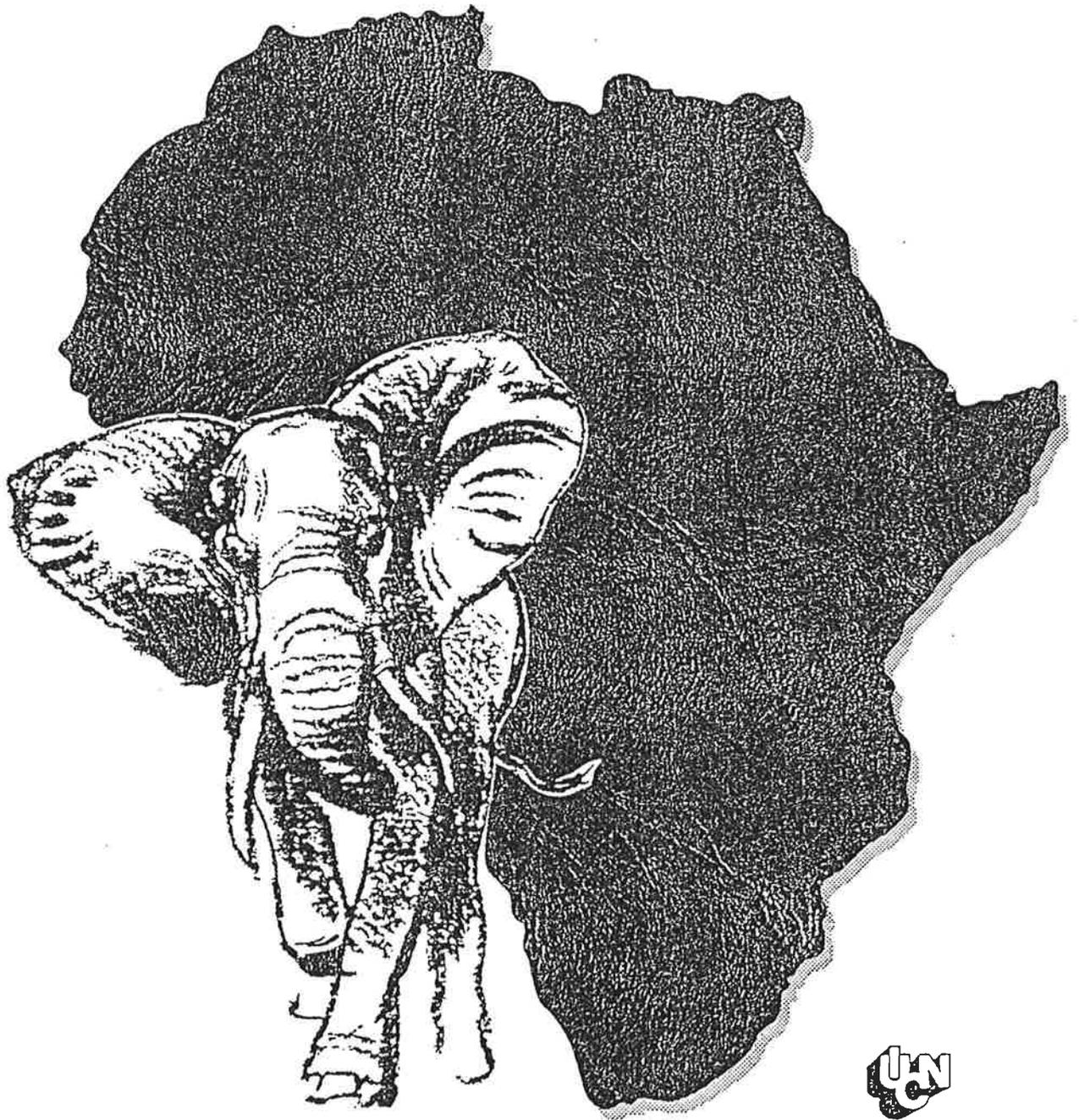


# AFRICA'S ELEPHANTS



1990



The World Conservation Union  
l'Alliance mondiale pour la nature

### **Acknowledgements**

IUCN wishes to thank Marcel Alers, Richard Barnes, Allard Blom, Ban Imary Daboulaye, François Lamarque, Henri Nsanjama, Joyce Poole, Gerard Sournia, Jean-Paul Thomassey, and Souleymane Zeba for their contributions towards the four regional papers on which this paper is based; the World Conservation Monitoring Centre and TRAFFIC prepared the Ivory trade paper; and, Mark Infield compiled this paper.

### **IUCN also wishes to acknowledge:**

*Front page elephant illustration:* Drawn and donated by Maggie Redfern.

*Design and graphics:* LIV Communications.

*Maps and population figures:* EEC/WWF African Elephant Programme in collaboration with GRID/UNEP, AERSG and ELSA.

*Photo credits:* p. 2 clockwise from upper left: WWF/F. Vollmar, WWF/Prof. U. Rahm, WWF/F. Vollmar, WWF/A. da Cruz; p. 15 WWF/Norman Myers.

"Africa — A Vast and Diverse Continent" adapted from World Eagle, Inc. 1981.

# FOREWORD

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Africa's elephants inspire wonder and awe. Yet their future depends on decisions taken today. The elephant is a resource of high potential value that can benefit all the people of Africa, and yet the greed of a few and the lack of concern of the majority threatens to destroy them.

