continues unchecked, Myanmar's elephant population faces a serious risk of extinction within a few decades. Efforts to curb this escalating trade include Myanmar's Elephant Conservation Action Plan, a 10-year initiative launched in 2018 to strengthen anti-poaching patrols.

105. ***Live elephant trade-*** In 2024, the live trade of Asian elephants remains a significant concern, driven by demand for their use in tourism, religious rituals, and private ownership across Asia. Despite conservation efforts, loopholes in regulatory frameworks continue to enable the movement of elephants, often under the guise of "transfers" for religious or traditional purposes (Mar, 2020). Recent changes in India's Captive Elephant (Transfer or Transport) Rules, 2024, have raised concerns among animal welfare groups, who argue that ambiguities in these rules could facilitate illegal trade and exploitation (https://thewire.in/environment/animal-rights-groups-write-to-centre-to-strengthen-captive-elephant-transfer-and-transport-rules). Kathmandu Declaration signed by the 13 Asian elephant countries in 2022 envisages to prepare the captive elephant registration system. Indian Government is also in the process of developing the DNA profiling of captive elephants and creation of a national database of captive elephants (https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/government-starts-dna-profiling-of-captive-elephants-101694460269241.html). The Indian Government also has restrictions on inter-state transfers,

and a moratorium on transfers from regions like the northeastern states and Kerala to prevent illegal capture and trade.

AsESG members meeting

106. The 11th meeting of the IUCN/SSC Asian Elephant Specialist Group (AsESG) was organised in India in March 2023. A number of issues concerning elephant conservation were discussed and possible solutions identified. Each Range State presented on the threats and conservation status of elephants in their country. The meeting also discussed the actions taken on decisions agreed during the 3rd Asian elephant range States meeting held in Kathmandu, Nepal in April 2022 and the conservation initiatives undertaken by each Range State since then. The report of the 3rd Asian elephant range States meeting can be downloaded at https://www.asesg.org/PDFfiles/2022AsERSMFinalReport.pdf.

107. To address the various challenges confronting elephant conservation in Asia, the AsESG plans to develop protocols in the form of guidelines or manuals to guide the management of specific matters in an effective and scientific manner. For this, several Working Groups have been constituted by the AsESG. Progress has been made in development of these WGs and the current status of the WGs are as below:

i. Bhutan Elephant Conservation Action Plan- Completed and available at (https://www.asesg.org/images/Elephant%20Conservation%20Action%20Plan%20for%20Bhutan%202018-2028.pdf)
ii. Sabah Elephant Conservation Action Plan- Completed and available at (https://www.asesg.org/images/BORNEAN%20ELEPHANT%20ACTION%20PLAN_2020-2029.pdf)
iii. Red List assessment of Asian Elephant – Completed and available at (https://www.asesg.org/PDFfiles/Asian%20Elephant%20Red%20List%20Assessment%202020.pdf)
iv. Guidelines for creating artificial water holes in elephant habitats - Completed and available at (https://www.asesg.org/PDFfiles/Waterhole%20WG%20report.pdf)
v. Guideline for welfare and use of captive elephants in Tourism- Completed and available at (https://www.asesg.org/PDFfiles/WG%20Report-%20Tourism.pdf)
vi. Management and care of captive elephant in musth- Completed and available at (https://www.asesg.org/PDFfiles/WG%20Report-Musth.pdf)
vii. Sumatra Elephant Conservation Action Plan- The NECAP has been finalized by the Indonesia Govt. and uploaded on the AsESG website (https://www.asesg.org/PDFfiles/2023/NECAP-Indonesia.pdf)
viii. Drafting the Peninsular Malaysia NECAP- The NECAP has been approved by the Govt. of Peninsular Malaysia and has been uploaded on the AsESG website (https://www.asesg.org/PDFfiles/2023/NECAP%202023-30.pdf)
ix. Guidelines for the reintroduction of captive elephants in the wild as possible restocking option (https://www.asesg.org/images/WG%20report-%20Rehabilitation%20of%20elephants.pdf)
x. Emerging diseases affecting Asian elephants (https://www.asesg.org/images/Emerging%20disease.pdf)
xi. Taxonomy of elephants in Sabah and its Red Listing- Bornean elephants have been red listed
xii. Handbook To Mitigate The Impacts Of Roads And Railways On Asian Elephants (https://www.asesg.org/PDFfiles/Asian-Elephant-Handbook_AsETWG_2024.pdf)

108. Currently the WG is also working on some of the critical aspects of elephant conservation that includes human – elephant conflict, mapping of elephant distribution, climate change affecting Asian elephants.

