

ELEPHANT CRISIS FUND
SPECIAL REPORT
2017



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hope. It's not a word we've used often during the fight against the crisis affecting African elephants. However, looking across the globe, we can see

beacons of hope that collectively show the ivory crisis can be stopped when the best ideas are supported. Although elephant populations are still being depleted rapidly in poaching hotspots across the continent, 2017 has been dominated by the overwhelmingly positive leadership from China. While once pro-ivory trade, China has become the world's leading voice calling for the trade in ivory to be banned. We celebrate their commitment to close their domestic trade, but we remain vigilant, as the key now is how well the ban is enforced to keep the trade from moving deep underground and across China's borders.

We are seeing solid results from funding cost-effective, intelligence-driven approaches to anti-poaching and law enforcement efforts. Poaching in Garamba National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo—a killing field for both elephants and rangers in recent years—has been almost halved. Small, isolated, and vulnerable elephant populations across Africa have a chance of survival with the injection of relatively modest funding from the Elephant Crisis Fund. The desert elephants of Mali, which lost almost a third of their population to poaching last year, are better protected now, thanks in part to timely ECF funding.

Legal reform and training are key to turning arrests into meaningful convictions. We have supported the Lilongwe Wildlife Trust in Malawi to implement courtroom monitoring work, following a model developed in Kenya by ECF grantee WildlifeDirect, and have seen conviction rates for wildlife crimes in Malawi rise from almost zero to 84%. Collaboration between ECF-funded partners also allows traffickers to be traced across borders. New work with international law enforcement agencies is generating new resources and new avenues to ensure senior traffickers, who had previously appeared untouchable, face justice.

While hope is emerging, there are major fights ahead. The forests of Central Africa have been largely emptied of elephants, and the few remaining strongholds are under intense pressure. Trafficking routes are like a balloon being squeezed—clamp down in one place and it comes up in another. Trafficking networks move their operations in response to increasingly effective enforcement and are shifting operations from ports in Kenya and Tanzania to Mozambique and Nigeria and from overseas shipping to air transport. As demand is being curtailed in China, ivory markets are ballooning in Laos, Vietnam, and Myanmar.

Inspired and fuelled by your commitment to elephants, hope will continue to spread and these challenges can be overcome. With your generosity, the Elephant Crisis Fund is ensuring that the best efforts of committed individuals around the world are supported, and the most urgent needs addressed, to ensure the world has a future with elephants.

BACKGROUND ON THE ELEPHANT CRISIS FUND

The ivory crisis is too big for any one organization to resolve—it requires a multipronged response from a coalition of effective leaders, NGOs, institutions, media, and governments.

This coalition must work to implement a three-pillared strategy to end the crisis: anti-poaching efforts to stop the killing of elephants; anti-trafficking projects to prevent ivory from reaching markets; and demand-reduction efforts that make the trade in ivory products ultimately obsolete.

Human greed led to this catastrophe, but human generosity can turn it around. Save the Elephants and the Wildlife Conservation Network, in partnership with the Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation, created the **Elephant Crisis Fund** (ECF) to galvanize that generosity and channel it to the most effective, strategic, and catalytic projects that can address the ivory crisis.

Uniquely, **100%** of ECF funds are used to support on the ground programs that save elephants—not a single cent goes to administrative fees or overhead. The ECF is **nimble**, deploying funds sometimes within 24 hours in response to a poaching crisis, and can quickly bridge funding gaps to keep boots on the ground. Each project is rapidly, but thoroughly **vett**ed by experts to ensure quality of granting and effective allocation of your investment. The Elephant Crisis Fund supports the **best ideas, not one institution**. The organizations able to make the biggest impact are supported, whether they are tiny, deeply embedded field outfits or larger multinational institutions—for it will take the best efforts of all to end this crisis.

In just four years, the Elephant Crisis Fund has raised and deployed more than \$11 million to the best efforts by organizations large and small to save elephants and end the ivory crisis.