The question of use and abuse forms the kernel of our struggle to come to terms with the conservation of the world's natural resources. Conflicting emotions arise from the desire to conserve wildlife for its aesthetic value, and from the need to make pragmatic use of it, as human societies have done through the centuries.

Not until we have found the balance between use and abuse will mankind preserve the natural wonders of the world around him. If we are unable to recognise this balance of values for the elephant, what hope remains for the smaller, less dramatic, but equally important animals and plants that share our planet.

IUCN — The World Conservation Union

*We are awakening... Africa is dying... her environment has been plundered, overexploited and neglected.*

Mrs. Rahab W. Mwatha  
Nairobi, 1986

# INTRODUCTION

African elephant populations have declined dramatically over the last two decades, largely due to illegal killing for ivory. Yet the elephant is of immense importance. It is a symbol of Africa and has become a flagship species for conservation; it is an integral part of many of Africa's habitats and plays a major role in the maintenance of ecosystems and biodiversity; and it has great direct and indirect economic value.

This meeting has three major goals:

- to explain the status of the African elephant, indicating the general requirements for its conservation;
- to reach a common understanding of the various needs and strategies to conserve African elephants; and
- to secure commitments of significant new funding from donor nations for elephant conservation projects;

The approach taken in examining elephant status was adopted to reflect the magnitude of the problem, the great size and diversity of the African continent and the reality of clear regional differences. Important biological variations, both genetic and behavioural, between elephant populations are also reflected in this way.

Four regional papers document the problems and priorities identified by wildlife departments within the regions with respect to the ecological, social, economic and political situations. They also show the variation within and between regions, and the capacity of governments to respond to conservation needs in general and the requirements of the species in particular.

The papers illustrate several different yet legitimate approaches to conserving elephants. The selection of one over another is an internal matter for each state, largely dictated by habitat, cultural norms, local conditions and national objectives. For example, an approach selected in Kenya, with its savannah elephants, serious shortage of agricultural land, and important tourist industry, is not applicable in Zaire, with its largely unstudied forest elephants, great

expanses of sparsely inhabited forest, agrarian economy, and relatively small tourist industry.

Nevertheless, it is clear that across all regions, immediate improvements in the protection of elephants are needed, which require significant increases in institutional support combined with new and inventive ways of approaching conservation problems.

The long-term threats to elephants are complex and to safeguard the elephant and its habitat will require action at fundamental social, political and economic levels. Traditional approaches to conservation have largely depended on science backed up by force-of-arms. Long-term conservation, however, requires that local communities take a much greater role in conserving their own resources. To bring this about we must break with tradition and draw on expertise from a wide array of disciplines. Economics, agriculture, tourism, investment, development assistance, wildlife and land management, health and human welfare, and education are all parts of this larger conservation commitment.

Though most elephant populations can be protected from illegal killing given adequate investment and support, unless the conflict between growing human populations and elephants is addressed, the majority will be lost. The conflict is largely stimulated by competition for land and resources and its resolution will require a multi-disciplinary approach.

- Efforts must be made to stabilise human populations.
- Incentives for community involvement in elephant conservation should be identified and implemented and the necessary education provided.
- Changes in legal structures governing use of wildlife resources will be required to facilitate development of incentives.
- Government and private development of elephant-related industries should be encouraged to provide tangible economic benefits.

- Fundamental questions of land-use planning must be addressed.
- The majority of range states will need to improve their management capacity radically if they are to conserve their elephants.
- better equipment, higher staffing levels, adequate training and remuneration, and improved departmental infrastructure with substantially increased budgets; and
- support from non-governmental organisations and the public within range states.

Such initiatives will not, however, be quickly carried out. In the meantime, immediate requirements for protecting elephants are necessary. These will vary depending upon whether they are small populations in small protected areas or large populations spread over great expanses; whether they are in open savannah or closed forest habitats; whether they are threatened by organised poaching gangs or subsistence hunting; or because they are a threat to local agriculture. In each case, however, it is essential that greater commitments be made by both range state governments and donor nations.

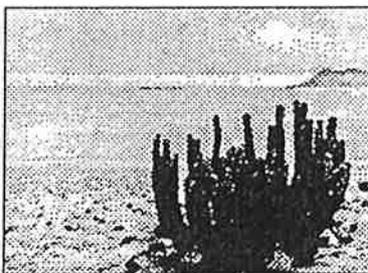
Success will require:

- enhanced political commitment at the national and local level;

Making the required improvements will be costly and both range states and donor countries must ask themselves, "How much is an elephant worth?" There are great benefits to be derived from elephant conservation through tourism, consumptive use, the maintenance of ecosystems, and as an educational and scientific resource. There are, however, significant costs, both in terms of management inputs and lost opportunities. These costs will vary between states and regions, as will the level of investment that can be made by range state governments and the private sector. Nevertheless, it is important to focus on expanding existing commitments, identify new sources of funds, and have the political courage to meet the conservation needs of the elephant today.



### Africa: A vast, diverse continent



Total area of above countries: 30,220,210 sq km  
 Total area of Africa: 30,321,130 sq km

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# HISTORY

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The African elephant once occurred throughout the continent, and conservative estimates put its numbers in the tens of millions. Today the elephant occupies little more than 25% of its former range, and numbers fewer than 610,000. What has caused this serious decline?

Three main factors — hunting, increasing human populations, and desertification of the Sahel — are implicated and continue to influence elephant distributions today.