Elephant conservation action plans

109. The Kathmandu Declaration signed by the 13 Asian elephant range countries enlists the development of national Elephant Conservation Action Plans by all range countries. During the 11th AsESG meeting held in India in March 2023, IUCN SSC AsESG released the first edition of the “Action Elephant”, a compendium of the updated National Elephant Conservation Action Plans. The first edition of “Action elephant” comprises of six National Elephant Conservation Action Plans. This includes the updated National Elephant Conservation Action Plans of Bangladesh (2018), Bhutan (2018), Cambodia (2020), Lao PDR (2022), Myanmar (2018) and Sabah Malaysia (2020). The National Elephant Action Plan of Indonesia, Peninsular Malaysia (2023) have also been prepared and approved by the respective Governments. The IUCN SSC AsESG is working with Govt. of Viet Nam and Nepal in completion of their NECAPs.

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The African Elephant Fund (AEF)

110. This section has been prepared and submitted by Zimbabwe as the Chair of the African Elephant Fund Steering Committee (AEFSC) in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as the host of the Fund, and the AEF Secretariat. This report is an update by the AEFSC on the implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan (AEAP) through the AEF and the Fund's operations. It covers the period between July 2023 and September 2024.

Membership of the African Elephant Fund Steering Committee

111. A new AEFSC has been elected to serve the 2024 – 2026 term. The election was undertaken virtually via a written no-objection procedure. The composition of the new Steering Committee is as follows:

1. *African Elephant range States:*
   a) Central Africa sub-region: Cameroon and Central African Republic
   b) East Africa sub-region: Tanzania and Rwanda
   c) Southern Africa sub-region: Zimbabwe (Chair) and Zambia (Vice chair)
   d) West Africa sub-region: Nigeria and Burkina Faso

2. *Donors*
   a) The Netherlands
   b) Belgium
   c) Germany
   d) European Commission (Observer)
   e) France (Observer)

3. Ex-officio members

a) United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
b) Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Secretariat
c) Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) Secretariat

Meetings of the AEFSC

112. Within the reporting period, the AEFSC has held one (1) formal and two (2) informal meetings. The last virtual formal meeting of the AEFSC serving the 2021-2023 term was held on 15 July 2024. The objective of the meeting was to review the activities and achievements of the previous three (3) years and to prepare to handover to the incoming Steering Committee members. Among the achievements highlighted was the completion of the updating of the African Elephant Action Plan, completion of several AEF-funded projects which nearly doubled the Fund's portfolio of completed projects, and running of several visibility and outreach activities.

113. An onboarding briefing session was also held with the new Steering Committee on 4 September 2024 to orient the new members on the operations and status of the Fund.

Projects funded by the African Elephant Fund

114. Sixty-seven (67) AEF-funded projects have been completed in the African elephant range States in support of the implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan (AEAP) since the inception of the AEF. Between July 2023 and September 2024, six (6) projects have been completed. These include four (4) COVID-19 projects. Highlights of the outcomes of the projects include: in Kenya, two (2) vehicle-based ranger units that had been grounded were re-operationalized to conduct high-impact patrols, resulting in swift intervention in human-elephant conflict (HEC), habitat destruction-related and poaching incidences; the capacity of law enforcement officers in Liberia and Ethiopia to employ effective field intelligence and investigation techniques was strengthened; similarly in South Sudan, the capacity of law enforcement was enhanced in various areas, including on enforcing CITES provisions on regulation of trade, use of Geographic Information System (GIS) technology in anti-trafficking and anti-poaching missions, utilizing ivory stockpile management systems and, conducting elephant deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) sample collection and analysis among others; six (6) elephant collars were also deployed in South Sudan to enable continuous monitoring of the elephant groups; in Ghana, local community members around the Bia Conservation Area were trained on HEC mitigation measures; in South Africa, eight (8) elephants were freed from snares through aerial and ground-based de-snaring missions.

115. Currently, there are five (5) projects marked as ongoing.

Funding

116. In terms of overall funding and expenditure, the total funds received by the African Elephant Fund to date is USD 5,489,984, while the total expenditures are USD 4,588,288.