BY THE NUMBERS

111,000 Elephants lost from Africa's elephant populations between 2007 and 2015.

169 Projects supported by the ECF.

57 Organizations receiving grants from the ECF.

47 Percent of funding allocated to anti-poaching projects.

31 Countries with ECF investments.

11 Millions of dollars, granted to stop the killing of elephants and stop the trafficking and demand for their ivory.

0 Percent of your donation going to administrative fees or overhead.

WHERE WE STAND

“The Elephant Crisis Fund has been one of my Foundation’s most strategic and impactful investments. It’s helping a wide array of partners save elephants and end the ivory crisis. But it’s also a new model for conservation philanthropy; supporting the best ideas rather than one organization and sending 100% of every dollar to efforts on the ground. We are proud to be partners in the ECF.”

—Leonardo DiCaprio, Founder, Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation

Hope is on the rise, but elephant numbers continue to fall—and we cannot falter. Progress is being made across the three pillars of investment by the Elephant Crisis Fund: **anti-poaching** efforts to end elephant killing, **anti-trafficking** investments to stop the movement of ivory within and across borders and bring criminals to justice, and **demand reduction** projects that end the desire for ivory and limit the ease with which it can be bought.

We are pleased to provide you with a snapshot of our position across these three portfolios. In each of these, we celebrate wins in 2017 and provide an insiders’ look at the road ahead in 2018. Each win we present was made possible because of your support and it is your financial commitment to elephants that will enable us to fight for them in 2018.



Anti-Poaching

The Snapshot

In 2017, with your support we funded 40 anti-poaching projects by 22 grantees (who are working with 19 other collaborators) in 14 countries, bringing the total to 80 anti-poaching projects supported by the ECF since its inception. Investments into the deserts, savanna and forest habitats of Africa include patrol bases, ranger training, vehicles, establishment of rapid reaction units, aerial patrols, new tracking and sensing technologies, command post upgrades, communications infrastructure, informer networks, and intelligence programs to guide anti-poaching units. **Below are some of the anti-poaching wins and where we must amplify our efforts.**

The Wins

Elephant Crisis Fund grantees achieved significant progress this year with financial support from the ECF, often buoyed with technical input from the ECF team. Below is a small selection.

- The **desert elephants of Mali's Gourma region** hang in the balance. Between 2012 and 2016, 142 out of their total population of 300 elephants were killed. It was thought these elephants had a high risk of extinction, especially given that the area is over-run with Islamic militants. However, late in 2016 a joint anti-poaching task force was established between the Malian army and the Department of Water and Forestry, with mentoring provided by Chengeta Wildlife and financial support from the Elephant Crisis Fund. We are pleased to report that there have been no elephants

poached since February 2017. However, there were ambushes and attacks by militants. An IED exploded under one of the anti-poaching unit (APU) vehicles, and a radio operator was killed in another attack on an APU base. The APU successfully fought back, suffered two injuries, but inflicted heavy losses on the attackers—all in defense of the last elephants of Gourma.

- **Garamba National Park**, situated on the border of the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan, is a vast area that is home to one of the most threatened elephant populations in Africa. The ECF has been



Nouabalé-Ndoki National Park's Rapid Reaction Unit

supporting African Parks Network's development of an anti-poaching intelligence program in the area since July 2016 and elephant poaching there has been almost halved (50 elephant carcasses recorded, down from 87 the previous year). The development of a human intelligence network and intelligence database has revealed hotspots within the poaching geography, allowing more effective deployment of patrols. With ECF support, African Parks is developing a regional approach to address cross-border threats, including incorporating intelligence from local communities, and amplifying aerial surveillance and tracking technologies.