Hunting for ivory in particular led to the decimation of elephant populations in Southern Africa during the 18th and 19th centuries, and in West Africa during the 19th and 20th centuries. The East African herds would have been similarly affected had not legislation introduced at the beginning of this century, and the collapse in demand for ivory following the First World War, afforded them a degree of protection. Only the elephants in the forests of Central Africa remained relatively unscathed during this time.

During the middle part of this century many elephant populations staged a dramatic recovery. In Zimbabwe, for example, elephant numbers rose from less than 5,000 in the 1900s to over 52,000 today. Elephants did not recover in all areas, however. In West Africa, rapidly expanding human populations occupied areas left vacant by the elephant's demise, preventing their recovery. Today these elephants exist in small, isolated populations surrounded by humans and their farms.

Large-scale killing of elephants began again in the early 1970s when the demand for ivory increased. Illegal killing spread rapidly from Kenya through East, Central and West Africa, and finally to parts of Southern Africa. Uganda's total population fell from over 17,600 to 1,600 between 1973 and 1989. Zaire's estimated population fell 70% from 376,000 to 112,000 between 1981 and 1989. The Luangwa Valley population in Zambia was reduced from 56,000 animals in 1973 to 20,000 by 1987.

The first continent-wide evaluation of elephant numbers was carried out in 1976 and concluded that there were an estimated

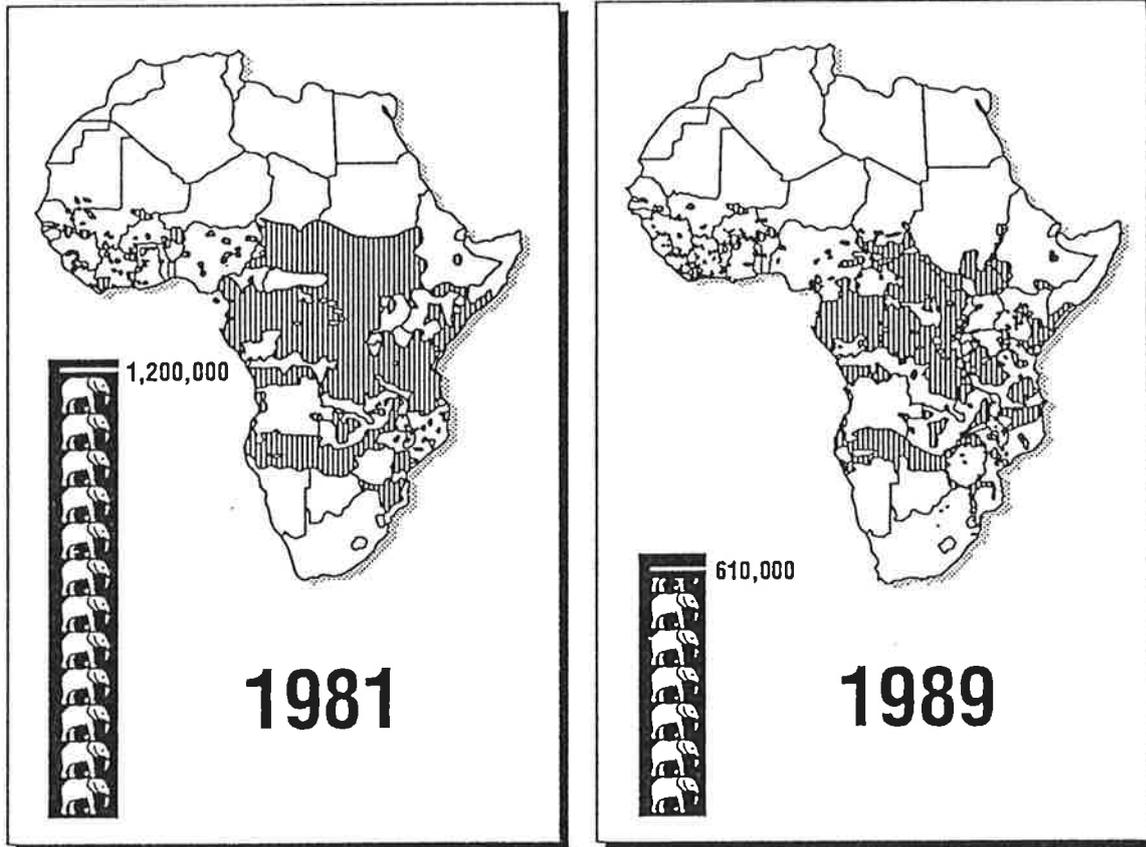
1.3 million animals. The most recent assessment in 1989, based on more rigorous data, estimates the population to be 610,000 animals.

These alarming declines foreshadowed the decision taken at the seventh Conference of the Parties to CITES to transfer the species to Appendix I, banning all international commercial trade in ivory and other elephant products. However, two important points should be borne in mind. **First, Africa's elephants should not be viewed as a single population.** Herd declines have not been universally experienced and several countries have secure, stable or expanding elephant populations. **Second, 610,000 elephants is a considerable population.** Indeed, the most pressing question from an African perspective today is, "How many animals can be supported and protected?" Though it is correct to say that many local and some national populations are severely threatened, it is incorrect to suggest that the species as a whole is endangered.

How was it that despite strict legislation in many African countries and the large numbers of parks and reserves, elephant populations were so severely reduced?

- Many of Africa's governments were unable to invest sufficient funds in the protection of elephants, as their limited financial resources were committed to improving standards of education, health and nutrition for their people.
- Excessive global demand for ivory, driving the unsustainable levels of illegal killing of elephants, reflected the lack of real concern amongst ivory-consuming nations.
- The profits to be made in illegal ivory were great. A poor rural farmer might make six months' income in one poaching trip. An official could receive a sizeable supplement to his salary by easing the import or export of ivory shipments. The real money, however, was made by dealers, middlemen and expatriate entrepreneurs, who saw the chance of making massive profits from illegal as well as legal ivory trade.