117. The donor funding received to the Fund between the reporting period is as follows:

Table 1: Donor Funding

Donor	**Amount**
Belgium (2023)	EUR 28,000
Germany (2023)	USD 179,701
The Netherlands (2023)	EUR 120,000
Belgium (2024)	EUR 50,000
France (2024)	EUR 20,000

118. The Government of the Netherlands has pledged to contribute EUR 120,000 to the AEF in 2024.

119. On behalf of the AEFSC and the African elephant range States, the Chair extends gratitude to the Governments of the Netherlands, Germany, France and Belgium for the continued financial support for the implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan (AEAP) through the AEF.

120. A significant resource gap remains for the effective conservation and management of elephants across the Africa, particularly with the increasing challenge of HEC. The AEFSC therefore urges all stakeholders - Parties, donors, intergovernmental organizations (IGO), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private sector, philanthropists, and others - to collaborate in developing innovative financial mechanisms and to increase the contributions to the AEF in support of the implementation of the AEAP in line with CITES Resolution Conf. 16.9.

The revised African Elephant Action Plan

121. The revised African Elephant Action Plan (AEAP 2023) was endorsed by the parties to the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) during its fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CMS COP14) held in February 2024 in Samarkand, Uzbekistan.

Participation at CMS COP 14

122. The AEF Secretariat organized a side event at the Fourteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS COP14). The event, which took place on 12 February 2024, was jointly organized with IUCN themed "*Mobilising Sustainable Resources for Wildlife Conservation: Opportunities and Strategies*". The event featured a panel discussion with representatives from the range States, non-profit sector and CITES, who shared their knowledge and experiences on the various opportunities and strategies for increasing sustainable wildlife conservation financing.

Participation at the CITES African Elephant Dialogue Meeting

123. Upon the request of the African elephant range States, the AEF Secretariat was invited to participate in the CITES African Elephant Dialogue meeting held in Maun, Botswana in September 2024 as technical experts and resource persons. The AEF Secretariat also presented on the status of the administration of the AEF as one of the financial mechanisms established to support the implementation of the AEAP. Bilateral meetings with a number of the range States were held to discuss the status of their ongoing projects, and to provide guidance on the preparation of proposals when a call for proposals has been issued.

Visibility

124. In the reporting period, the AEF Secretariat has organized two (2) exhibits to increase awareness and promote engagement with the AEF. An exhibition booth was run during the CMS COP14 meeting, attracting inquiries regarding the work undertaken by the AEF. An exhibition booth was also hosted at the sixth session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-6) in Nairobi, Kenya, where the booth attracted over 200 visitors keen to learn more about the Fund, access funding, and explore partnership opportunities. Both exhibits were run in February 2024.

125. The AEF Secretariat continues to submit inputs to the quarterly reports for the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) of UNEP.

126. The newsletter highlighting the activities undertaken by the AEF in 2023 has also been published on the AEF website (https://new.express.adobe.com/webpage/gSf7GQ50qxI6T).

Conclusions

127. The Standing Committee is requested to take note of the strategic activities being undertaken by the AEF, particularly the mapping study and development of a strategic approach for the Fund. The mapping study will provide consolidated information on the major organizations and initiatives working on elephant conservation and management in Africa, which is currently not available. The strategic approach for the AEF is aimed at enhancing its effectiveness in supporting range States in scaling up the impacts of their elephant conservation and management efforts to the regional and continental levels for the achievement of the AEAP. The AEFSC continues to urge governments, donors, IGOs, and NGOs to contribute financial resources to the African Elephant Fund in support of the implementation of the revised AEAP.

MONITORING THE ILLEGAL KILLING OF ELEPHANTS' REPORT

The slope estimate (i.e., third column) indicates the average annual change of PIKE over the period from 2019 to 2023. A negative slope value suggests a downward trend, while a positive value indicates an upward trend. The credible interval represents the range of possible slope values with 95% certainty.

The probability of a downward trend is determined using a linear regression model based on the posterior PIKE estimate (see technical reports published in GitHub repositories, Annex 2). A probability greater than 90% indicates high certainty of a downward trend (or 0% if the slope is positive), while a value around 80%% suggests a probable presence of a trend. Conversely, a probability below 50% suggests uncertainty regarding the existence of a trend.

PIKE Trends Estimated by Unweighted Bayesian GLMM: Continental and Subregional Analysis for Africa over the last five years (2019-2023).