- Our partner, the Wildlife Conservation Society is developing an integrated, intelligence-led approach to law enforcement in **Nouabalé-Ndoki National Park in northern Congo**. ECF investments have supported the creation of an informant network, a Rapid Reaction Unit, and a Wildlife Crime Unit (WCU) whose investigators are infiltrating the most serious poaching rings in the area. Between July and September 2017, 72 intelligence led anti-poaching operations have resulted in 22 arrests, and a further five arrests by the WCU. A notorious ivory trafficker was apprehended in August 2017 and a trial date is pending.

- **Yankari National Park** is home to Nigeria's last viable savanna elephant population (around 100 individuals) and is co-managed by the Wildlife Conservation Society and the Bauchi state government. In 2015, the ECF provided support for specialist ranger training and two new vehicles, which contributed towards a major improvement in levels of protection. Since May 2015 zero elephant carcasses have been recorded. The ECF funded further training for fifty-eight rangers in 2017, and periodic aerial support to help guide law enforcement efforts, to undertake an elephant census, and to collar six elephants for herd security. Another grant from the ECF is allowing the Wildlife Conservation Society to upgrade its communications system from four hand-held radios reaching only ten kilometers from base, to a system to cover the entire reserve.



Fitting collars is a skilled job conducted by an experienced team. Taken during a September 2017 collaring operation by Frankfurt Zoological Society in North Luangwa, Zambia, supported by the ECF.

The Road Ahead

The challenges of taking on the poachers are ever-changing, but we see the following amongst our priorities in the coming year.

- **Our primary anti-poaching priority remains supporting cost-effective, intelligence-driven approaches to law enforcement**, particularly in elephant strongholds under threat. These include the key elephant populations of Garamba (DRC), Niassa (Mozambique), and Odzala (Congo); the Luangwa ecosystem (Zambia); and the elephants of Gabon and Tanzania. The Elephant Crisis Fund and partners are rolling out the concept of elephant tracking for security with Vulcan Inc.'s integrated Domain Awareness System and the STE Tracking App. We will pursue its deployment to more protected areas across the continent in 2018.
- **We will continue to support the small, isolated, and vulnerable elephant populations, with the injection of additional funding** to populations in the Central African Republic, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Mali, and the tiny remnant populations in West Africa where possible. The Elephant Crisis Fund believes all elephant populations matter and has been one of the few sources of support for the smaller, extinction prone, and/or less visible elephant populations.

Anti-Trafficking

The Snapshot

In 2017, we funded 38 anti-trafficking projects implemented by 22 grantees (plus another 27 partners associated with the projects) in 16 countries, bringing the ECF's total to 64 anti-trafficking projects since its inception. ECF has supported effective tools such as sniffer dogs, investigations into ivory seizures,



Maisha Consulting Ltd

A Springer Spaniel sniffer dog, part of the Uganda Wildlife Authority canine unit at Entebbe Airport, established with support from the ECF.

development of intelligence capacity, and investigations into organized crime networks—leading to arrests and convictions of increasingly high-level traffickers. Yet, many tons of ivory continue to move across the continent and on to markets, particularly in Asia, and the ECF is one of few funders investing heavily in the undercover operations needed to address ivory trafficking.

The Wins

Grants from the Elephant Crisis Fund have made great strides in the anti-trafficking strategies that are critical to end the ivory crisis.

■ With support from the Elephant Crisis Fund, the Lilongwe Wildlife Trust has been instrumental in **improving the prosecutorial and judicial response in Malawi through courtroom monitoring.**

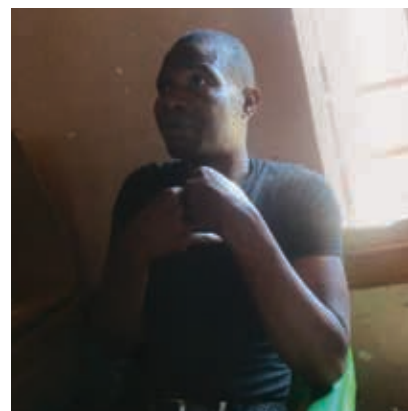
Incarceration rates for elephant crime rose from 0.02% during the pre-project period to 84% when

a courtroom monitor was present. Since May 2016, 780 kgs of ivory have been seized in Malawi, 191 traffickers have been arrested, 178 have been convicted, and 97 imprisoned.