# Elephant Range and Numbers



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# EAST AFRICA

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## **Elephant Status**

East Africa has suffered perhaps more than any other region from illegal hunting. Over the last two decades Kenya, Sudan and Tanzania have lost over 80% of their elephants whilst Somalia and Uganda have lost over 90%.

The East African population today makes up approximately 18% of the continental total.

## **Priority Government Concerns**

East Africa's dominant concerns centre around the control of illegal hunting. Though conflicts between people and elephants over land and resources are likely to intensify in the future, as East Africa's population increases, today there are still great expanses of wild, largely unsettled land. This land could support many elephants but, as a result of uncontrolled killing, is largely devoid of them.

Poaching threatens tourism, an important industry and source of foreign currency in the region. Poachers and bandits are indistinguishable and have operated with relative impunity in certain areas. One or two highly publicised attacks on tourists in Kenya have caused great concern as tourism provides direct financial support to wildlife departments. As elephants are a major tourist attraction, there is a real danger that their loss will reduce the attractiveness of the region for tourists.

## **Current Initiatives**

Kenya, Tanzania and Somalia strongly supported the initiative to transfer the elephant to Appendix I of CITES. They have taken a strong public stance against the sale of Ivory, and have made determined efforts to stop the illegal killing of elephants in their countries.

The use of the army and air force to combat poachers in Kenya clearly demonstrates the government's commitment. Kenya's gesture of burning 12 tonnes of Ivory in July, 1989 focussed world attention on the severe problems of protecting elephants in East Africa. Tanzania's Operation Uhai involving

2,000 men in a US\$1.3 million blitz against poachers and illegal dealers at all levels led to over 1,500 arrests and clearly signalled the government's intention to improve the protection of their elephants.

## **Future Initiatives**

In Kenya and Tanzania, initiatives revolve around increasing tourism and improving its management. This will make additional funds available to conserve and protect elephants. This is not a viable option for the near future in Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan where wars persist, but may become so in Uganda.

There is a growing awareness of the importance of enlisting the support of local communities in conservation, both to assist in gaining control of poaching and to ensure the long-term survival of elephants. To this end, increasing emphasis will be placed on both education and extension activities. Conservation education programmes have been important for many years in the region, operating through wildlife clubs and schools.

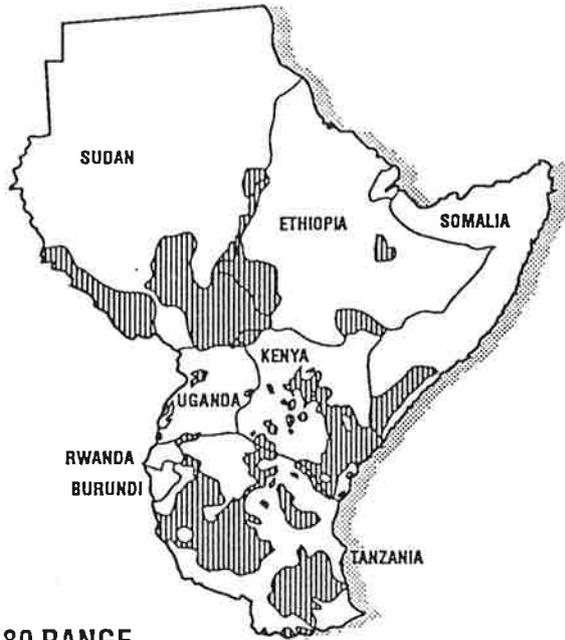
Conservation extension is set to become a major activity in the future. In Kenya, for example, one quarter of all park entrance fees will go directly to local communities. It is expected that the large sums involved will enable a significant impact on the development of poor rural communities and thus on attitudes towards conservation in general and elephants in particular. This approach to conservation is not new to the region. The establishment of the Amboseli National Park in 1974 was carried out after lengthy negotiations with local communities who were guaranteed a range of economic and social benefits. That these were not forthcoming in the final analysis says more about the execution of the plan than the original intention.

## **Funding for Elephant Conservation**

The ability of the region's governments to invest adequate funds in elephant conservation varies greatly, largely in relation to the level of earnings from tourists. Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda have created provisions to ensure that significant proportions of the revenue earned from

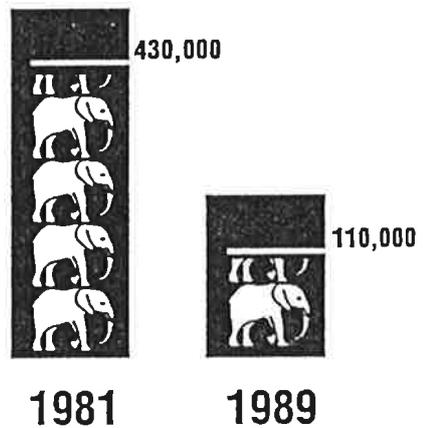
wildlife is reinvested in the management of conservation areas. For example, both Kenya and Tanzania have estimated their local requirements for conservation (with an emphasis on elephants) at well over US\$100 million per country over the next decade. Projected 1991 earnings from national park fees in Kenya are US\$9.5 million whilst Tanzania estimates annual revenues from the wildlife sector at US\$4.5 million.