Continental or Subregional Categories	**Time Period (last 5 years)**	**Estimated Slope (annual estimate of PIKE change) (1/year)**	**95% Credible Interval**	**Probability of Negative Trend**	**Level of Certainty Associated with the Reported Trend (i.e., slope)**
Africa	2019-2023	-0.009	[-0.026, -0.007]	86.6%	certain downward
Central Africa	2019-2023	-0.019	[-0.062, -0.023]	81.7%	certain downward
Eastern Africa	2019-2023	-0.007	[-0.026, 0.014]	74.1%	potentially decline
Southern Africa	2019-2023	-0.021	[-0.038, -0.002]	98.9%	highly certain downward
Western Africa	2019-2023	0.026	[- 0.054, 0.107]	26.5%	uncertain of a trend

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MONITORING THE ILLEGAL KILLING OF ELEPHANTS REPORT

The table provides web page links to technical reports and R code used for PIKE trend analysis spanning various years. It lists the methodology conducted using both the original but now outdated LSMEANS approach, and the current Bayesian GLMM method (weighted/unweighted), starting from 2020 onwards. For more in-depth information, please access the corresponding repository web page link.

Date	GitHub Repository name	Content	Repository web page link
Sept 2024	CITESmike2023/GLMM-2024-unweighted-mode	PIKE TREND ANALYSIS (2003-2023) USING A BAYESIAN GENERALISED LINEAR MIXED MODEL APPROACH IN R (unweighted model)	https://github.com/citesmike-code/GLMM-2024-unweighted-model
Sept 2023	CITESmike2023/GLMM-2023-unweighted-mode	PIKE TREND ANALYSIS (2003-2022) USING A BAYESIAN GENERALISED LINEAR MIXED MODEL APPROACH IN R (unweighted model)	https://github.com/CITESmike2023/GLMM-2023-unweighted-model
June 2022	CITESmike2020/ GLMM-2022-unweighted-model	PIKE ANALYSIS FOR THE DURATION 2003-2021 (UNWEIGHTED MODEL)	https://github.com/CITESmike2020/GLMM-2022-unweighted-model
Nov 2021	CITESmike2020/ GLMM-2021-unweighted-model	PIKE TREND ANALYSIS USING A BAYESIAN GENERALISED LINEAR MIXED MODEL APPROACH IN R (unweighted, 2021)	https://github.com/CITESmike2020/GLMM-2021-unweighted-model
Nov 2020	CITESmike2020/ MIKE-GLMM	PIKE TREND ANALYSIS USING A BAYESIAN GENERALISED LINEAR MIXED MODEL APPROACH IN R (full models, 2020)	https://github.com/CITESmike2020/MIKE-GLMM
Aug 2019	CITES-MIKE/ MIKE-LSMEANS	ORIGINAL LSMEANS CODE (DEPRECATED)	https://github.com/CITES-MIKE/MIKE-LSMEANS

TRENDS IN REPORTING OF ETIS DATA ELEMENTS

128. This Annex has been prepared by TRAFFIC.

129. Paragraph 2 of Annex 1 of Res. Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19) specifies a 3-tiered approach to ETIS data collection with 1) minimum information to allow a record to be included in the analysis, 2) additional trade route information, if available, that informs the modelling, and 3) optional information that is used contextually to understand illegal activity. ETIS data forms and explanatory notes associated with each data element have been published in the annual Notification to the Parties calling for the submission of ETIS data (e.g., Notification No. 2024/029), and are available on ETIS Online. Currently, the only data elements that are required relate to the first data tier and include: Source of information; Date of seizure; Agency responsible for seizure; Country of seizure; and Type of ivory and Quantity of ivory or non-ivory elephant specimens.

130. Data exploration during modelling developments implemented in response to the ETIS review and in consultation with the MIKE-ETIS TAG and the CITES Secretariat highlighted several issues with the reporting of data elements relating to seized quantities and reported trade routes. The following summarizes the issues and, based on consultation with the MIKE-ETIS TAG and the CITES Secretariat, proposes improvements to the data collection procedures are included in Annex 1d of this document.

Quantity information

131. Quantity information is an essential data element to include a record in the database as it informs the classification of each seizure into the small, medium, and large raw ivory, and small and large worked ivory classes that are presented in the ETIS trend analyses. Quantity information fields in the ETIS data form include the number of pieces and weight seized for raw and worked ivory, and a common field to assess whether the submitted quantities are based on an estimate or an actual measure.

