

# African Elephant Conservation Fund

Currently, threats to African Elephants vary significantly from one region to another. In some parts of Southern Africa, elephant numbers have stabilized or even increased. In East Africa, by contrast, elephant populations have decreased by 65 percent. Central Africa has been plagued by political instability and civil war, which has led to an increased flow of guns into the region. Economic hardship has contributed to some of these weapons being used to kill elephants for food—commonly referred to as “bushmeat,” and for ivory.

In some areas of Central Africa, poaching elephants for bushmeat has become a greater threat than poaching for ivory. Bushmeat is an affordable food source for people living in remote and rural areas,

but bushmeat is also highly valued by city dwellers as a native food tied to cultural tastes and traditions. The demand for bushmeat in Africa’s urban areas is skyrocketing, and an international market is developing too.

In addition to the ivory and bushmeat trades, there is another threat to elephant survival that pervades throughout Africa—the loss of natural elephant habitat and the resulting conflict between elephants and humans who find themselves in competition for space and resources. As human populations increase and move into remote areas, more land is taken up for agriculture. Elephant populations are concentrated into smaller ranges with limited food and water supplies.

Elephants looking for food ramble into villages and damage crops. Sometimes, people are killed in their attempt to fend off elephants. More commonly, people kill elephants in their attempt to stop the crop raids.

The African elephant continues to be classified as a species threatened with extinction. In 1988, the United States Congress passed the African Elephant Conservation Act to establish a fund for programs aimed at the protection, conservation and management of Africa’s elephants. Special emphasis was placed on review of conservation plans in ivory producing countries and the United States established a moratorium on all ivory imports.

---

**International Affairs**  
**Division of International Conservation**  
4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Room 730  
Arlington, VA 22203  
703/358-1754  
703/358-2849 fax  
internationalconservation@fws.gov  
<http://international.fws.gov>

**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service**  
[www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov)

**Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance**  
**Number 15.620**

**February 2004**



*African elephants*

© Corel

***The 2003 appropriation of \$1.2 million to the African Elephant Conservation Fund supported 24 conservation projects to carry out work such as:***

- Organizing “snare and firearms surrender programs” in Zambia, ridding the country of thousands of deadly animal snares and dozens of firearms;
- Training government agents and guards in the Republic of Congo to enforce wildlife protection laws and to prevent poaching of elephants and great apes in three high risk areas with the goal of reducing illegal commercial bushmeat traffic;
- Improvement and maintenance of water systems and holding dams in Tanzania to increase water supply during dry seasons and reduce human-elephant conflict over water resources;
- Survey and monitoring of elephant populations in Cameroon, Gabon, the Republic of Congo, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea, and the Central African Republic to estimate elephant numbers, distribution and mortality;
- Facilitating a series of workshops to develop elephant management and conservation programs for the Botswana Department of Wildlife and National Parks;
- Creating income alternatives to poaching for hunters in poor rural areas of Zambia by providing training in sustainable agriculture;
- Training for university students and wildlife management professionals in Namibia to build capacity for locally supported conservation of elephants;
- Training and mobilization of park rangers in Garamba National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo where a large-scale commercial poaching for ivory is devastating elephant populations;
- Assisting the Kenya Wildlife Service to repair three aircraft and to provide aircraft maintenance training. The aircraft are essential components of Kenya’s elephant protection and monitoring programs;
- Determining the ecological “carrying capacity” for populations of elephants within the Waza National Park in Cameroon—considered one of the most important elephant ranges in northern Central Africa;
- Sponsoring a workshop with the Government of Niger to create a national elephant management strategy; and
- Supporting Uganda’s Wildlife Authority in its efforts to educate local communities on ways to reduce human-elephant conflict in the Southern Queen Elizabeth Conservation Area national park.



*Surrendered firearms*  
USFWS/Richard Ruggiero



*African elephant poaching*  
USFWS/Richard Ruggiero

<b>African Elephant Conservation Fund from First Appropriation in 1990 through FY 2003</b>	
<b>Total Number of Grants Proposals Received</b>	<b>300</b>
<b>Total Number of Grants Awarded</b>	<b>194</b>
<b>Percentage of Countries with African Elephants that Receive Grants</b>	<b>70%</b>
<b>Total Amount Appropriated by U.S. Congress</b>	<b>\$13,319,766</b>
<b>Total Funds Distributed through Grants</b>	<b>\$12,825,933</b>
<b>Total Funds to Administration of Grants</b>	<b>\$493,833</b>
<b>Total Matching/In-kind Funds Leveraged by Grants</b>	<b>\$60,481,514</b>