In Uganda, Sudan, Somalia and Ethiopia the situation is considerably worse. Past and present armed conflicts prevent much tourism, whilst at the same time making the protection of elephants more difficult. Drought and famine have worsened the economic position. In Uganda, for example, revenue earned from tourism in 1989 was negligible (US\$90,000) and the National Parks had to rely on less than US\$230,000 to fund their operations.



1989 RANGE

## East Africa



# SOUTHERN AFRICA

## Elephant Status

The status of elephants in Southern Africa varies greatly between countries. In Zambia, for example, the population has declined from 160,000 to 32,000 since 1981, whilst the populations of Zimbabwe and Botswana have been rising steadily by 5% per annum. Little is known of the status of elephants in Angola and Mozambique due to the long-running civil wars in these countries. The South African population has remained stable and under tight management control.

The Southern Africa population makes up approximately 33% of the continental total.

## Priority Government Concerns

Wildlife conservation and management issues are coordinated on a regional basis through the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), though South Africa and Namibia are not currently included. SADCC policy on conservation emphasises the importance of integrating development and the sustainable use of natural resources and is central to the southern African approach to elephant conservation.

The dominant concern of the region's wildlife departments is the development of mechanisms to ensure that the conservation of the species benefits the people. That the region can focus attention on this objective indicates that illegal killing, though a serious problem in some states, has not assumed the proportions that it has in other regions and is not viewed as a serious threat to their elephants.

Southern Africa has a long tradition of active wildlife management. As a result, the expertise required for elephant management and the interest in interventive management is more developed than elsewhere on the continent. Following the work of early pioneers, Zimbabwe developed a model for community wildlife conservation.

In the past, conservation in Zimbabwe, as elsewhere, invariably resulted in alienating communities from the wildlife resource. This

meant that wildlife had to be heavily protected by the Government within conservation areas. Meanwhile, development of agriculture and animal husbandry, often in marginal lands, was resulting in the destruction of wildlife. Zimbabwe's "natural capital" was being lost for short-term financial gains.

Operation Campfire was designed to overcome both of these problems and proposes that local communities conserve their own wildlife. The communities are given decision-making power over the resource, the capacity to make rational use of wildlife, and the technical expertise to manage the resource on a sustainable basis. As a result, they value wildlife, retain and manage it on their land, and are more receptive to government initiatives.

The model has stimulated considerable interest throughout the region, and in other parts of the continent. Projects based on similar principles are being implemented or are being developed in Zambia, Malawi and Botswana.

## Current Initiatives

National conservation efforts are being concentrated in two areas.

First, commitment to combatting poaching is being strengthened in areas where it is currently weak, for example in Zambia and Botswana, and maintained at a high level in Zimbabwe and South Africa. Increasing use is being made of the community game ranger concept to reduce poaching.

Second, projects to enable local communities to benefit from the presence of elephants on their land are being implemented in Zimbabwe and Zambia and are at a high level of planning in Botswana and Malawi. Direct utilization of elephants to produce meat, skin, and ivory are important elements in Zimbabwe's conservation strategy and represent the tangible results of changes in legislation initiated twenty years ago.

Such projects are possible in countries such as Zimbabwe and Botswana, with expanding elephant populations, both inside and

outside protected areas. Both countries intend to achieve overall reductions in numbers which will produce considerable quantities of valuable products. Culling operations are accompanied by strategies to make the fullest use of the resources produced.

### Future Initiatives

National priorities in elephant conservation will be influenced by SADCC policies reflected in *Natural Resources and the Environment — Policies and Development Strategy*, published in 1988. This policy emphasises that economic development and environmental protection must maintain an ecological balance as a precondition for development in all sectors of the economy.

To achieve this goal, improvements must be made in monitoring elephant numbers and trends, particularly in Zambia, Mozambique and Angola. Increases in trained personnel, improved wildlife legislation, and greater environmental education at all levels of

society are also necessary. Areas in particular need of assistance and improvement include the Caprivi in Namibia, and much of Zambia, Mozambique and Angola.

An activity of particular significance in the region, and dictated by their approach to conservation, is the establishment of the Southern Africa ivory market.

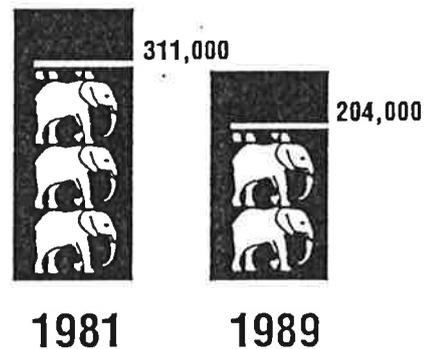
### Funding for Elephant Conservation

Expenditure on elephant conservation varies greatly between countries in the region. The Zimbabwe Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management, for example, expects a budget of US\$21 million to cover annual recurrent expenses for managing the country's wildlife estate. Expenditure in Mozambique is less than US\$500,000, and in Angola is believed to be minimal. Botswana will dramatically increase its expenditure on both protection and management of elephants during 1990.



1989 RANGE

## Southern Africa



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# CENTRAL AFRICA

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## Elephant Status

Central Africa's elephants escaped significant reduction over the centuries but have not escaped the most recent wave of illegal killing. Populations are believed to have declined by a third over the last decade. It should be noted, however, that the vast area of forest in which elephants range (1.75 million km<sup>2</sup>) makes estimating populations extremely difficult.

Today, the Central African population makes up approximately 43% of the continental total.