■ The Natural Resource Conservation Network's collaboration with the Uganda Wildlife Authority has led to further arrests in Uganda. They uncovered a **large multinational trafficking network which is under active investigation.** The Uganda Wildlife Authority sniffer dog unit has been highly effective, intercepting at least 94 illegal wildlife products. As a result, by August 2017, 32 offenders had been tried and convicted in court, 39 were cautioned and released, and seven were awaiting court trial.

The Road Ahead

We have much more to do to stop ivory trafficking—from the time it leaves a dead elephant to the point of sale. The Elephant Crisis Fund has played a tremendous role in supporting brave people on the front line, who are working to bring traffickers to justice. We will continue to adapt as quickly as the criminals. Following are a few of the priorities for 2018.



Malawi Police Service

Ivory trafficker Winston Humba arrested. With support from the ECF he was later successfully prosecuted and sentenced to seven years imprisonment.

■ The **crackdowns on the ivory trade are forcing traffickers to adopt new routes**, and new ports of exit and entry. We need to pursue them and develop new projects in places like Mozambique and Nigeria which have been revealed by ECF partners to be new exit points for ivory from East and Central Africa, respectively. The prosecution of Feisal Ali Mohammed in July 2016 and the deportation



Krissie Clark

Conservationist Wayne Lotter, tragically murdered in 2017.

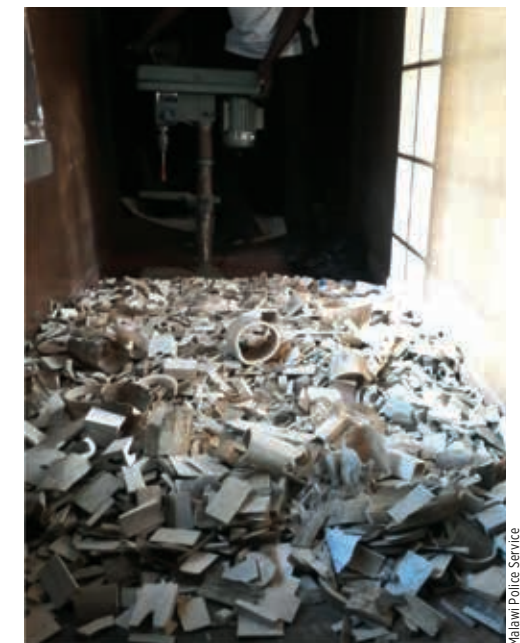
of the Akasha brothers in January 2017 have made several major East African traffickers divert some ivory flows northward to Ethiopia and Somalia, countries not previously prominent in the trade. Once unheard of, the links between East and West African trafficking networks are growing, creating new flows of ivory across the continent, with Uganda becoming a major east-west connector. We must intensify pressure on traffickers so it's harder for them to find places to operate.

■ **We will be seeking greater security for both teams and data.** Wayne Lotter, executive director of the PAMS Foundation, was killed in August in what looks like a targeted hit because of his anti-trafficking work, which was being supported by the ECF. He was enabling successful law enforcement in Tanzania, which had a significant impact

and started to touch very powerful people. His death is a brutal reminder that we are up against dangerous criminal networks who will stop at nothing to protect their interests. It also confirms that the global coalition fighting the illegal ivory trade is having an impact.

■ As the traffickers are changing their operating areas, there is an increasing need to **enhance coordination between investigating agencies** both in the non-profit and government sectors, as well as across boundaries. Kenyan and Tanzanian crime networks have been displaced into Mozambique, for instance, and there is a need to share intelligence across borders and carry out joint investigations.