132. During the development of models to estimate weight and to classify records into ivory and weight classes, an exploration of the quantity information for raw and worked ivory seizures spanning 2008 – 2023 showed that 38% of the ivory records report only number of pieces, 28% report only the weight and only 34% report both quantities. As depicted in Figure 1 (left panel), reporting behavior varies by year and by Party; some Parties almost never report both weight and number of pieces (heatmap, orange colors); other Parties which previously tended to report both types of quantity information (heatmap, blue colors) now rarely do.

133. An *Ivory comment* field collects free text data that provide contextual information on the seized ivory specimen(s) - e.g., whether whole tusks or cut pieces were seized for raw ivory, or whether jewellery or carvings were seized for worked ivory, any noted markings including stockpile labeling or their apparent removal, and any other information that the CITES Management Authority deems to be relevant. An exploration of quantity information by keywords of the ivory comment field suggested that, as expected, the weight-per-piece distribution for raw ivory seizures that indicate whole tusks tends to be higher than for seizures that indicate cut pieces. Similarly for worked ivory, the weight-per-piece of seizures that report carvings tends to be larger than of seizures that indicate jewellery (Figure 2).

134. Weight information is essential to categorize seizures into the weight classes presented in the ETIS trend analyses; hence weight estimation models are used where only the number of pieces are reported. After a review of reporting patterns by the Parties, and upon further consultation with the MIKE-ETIS TAG and the CITES Secretariat at the 20th meeting of the TAG in Kenya on November 2024, it was suggested to propose revisions to the ETIS data collection form to provide the necessary clarity and promote better reporting of quantity information by the Parties. The proposed revisions (see Annex 1d) also incorporate fields available in the Annual Illegal Trade Reports (AITR) database and collection form, to facilitate more accurate weight estimation and promote the interoperability of ETIS and the AITR as envisioned by the Parties in the revisions of Res. Conf. 10.10 and Res. Conf. 11.17 at CoP19 (SC78 Doc. 65.5).