## Priority Government Concerns

The conservation of the region's elephants is intimately linked with the conservation of Central Africa's forests. Here the objective of conserving elephants is directly related to activities that will conserve biodiversity, soil, water catchments and timber resources.

The *La Lope Declaration*, made in 1988, states the intention of the seven countries of the region to direct thirty percent of the sixth European Development Fund's allocation to projects concerned with the conservation and management of the region's forests. This will greatly enhance elephant conservation. Well-managed forestry can improve the habitat for elephants, and the region has the potential to become Africa's greatest elephant stronghold. At present, however, demand for foreign currency to support development and service debts is resulting in deforestation for timber and cash crop production. The elephant range is being rapidly reduced, whilst new roads have led to increases in illegal killing.

Illegal killing is now a major threat in many of the region's countries. Highly organised gangs of poachers have greatly reduced the region's savannah elephants and are already operating in the forests. Though each country has an established wildlife department these have been inadequately funded and have been unable to do more than preserve the integrity of parks and forest reserves. Ill-equipped anti-poaching units have been unable to hinder either the subsistence hunting activities of the past or the activities of poaching gangs today. It must be

recognised, however, that the great expanses of forest create special problems for controlling illegal killing.

## Current Initiatives

Initiatives today are largely restricted to maintaining government presence in national parks and forest reserves. Elephant management is not attempted and anti-poaching initiatives are rarely carried out in the field. There are exceptions to this general picture, for example, Garamba National Park in Zaire where efforts to safeguard the last remaining northern white rhinos have resulted in improved infrastructure and staff morale and have brought elephant poaching to a halt. In the Korup National Park in Cameroon, project activities have raised the profile of conservation and significantly reduced elephant poaching.

## Future Initiatives

Two major lines of initiative are required to conserve the region's elephants.

Firstly, wildlife departments must significantly improve their capacity to protect and manage elephants. If this is achieved there is great potential to earn revenue from elephants. Though tourism is unlikely to play a major role, due to the unsuitable forest environment, controlled harvesting could provide an important source of foreign currency and create jobs for rural communities. To exploit elephants successfully, however, management capacity will have to be radically improved, comprehensive surveys of elephants carried out, and careful feasibility studies of elephant harvesting undertaken.

Secondly, elephant conservation will be greatly enhanced by improving management of the region's forests. Though each state will undertake its own priority projects, they will work together, sharing experiences on a regional basis. This approach will be equally important in tackling the problems of elephant conservation and management. Revision of wildlife legislation, research, anti-poaching, revenue creation, and education must all be planned on a regional basis.

In recent years, policies relating to forest conservation have been oriented towards enlisting the participation and support of local communities. However, after several years of effort it is apparent that these initiatives have largely failed. The region's governments are anxious to improve their record and have convened a ministerial conference in May 1990 to finalise a regional Forest Conservation Action Plan.

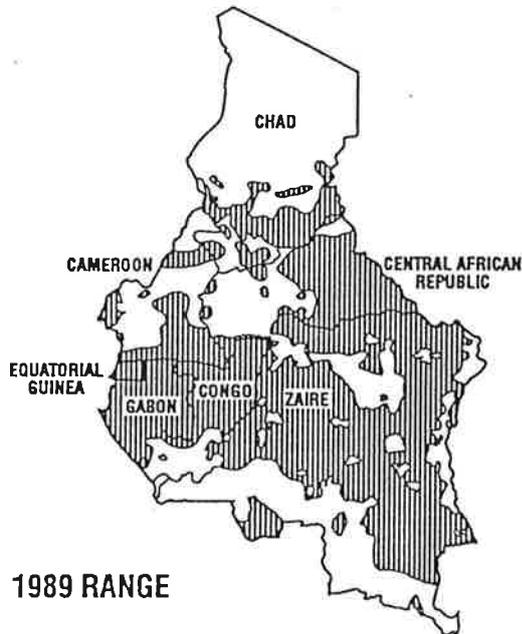
This Action Plan could also serve as a mechanism for coordinating elephant conservation initiatives. The Organisation for the Conservation of Wildlife in Central Africa (OCFSA), could also provide a useful role as a regional information centre if it were increased in size to include Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Congo, and given the necessary financial support.

### Funding for Elephant Conservation

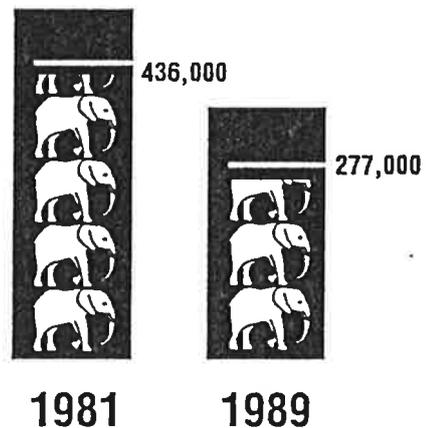
Although detailed statistics are not available, funding for elephant conservation in Central

Africa appears to be low. This may be partially explained by the great ignorance that exists regarding the region's elephant populations. Until recently there had been no systematic attempt to census them. As a consequence there has been little thought about the potential value of the elephants, or on mechanisms to realise this value. Having little evident value there was little incentive for the governments of the region to expend scarce financial resources on elephant conservation.

All aspects of elephant conservation are in need of additional funding, from educating local communities to training and supplying conservation officers. Both forest and elephant utilisation could provide revenues to achieve these improvements and drive local village development, and thus win the support of these communities for government conservation initiatives.