■ **The ivory trade is increasingly of interest to major international law enforcement agencies.** They are already operating in many parts of Africa, chasing international drugs, arms, and human traffickers. It is clear there is significant crossover between ivory trafficking and these other serious crimes. Traffickers are much less careful when handling ivory compared to other contraband, making ivory a soft underbelly in terms of law enforcement and a useful route into criminal networks for government agencies. As a result, these agencies are prepared to take up the ivory cause in collaboration with ECF-funded partners.



Malawi Police Service

Winston Humba was operating a factory where raw ivory was processed for air transport to Asia.

Demand Reduction

The Snapshot

Without ending demand for ivory, we will never end the ivory trade. In 2017, the Elephant Crisis Fund continued to make progress by supporting four grantees implementing six demand reduction projects in four countries. This makes a total of 25 demand reduction projects supported since the ECF's inception.

The Wins

China's commitment to ban all domestic ivory trade represents perhaps the greatest cause for hope for elephants in 2017. Below are some of the wins that give us all greater confidence that we will end this existential threat to elephants.

- ECF projects provided important information to both policymakers and the wider population in China, the world's largest market for ivory. On December 29, 2016, **the Chinese government announced they would ban all domestic ivory trade** and processing activities in China by the end of 2017. On March 31, 2017 China closed 12 (out of 34) licensed ivory factories and 55 (out of 143) retail ivory shops. The remainder are to be closed by the end of 2017. This year, ECF grantee, the Natural Resources Defense Council, has been providing advice to the Chinese government behind the scenes on the practical steps required in implementing the ban.



Esmond Martin

Customers buying ivory items in Ho Chi Minh City are mostly Chinese and Vietnamese.

accept that there was a problem with illegal ivory sales within the country. However, ensuring effective law enforcement is difficult, so the ECF is supporting WildAid in their campaign to encourage the Vietnamese government to clamp down on illegal sales.

- The Elephant Crisis Fund consultants also found that **Laos is now one of the world's fastest growing ivory markets**. Vientiane, Laos' capital, had the most outlets and ivory items seen for sale, but other hotspots are springing up throughout the country. The report will help focus attention on Laos' ivory trade at an upcoming CITES standing committee meeting in Geneva where parties will be seeking to hold Laos accountable for their trade.

- A report published by Save the Elephants in February 2017 showed that **the price of ivory in markets across China had dropped by two-thirds** from \$2,100 per kg in early 2014 to \$730 per kg in 2017, an encouraging sign that demand was declining. Part of the reason for this price reduction is likely a reaction to China's announcement of the ivory ban and a crackdown on corruption that has dissuaded business people from buying expensive ivory items as gifts for government officials.

- **Vietnam was identified as a major market** for illegal ivory sales by Lucy Vigne and Esmond Martin, consultants commissioned by the Elephant Crisis Fund. The findings in their **2016 report had a significant impact on the Vietnamese government** coming to

The Road Ahead

While China's actions are truly signs for hope, the Elephant Crisis Fund must double down to ensure that the China ban is complete, that demand does not simply flow over China's borders into neighboring nations, and that Asia and the world once and for all says "no" to ivory.

- With the closing of the legal ivory markets in China, there may be **an increase in illegal sales in China** and **legal sales in Hong Kong** and a further **increase in sales in neighboring countries,**

particularly Vietnam, Laos, and Myanmar. Sales in most of these countries are illegal but there is little or no law enforcement. Since most of these sales are made to traveling Chinese nationals, rather than locals, conventional consumer-focused campaigns in these countries are unlikely to be effective, so the focus should be encouraging governments to close down markets and confiscate ivory at border crossing points.



WildAid

Miss Universe Vietnam 2015 Pham Huong and Miss Universe Vietnam 2016 Le Hang discuss their experience in Africa at the Ivory Campaign launch in Ho Chi Minh City.