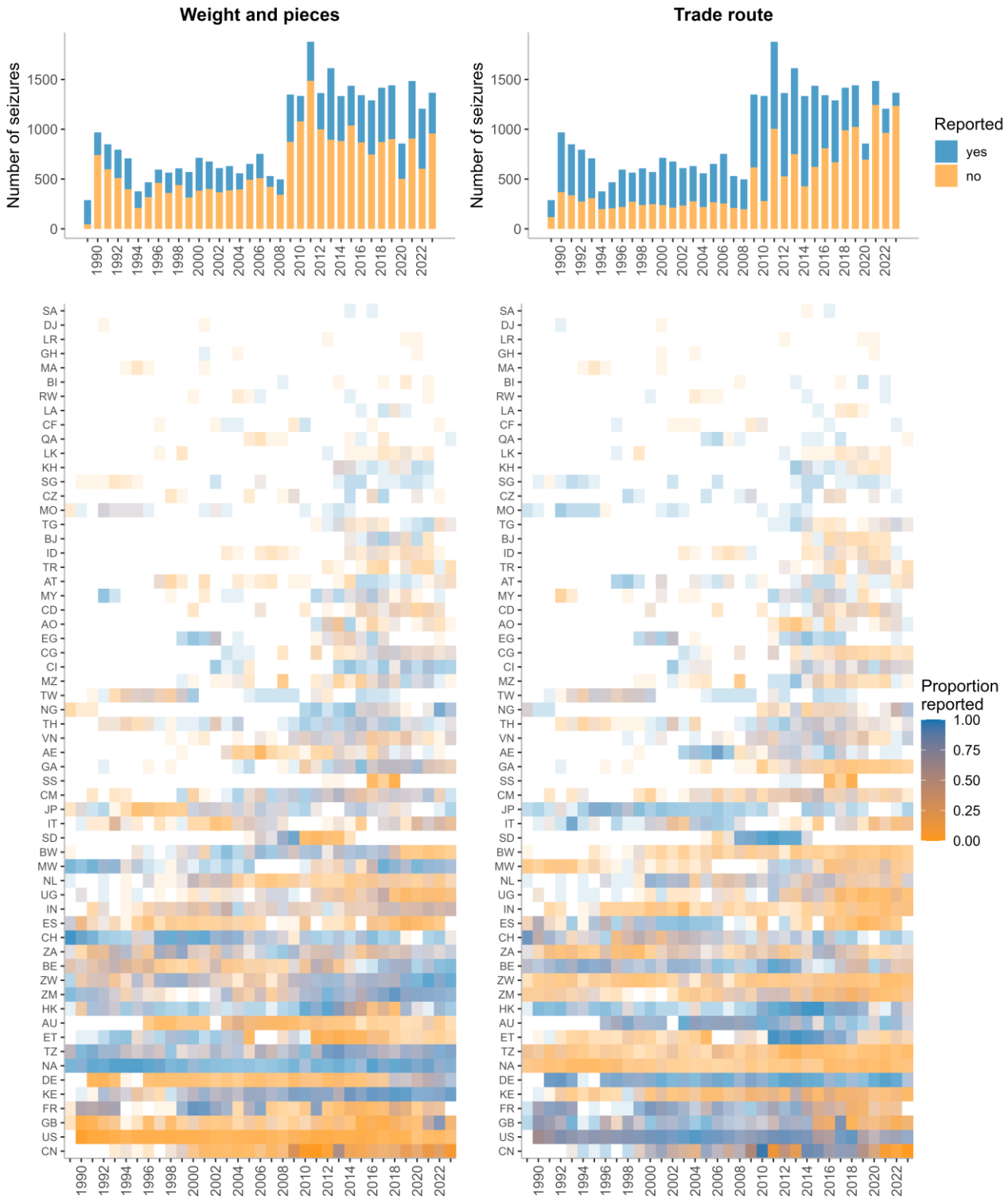

Figure 1. Quantity and trade route reporting behavior over time. The top panels display the yearly numbers of ivory seizures in the ETIS database since 1989, distinguishing whether both weight and pieces are reported (top left), and whether a full or partial trade route is reported (top right). Orange bars indicate seizure records which do not report the information. The heatmaps (bottom panels) show a breakdown by Party; the color scale indicates the proportion of the seizures reported by each Party each year that include both weight and pieces (bottom left) or include a full or partial trade route (bottom right). The orange colors indicate a lower proportion of reporting. Transparency relates to the number of seizures reported, whereby fainter colors indicate a smaller sample size, and white indicates a sample size of zero (i.e., no seizures were reported for the given Party and year). The Parties are arranged from top to bottom in increasing order of their total number of seizures reported across the time range.