## Central Africa



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# WEST AFRICA

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## **Elephant Status**

Sixteen range states are included in West Africa. Elephant populations in all of these countries are small, ranging from a high of 4,500 in Burkina Faso to a low of 40 in Guinea Bissau. Though the populations are small they are often of considerable conservation importance. The desert elephants of Gourma in Mali, for example, represent the species living in a harsh environment at the extreme limit of its distribution, requiring unique behavioural and perhaps even physiological adaptations.

In most countries in the region existing elephant ranges overlap considerably with national parks and forest reserves. A high proportion of the region's elephants are being protected in these areas. There are some exceptions to this, notably in Guinea and Liberia, where considerable numbers of elephants live outside existing protected areas.

Today, the West African population makes up approximately 3% of the continental total.

## **Priority Government Concerns**

Populations in West Africa are perhaps more endangered than any others in Africa. Elephant populations were radically reduced at the turn of the century by ivory hunters and habitat loss has prevented their recovery. Populations now exist as isolated groups, cut off from other populations by human habitation. Because many of the populations are extremely small and isolated, they are very vulnerable unless sophisticated management techniques are adopted.

This situation is exacerbated by strong pressures for land for cultivation in much of the region, and has further intensified since the end of the 1960s as human populations migrate southward away from the Sahel region.

Poaching for ivory is not a major problem today in the majority of the region because populations are too small to attract professional poachers. Despite this, elephants numbers have declined by approximately 14% over the last two years

due to intensifying conflict between elephants and people and the continuing loss of habitat.

## **Current Initiatives**

Current initiatives are based upon maintenance of existing national parks and forest reserves. Almost all of the surviving elephants in the region have been compressed into these often small areas which are under increasing pressure from surrounding human populations and conflicting land-use policies.

Effective protection of elephants within parks and reserves has resulted in increasing elephant populations in some countries, for example Nigeria, Togo and Burkina Faso.

## **Future Initiatives**

If many of the elephant populations in the region are to survive, projects are urgently needed in areas where elephant/human conflicts are most severe. Projects will need to resolve the very real problems faced by the local communities in relation to elephant populations and increase local support for the elephants through both education and extension work.

Following the example of Burkina Faso's Nazinga Ranch Project, similar approaches to conserving elephants need to be pursued. Nazinga Ranch could provide a useful training facility for the region.

If many of the smaller populations are to be saved, a high level of interventionist management will have to be undertaken. This will require a major regional initiative in training and development of management infrastructures.

To achieve these ends a considerably higher regional capacity will need to be developed. Greater investment is required in the training of elephant-management professionals. Improved capacity may be assisted through information exchange with those who have the expertise, regional problem sharing and discussion, and professional training and education exercises. "Twinning" of parks in West Africa with successful parks elsewhere

may be a useful mechanism. The language barrier between Francophone and Anglophone countries will have to be overcome. Both government and local community support for elephant conservation could be encouraged by active promotion of wildlife tourism in the region.

There are many imaginative schemes which could be proposed to improve the capacity of West African range states to manage their elephants. It is essential, however, for the wildlife departments to set their priorities for action and formulate them into an action plan. When this has been achieved it will be possible for external donors and expertise to contribute to development and implementation of elephant conservation activities in the region.

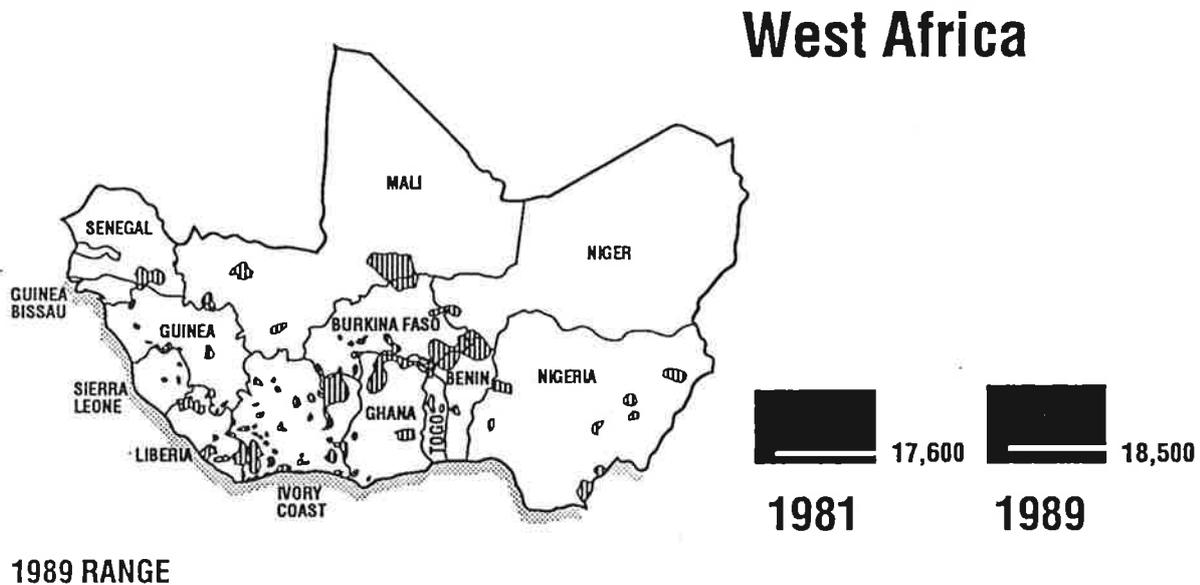
### Funding for Elephant Conservation

Though detailed information is lacking, funding for elephant conservation in the region is low. There are several factors which may have influenced this: national elephant populations are so small that they do not figure significantly in national planning; elephants are of little current economic importance, as they are for example in East

Africa; the small elephant numbers do not inspire the interest and commitment of donor countries that have been seen elsewhere in Africa; there has been relatively little scientific interest in the region's populations; and, West African wildlife departments have been poorly represented internationally in the past.