- **The Hong Kong government is developing legislation to ban its ivory trade over a five-year period.** A major priority is to ensure that traders do not derail this

process, particularly in the quest for compensation for existing ivory stocks. There is a strong rear-guard action against the passage of this bill, so the ECF is supporting WWF Hong Kong and WildAid in their public relations campaigns aimed at ensuring public support for legislation and lobbying of key undecided members of the Legislative Council.

- **Japan also has a significant legal trade in ivory;** there are many shops selling ivory name seals or "hankos" supposedly from old stock. Some experts consider the trade to be substantial and think it's used as a cover for importation of new ivory. It is important to get an independent assessment of the current situation, to determine whether we should be funding efforts to close down the trade, to create awareness, and to support more effective law enforcement.



Alex Hofford

In October 2017, Chris Leadismo, Head of Security at Save the Elephants, addressed one of the Hong Kong Legislative Council's ivory trade public hearings and spoke about his closest friend being killed by elephant poachers.



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“You were the first to believe in us... You have helped us learn and develop WCP over the last two years. We wouldn't be where we are without your support.”

—Kerri Rademeyer, Wildlife Crime Prevention Chief Executive Officer, Zambia



Zanne Labuschagne/WCS

“ECF funding has leveraged additional resources and support from other donors, and has created an opportunity for both donors and conservation organizations to collaborate, plan and implement well coordinated activities... We highly appreciate the funding support from the Elephant Crisis Fund and the timely guidance and constant support from its staff.”

—Geoffrey Mwedde, Wildlife Conservation Society Projects Manager, Uganda Country Programme