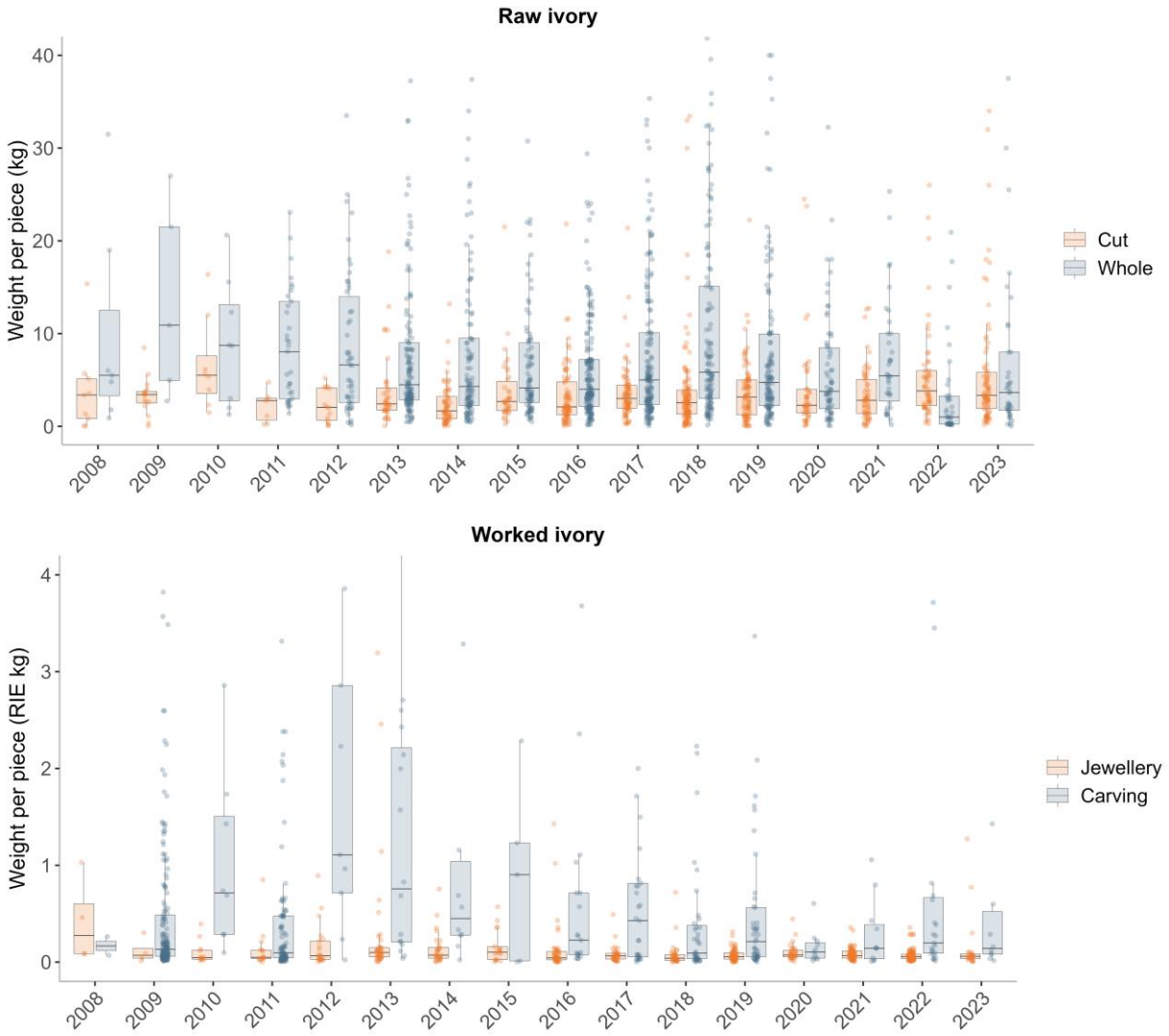

Figure 2. Distributions of weight per piece for seizures reporting both quantity information since 2008. For raw ivory seizures (top panel), the comparison is made between seizures indicating cut pieces (identified as including the words "cut" or "piece" and not the word "whole" in the ivory comment) and seizures indicating whole tusks (identified as including the words "whole" or "tusk" and not the words "cut" or "piece" in the ivory comment). For worked ivory seizures (bottom panel), the comparison is made between seizures indicating jewellery (identified as including at least one keyword[23] relating to jewellery in the ivory comment) and seizures indicating carvings (identified as including the word stem "carv" and not any of the jewellery keywords in the ivory comment).

Trade route information

135. Figure 1 also highlights the issues with the reporting of trade route information. The top right panel of Figure 1 shows an increasing trend in the number and proportion of ETIS seizure records which do not report any trade route. Similarly to the reporting behavior of quantity information, there is variability among the Parties, with some Parties showing declining trends over time in the proportion of their seizures that include trade route information (bottom right panel of Figure 1). Trade route data are essential for the ETIS modelling as they inform the calculation of the law enforcement ratio which is used in the bias-adjustment modelling of seizure rate. Additionally, a summary of the trade chain links of most affected Parties is often reported in the ETIS report to CoP. Because of the importance of trade route information to the ETIS analyses, and after consultation with the MIKE-ETIS TAG and the CITES Secretariat, it is suggested to include a question in the ETIS data form to prompt Parties to indicate whether a trade route is available or known before linking to the trade route fields for *country(ies) of origin, country(ies) of export, country(ies) of transit, and country of destination*.

[23] *Based on keyword frequencies, the following keywords were used: "jewellery", "jewelry", "bracelet", "necklace", "bangle", "ring", "earring", and "pendant".*

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO THE ETIS DATA COLLECTION FORMS

This Annex provides a proposed revised ETIS data collection form which contains the following changes:

a) an opportunity for Parties to indicate whether or not trade route information is known (question 6);

b) more detailed quantity information fields to allow differentiation between raw and worked ivory types, as well as to assess which quantity is an estimate (question 10); and

c) additional fields (questions 19 – 21) to enhance the interoperability between ETIS and the CITES Secretariat's Annual Illegal Trade Report and allow for data sharing as per paragraph 27.g of Res. Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19) and paragraph 4 of Res. Conf. 11.17 (Rev. CoP19).

