



# UGANDA

PARTY TO CITES (1991) | UNTOC (2005) | UNCAC (2004) MEMBER OF INTERPOL | WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANISATION | LUSAKA AGREEMENT TASK FORCE | HORN OF AFRICA WILDLIFE ENFORCEMENT NETWORK

## SOURCE • TRANSIT

3.67 TONNES  
IVORY SEIZED  
SINCE 2010

IVORY



## TRANSIT

15 RHINO HORNS  
SEIZED SINCE 2010

RHINO



## TRANSIT

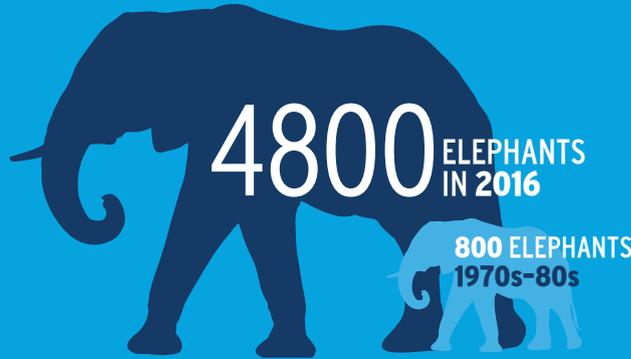
OVER 2 TONNES  
PANGOLIN  
SCALES SEIZED  
SINCE 2010

PANGOLIN



## GOV STOCKPILE THEFT

1200 kg IVORY  
MISSING  
2014



## HUNTING TROPHIES LEGAL EXPORT CHANNEL

LEGALLY EXPORTED

7 TONNES  
PANGOLIN  
SCALES

## UGANDA | INVESTING IN ENFORCEMENT

### KEY INDICATORS<sup>1</sup>

INTERPOL National Central Bureau has officer(s) dedicated to investigating wildlife crime

Multi-agency enforcement mechanism established to investigate wildlife crime

Financial intelligence unit includes wildlife crime on their portfolios

Assets and proceeds of crime seized in relation to wildlife crime cases since 2014

DNA analysis used in wildlife crime investigations since 2014

Government monitoring of online wildlife trade

Part of bilateral or multilateral agreements that specifically tackle transnational wildlife crime<sup>2</sup>

Participated in INTERPOL operations on wildlife crime since 2014

Participated in regional/international enforcement operations on wildlife crime since 2014<sup>3</sup>

Applied or declared intention to apply ICCWC Wildlife and Forest Crime Analytic Toolkit

wildlife crime database at Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), which is not yet operational; various training workshops for UWA, URA and police, including training in controlled deliveries and recovery of proceeds of wildlife crime conducted by UNODC. Lack of capacity in some areas continues to be a challenge.

- UWA has established an **intelligence unit** with 80 staff members deployed specifically to curb illegal wildlife trade and given training in areas such as advanced intelligence, use of online tools for tackling wildlife crime and crime scene management.
- An **inter-agency task force** comprising Uganda Police, URA, UWA, INTERPOL, Civil Aviation Authority and the Chieftaincy of Military Intelligence was established in 2013. While the task force has been involved in coordinated joint operations, it does not appear to include prosecutors or the judiciary in its membership, a major gap in ongoing efforts to increase prosecutions and secure better court outcomes in wildlife crime cases.
- UWA staff are part of a **Joint Security Team** at Entebbe International Airport, which has reportedly led to an increase in seizures of wildlife items.
- URA has established a **specialised unit focusing on wildlife enforcement** and is undertaking steps to include a course on CITES and wildlife enforcement in the Customs training curriculum.
- Uganda is participating in **regional wildlife trade enforcement initiatives**, in particular

collaborating with Kenyan agencies through INTERPOL and the Lusaka Agreement Task Force, and has shared information relating to ivory trafficking with Malaysia, Singapore and Sri Lanka.

- An MoU was adopted in 2015 between UWA, URA, Uganda Police Force and the UNODC through which Uganda formally joined the **UNODC-WCO Container Control Programme**. The Programme seeks to establish structures to minimise the risk of maritime containers being exploited for trafficking of various illicit goods, such as wildlife products.

### BEST PRACTICE

DNA samples from all ivory seizures of more than 500kg have been sent to the University of Washington for analysis. DNA samples from rhino horn seizures have also been taken for analysis.