Lucy Vigne



Zanne Labuschagne/WCS



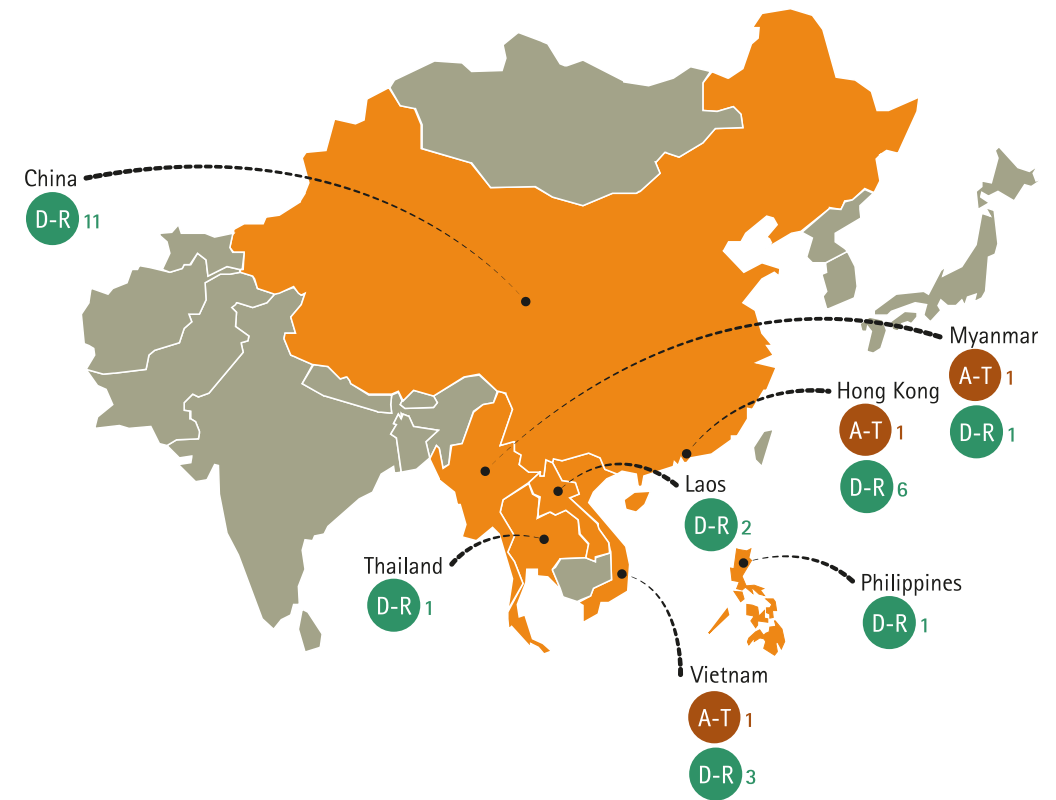
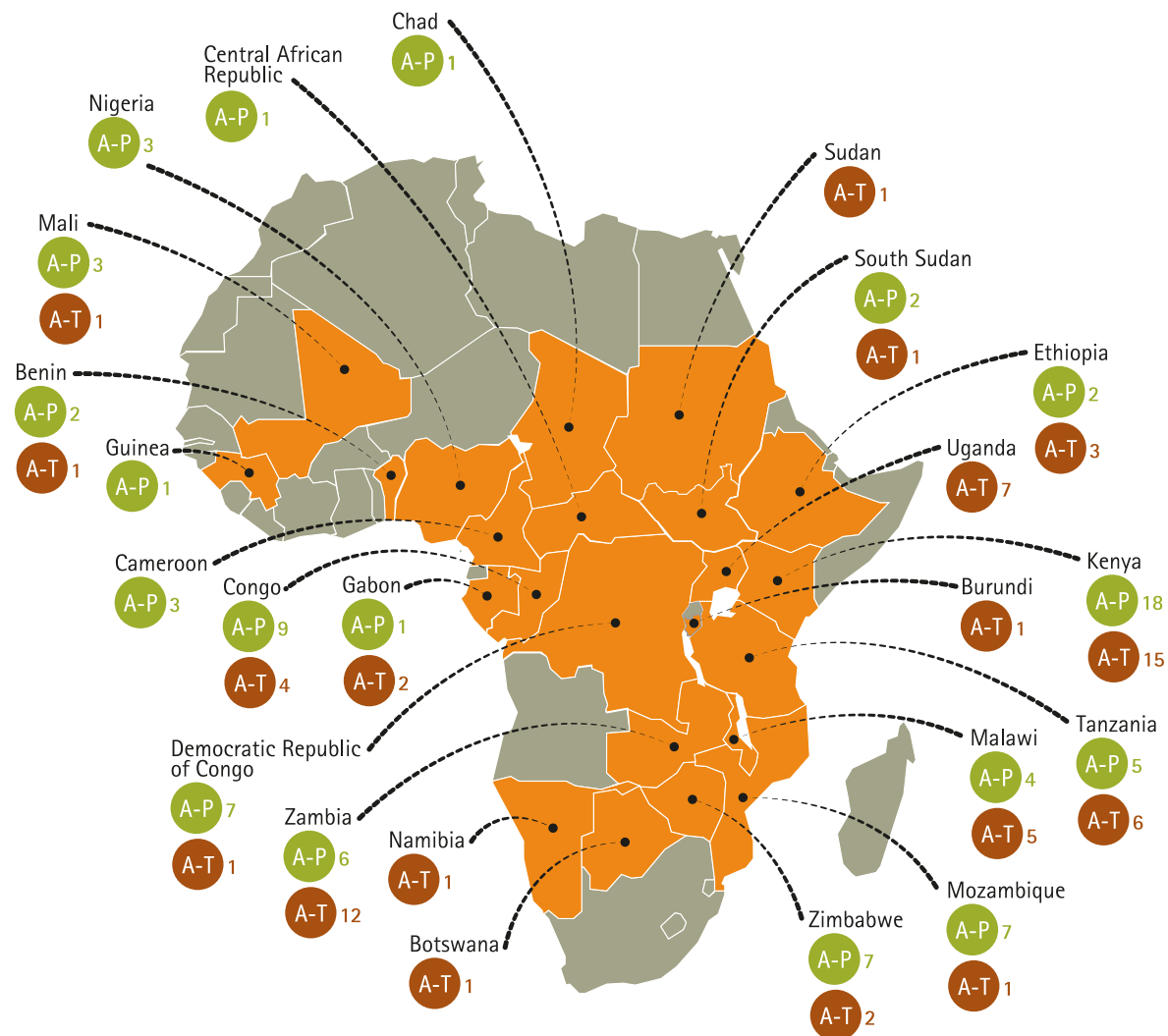
Jill Knox