If the level of management which will be required to save many of the region's populations from extinction is to become a reality, significantly greater funds will need to be made available. Three general areas for investment can be identified:

- Major investments must be made in developing park infrastructure, and in training the expertise necessary for elephant management.
- Powerful public information and education campaigns will be essential if people are to understand and accept the importance of conservation.
- Initiatives to provide economic benefits to governments and local communities are needed if interest and concern for elephants are to be maintained.



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# TRADE IN IVORY

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Ivory has been an important export from Africa for centuries. The main markets for ivory have been "hard currency" consumer nations and in recent years North America, Europe and Japan have accounted for 90% of the total trade.

Increasing demand for ivory through the 1970s and 80s drove the price up steadily which led to a wave of illegal killing of elephants. In 1985 CITES established an ivory control system, which focussed on permitting procedures. However, continued widespread elephant killing soon indicated the control system's failure to prevent illegal dealing in ivory. Indeed, the legal trade in ivory most likely acted as a screen for the illegal trade. In retrospect it is perhaps clear that a control system which only influenced monitoring of trade and made no attempt to control either supply or demand would fail. In the absence of scientific management of elephant populations, which would have determined supply, and the capacity of range states and the will of consumer states to enforce the law, there was no mechanism for influencing market forces. These dictate that as elephants dwindled and supply of ivory fell, demand driven prices would rise, putting further pressure on the elephant.

The Ivory Trade Review Group's report, published in 1989, provided evidence of this situation and led many consumer countries to ban the importation of ivory. Strong public and media pressure, largely in America and Europe, was an important factor in the decision taken by the Parties to CITES to list the African elephant on Appendix I, banning international trade in ivory and all other elephant products.

With the demand dramatically, if artificially, reduced, ivory prices in Africa, Europe and

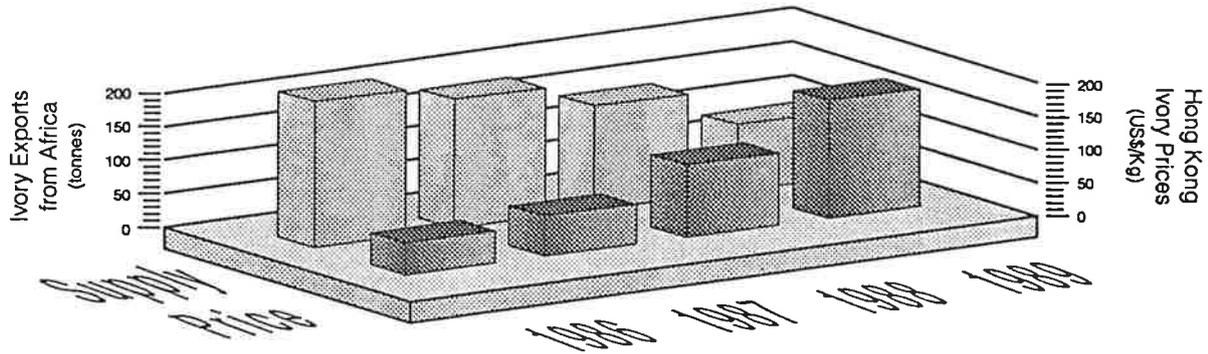
North America fell significantly, though prices have risen in Japan where high internal demand remains. There is, however, little clear information on the ban's effect on illegal killing. While Tanzania and Kenya, for example, report reduced poaching, Malawi reports no change in the killing of elephants.

The future of ivory trade is uncertain. Fifteen African states may still legally export ivory. Five of these (Botswana, Malawi, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe) took out reservations under CITES whilst the remaining ten are not Parties to CITES. The southern African range states are in the process of establishing a central ivory market, with an auction house in Botswana.

It is apparent, however, that the principal problem in pursuing the ivory trade lies not in securing a supply but in finding a market. The world market is severely depressed as all the principal importing countries are adhering to the CITES decision. Of the former important ivory consumers, only China remains.

Meanwhile, at least 250 tonnes of raw ivory, more probably over 350 tonnes, are stockpiled in Africa, and these stockpiles can only grow as ivory from natural mortality and confiscations continues to accumulate. A further 580 tonnes are held in consumer countries. With no legal outlet there is a real danger that much of this ivory will enter the trade through non-CITES parties and entrepots for illegal trade in principal consumer states. There are indications that demand in certain middle and far eastern countries is increasing and the large quantities of stockpiled ivory may foster new markets which will be difficult if not impossible to control.

## The Ivory Trade: Decreasing supply leads to increasing price



Supply		Prices	
1986	— 188 tonnes	1986	— \$ 62 / Kg
1987	— 152 tonnes	1987	— \$ 77 / Kg
1988	— 118 tonnes	1988	— \$ 95 / Kg
1989	— 59 tonnes	1989	— \$ 144 / Kg



**In the environment, every victory is temporary,  
every defeat permanent.**

**Thomas Jefferson**

L'Alliance mondiale pour la nature  
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March 1990