ABOVE: MOBILE SCANNER IN OPERATION, UGANDA © EIA

### MAIN OBSERVATIONS

- Recent **investments to strengthen capacity** have included six sniffer dogs donated by NGOs to be deployed at key border points, including Entebbe International Airport, where they have led to several ivory seizures; a mobile scanner unit deployed by the Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) to intercept ivory; establishment of a

# UGANDA | ENSURING EFFECTIVE LEGAL DETERRENTS

## KEY INDICATORS<sup>1</sup>

Legislation treats wildlife crime as a 'serious crime' as per UNTOC, ie, the maximum sanction applicable is not less than 4 years

Sentencing guidelines for wildlife crime have been disseminated

Known convictions for wildlife crime since 2014

Charges brought under ancillary legislation such as anti-money laundering laws in wildlife crime cases since 2014

Has anti-corruption unit

Known convictions for corruption related to illegal wildlife trade cases since 2014

**25/100** TI Corruption Perceptions Index 2015

## MAIN OBSERVATIONS

- Uganda has recently **reviewed its Wildlife Act**; an amendment bill for tabling in Parliament was approved by Cabinet in early 2016. In May 2016, President Museveni indicated that the bill is a priority and would be passed in 2016. The amended Act will provide for more deterrent sentences, including sentences of up to 20 years, for poaching and wildlife trafficking and will

clarify the responsibilities of various agencies involved in addressing wildlife crime. A significant achievement of the Bill is that it is expected to close a major loophole in the previous legislation by including possession of ivory and rhino horn as an offence.

- **Orders and regulations to enable CITES provisions** to be incorporated into domestic legislation have also been developed, including the Uganda Wildlife (Powers of Search, Arrest, Possession and Use of Firearms) Regulations, 2015 and are expected to be passed following enactment of the amended Wildlife Act.
- **Judicial sensitisation** to wildlife crime has been identified as an urgent necessity to secure the best outcomes from prosecutions for wildlife crime.
- Uganda has **no centralised database** of court records and outcomes.
- The Government signed a **10-year MoU with the NGO Natural Resource Conservation Network (NRCN)** to delegate authority to prosecute wildlife trade cases. This has greatly increased prosecution rates for wildlife crime.
- Uganda has recently finalised the establishment of a **specialised fast-track court** which will hear wildlife crime cases.

- **Corruption is a major impediment** to the effective enforcement of wildlife law in Uganda and members of the police and judiciary in particular are perceived as corrupt. In May 2016, an officer of the Special Forces Command was arrested for ivory trafficking, after which the NRCN alleged that security forces in Uganda were preventing exposure of officers engaged in illegal wildlife trade.

## CHALLENGE

The urgent need to harmonise laws and increase judicial awareness of wildlife crime was highlighted by an ivory trafficking case. Following a seizure of elephant ivory in Uganda, the owner of the illegal cargo and target of an arrest warrant exploited legal loopholes to absurd effect, claiming he was shipping ivory from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and only transiting Uganda, and was therefore not in breach of Customs law.

He was able to successfully petition the High Court to order the release of the ivory for onward export, in contravention of CITES. The return of the ivory has been suspended pending an appeal of the High Court's judgment and parallel legal proceedings in the trial court.

# UGANDA | ERADICATING DEMAND

## KEY INDICATORS<sup>1</sup>

Prohibits trade in elephant ivory

Prohibits trade in parts/products of Asian big cats

Stockpiled ivory has been inventoried

Destroyed ivory stockpile since 2014

Destroyed other wildlife stockpiles since 2014

No known incidents of thefts of government-owned wildlife stocks

Government-led initiatives to reduce demand for wildlife products implemented since 2014

## MAIN OBSERVATIONS

- In November 2014, a **loss of 1,200kg of ivory from Government stockpiles** was reported, detected during a routine inspection. A secure ivory strong room has since been built at UWA, equipped with CCTV.

- Following the ivory stockpile theft, UWA in collaboration with the NGO Stop Ivory has completed a full **inventory of its ivory stockpile** and has developed an electronic inventory database. The Government has since applied for funding to inventory ivory stockpiles held by police and the URA.
- As a signatory to the **Elephant Protection Initiative (EPI)**, Uganda has committed to closing its domestic ivory markets and observing a minimum of a 10-year moratorium on all international ivory trade.
- In collaboration with NGOs, posters and leaflets aimed at **raising awareness** of wildlife trade have been developed and displayed at Entebbe International Airport and other locations. In collaboration with WWF, the UWA developed a series of radio advertisements aimed at raising awareness on illegal wildlife trade.

- UWA has dedicated **Community Conservation Rangers** who run projects in communities surrounding protected areas aimed at building support for conservation.

## CHALLENGE

In June 2015, the High Court in Uganda dismissed a suit filed by the NGO Greenwatch Uganda, which had challenged the export permit issued by the UWA allowing the export of 7.3 tonnes of pangolin scales.

Uganda has also reported to the CITES Secretariat on a pilot project to commercially breed pangolins for trade. This raises concerns about the impact of such a project because pangolins do not breed well in captivity and captive breeding facilities for pangolins may be used as a front for laundering wild specimens.

Further, Uganda has also been implicated in pangolin trafficking; for example, in January 2015, it was reported that two tonnes of pangolin scales were seized in Entebbe International Airport.