Proposed new data collection form (to be reflected similarly on ETIS Online) for consideration by MIKE-ETIS Subgroup and the Parties:

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA

Please fill in one form for each individual seizure. Completed forms should be returned to etis@traffic.org or info@cites.org

This seizure case will be reviewed and entered to the ETIS database by TRAFFIC. For guidance on the ETIS data collection form please consult the Explanatory Notes available with the latest CITES Notification for ETIS data collection. For any further questions or to request training, please contact TRAFFIC at: etis@traffic.org

Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS) Data Collection Form

☐ Please tick with an "x" to indicate if the seizure record should **not** be made available to the members of the International Consortium on Combatting Wildlife Crime (ICCWC) for global research and analysis (this applies only to this seizure record).

* *Required information*

1. **Date of Report to ETIS:** Day_____ Month_____ Year _____

2. **Data Provider's reference code**_____

3. **Source of data***_____
_____

Other sources_____
_____

4. **Date of seizure*** Day_____ Month_____ Year*_____

5. **Agency(ies) responsible for the seizure***_____
_____

Other Agency(ies) _____
_____

6. **Location of discovery***
Place_____
City, Province, State _____Country*_____

7. **Trade route information:**

Is trade route known?* (NOTE: new question relating to trade routes)

□ **Yes** □ **No**

If Yes, please indicate:

A. **Country(ies) of origin**_____

B. **Country(ies) of export/re-export** _____

C. **Country(ies) of transit**_____

D. **Country of destination/import**___ _____

8. **Elephant species** (Please tick): oAfrican oAsian oUnknown

9. **Ivory type* and quantity* (At least one, number of pieces or weight, is required) NOTE: revised quantity information to better differentiate between types of raw and worked ivory and provide explicit "is this an estimate" question to each section - no. of pieces and weight (previously only one such question so could not differentiate if for pieces or weight)**

A. ***Raw ivory***:

Whole tusk Number of pieces _____ Weight (kg)_____
(TUS) Specify: oEstimate oActual oEstimate oActual
o Tusks present, but amount unknown

Cut pieces Number of pieces _____ Weight (kg)_____
(IVP) Specify: oEstimate oActual oEstimate oActual
o Cut pieces present, but amount unknown

Mixed Number of pieces _____ Weight (kg)_____
(TUS/IVP) Specify: oEstimate oActual oEstimate oActual
o Mixed pieces present, but amount unknown

B. ***Worked ivory***:

Jewellery Number of pieces _____ Weight (kg)_____
(IJW) Specify: oEstimate oActual oEstimate oActual
o Jewellery present, but amount unknown

Carving Number of pieces _____ Weight (kg)_____
(IVC) Specify: oEstimate oActual oEstimate oActual
o Carving present, but amount unknown

Piano keys Number of pieces _____ Weight (kg)_____
(KEY) Specify: oEstimate oActual oEstimate oActual
o Piano keys present, but amount unknown

Further comments on ivory seized_____
_____
_____

o Forensic examination (Tick if undertaken)

10. **Non-ivory elephant products* (At least one, number of pieces or weight, is required)**

Elephant hide/skin: Number of pieces _____ Weight (kg) _____

Manufactured hide products: Number of pieces _____ Weight (kg) _____

Description of manufactured hide products_____

Other elephant products: Number of pieces_____ Weight (kg)_____

Description of other elephant products_____

11. **Details of other contraband seized**_____

_____

12. **Estimated value of seized elephant products in country of seizure**_____

_____

13. **Type of activity(ies) (please tick)**

oIllegal killing oExport oTransit oImport oOffer for sale
oSale oPossession o Other (Specify) _____

14. **Mode of transport** (Please tick) oAir oSea oLand oPost oOther (Specify)

_____

15. **Method of concealment** _____

_____

16. **Method(s) of detection** (Please tick) o Routine inspection o Targeting
o Investigation o X-ray o Intelligence o Sniffer dog
o Other (Specify)_____

17. **Nationality of suspect(s)**_____

_____

(NOTE: Questions 18– 20 included to facilitate interoperability with AITR)

18. **Law under which charges were brought**_____

_____

19. **Sanction**_____

_____

20. **Disposal of confiscated specimens**_____

_____

21. **Additional comments**_____

_____

_____

Name and position of person completing this form_____

Name of organisation represented_____

_____ **Date**_____