“The Elephant Crisis Fund has been critical in getting our intelligence department off the ground and I am really excited about where we are headed.... covering both reactive and preemptive intelligence to keep the park safer.”

—Naftali Honig, African Parks Anti-Poaching Information Coordinator, Garamba National Park, Democratic Republic of Congo

GLOBAL INVESTMENTS TO END THE IVORY CRISIS

NUMBER OF ACTIVE PROJECTS IN 2017
BY COUNTRY AND TYPE OF PROJECT



Regional African projects

East Africa

A-T 1

West Africa

A-T 1

Multiple Regions

A-T 9

Projects in the USA

A-T 1

D-R 3

Key

A-P Anti-Poaching

A-T Anti-Trafficking

D-R Demand Reduction

Numbers refer to the number of projects within each ECF strategy for the specified location.

Some ECF projects have impact on more than one strategy or more than one country and are therefore repeated.

Our Partners

The Elephant Crisis Fund is proud and humbled to be able to support the endeavours of the following organizations to end the ivory crisis. Each was rigorously vetted, and presented rapid, strategic, innovative, and effective investment concepts. Save the Elephants and the Wildlife Conservation Network worked with them to finalize projects that we determined to be critical for the future of elephants.

African Parks Network	Natural Resource Conservation Network
Agence Nationale des Parcs Nationaux, Gabon	Natural Resources Defense Council
Big Life Foundation	Northern Rangelands Trust
Biocarbon Partners	PAMS Foundation
Born Free Foundation	Save The Elephants
Centre on Illicit Networks & Transnational Organised Crime	South Luangwa Conservation Society
Conservation Lake Tanganyika	Space for Giants
Conservation Lower Zambezi Elephant Survival Organisation	Stop Ivory
Elephant Voices	Tashinga Initiative Trust
Elephants Alive	The WILD Foundation
Environmental Investigation Agency	The Zambezi Society
Fauna and Flora International	Tikki Hywood Trust
Focus Africa	Tsavo Trust
Forgotten Parks Foundation	Uganda Conservation Foundation
Frankfurt Zoological Society	University of Utah IsoForensics
Freeland	University of Washington WildAid
Game Rangers International	Wildlife Action Group Malawi
Global Wildlife Conservation	Wildlife Conservation Global
Gorongosa Restoration Project	Wildlife Conservation Society
Independent consultants	Wildlife Crime Prevention
International Fund for Animal Welfare	Wildlife Traxx Consultancy
Legal Assistance Centre, Namibia	Wildlife Works Elephant Protection Trust
Lilongwe Wildlife Trust	WildlifeDirect
Lukuru Wildlife Research Foundation	Working Dogs for Conservation
Maisha Consulting	World Wildlife Fund
Mara Elephant Project	Zoological Society of London
Mareja Community Conservation Project	

THANK YOU

These wins, and the victories we will make in the coming year, are all because of you.

Save the Elephants and the Wildlife Conservation Network are deeply grateful for your financial support, but also for your vote of confidence... confidence that the ivory crisis can be conquered and elephants can once again have the freedom to roam in safety across the forests and savannas of Africa.

On behalf of the courageous and effective organizations supported by the Elephant Crisis Fund, and on behalf of the elephants themselves, we thank you.



ElephantCrisisFund.org