



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

# Conservation is **WILDLIFE**



*Transfrontier conservation areas, such as Botswana's Chobe National Park, are an important strategy in the protection of the world's largest population of elephants.*  
Photo: WCS/Mark Atkinson

**Wildlife trafficking — the fourth largest black market in the world** — endangers elephants, rhinos, tigers, sharks, and many other wildlife species. Poachers are often linked to international criminal networks that take advantage of weak laws and enforcement, porous borders, and corrupt officials. These networks are violent and sophisticated, and their profits finance the activities of terrorist and other criminal organizations. The loss of iconic wildlife and the presence of violent elements linked to trafficking threatens nature-based tourism, an important source of revenue in many developing countries.

## WHAT USAID IS DOING

- In more than 25 countries, USAID has worked with park guards, customs officers, the judiciary, and the media to stem demand for wildlife products and stop poaching and trafficking. Our approach is comprehensive and collaborative. In early 2014, USAID worked with other U.S. agencies and 28 countries through Operation Cobra II, a month-long endeavor that resulted in 400 arrests and 350 major wildlife seizures across Asia and Africa.
- USAID provided training, rations, equipment, and logistical support for a crackdown on poaching in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, helping to secure at least 70 percent of Salonga National Park and allowing elephants to return to areas they had been avoiding due to poachers.
- USAID is partnering with businesses in the travel and hospitality sectors. For example, it worked with Delta Airlines and Kenya Airlines in Asia to train employees on how to detect and respond to wildlife trafficking through airports. USAID's work with Fin Free Thailand has encouraged 100 prominent hotels and restaurants to keep shark fin soup off their menus.

## DID YOU KNOW?



More than  
**1,000 forest rangers  
have been killed**  
in the line of duty  
over the last decade.



On average,  
**an elephant is killed  
every 15 minutes**  
for its ivory.

# USAID'S WORK IN ACTION

## REDUCING DEMAND FOR WILDLIFE PRODUCTS

Asia's Regional Response to Endangered Species Trafficking (ARREST) program is USAID's largest initiative to fight wildlife trafficking. Drawing on the expertise of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Department of Justice and others, the program reduces consumer demand for illegal products, enhances law enforcement and fortifies cooperation in Asia. ARREST trains park rangers, customs officers, police, and lawyers in wildlife forensics and border inspections as well as tactics for arrests and prosecutions. USAID, through ARREST, works closely with and provides support to the southeast Asian Wildlife Enforcement Network (ASEAN-WEN), a partnership that has resulted in high profile arrests and convictions of major criminals over the past three years. For example in early 2014 ASEAN-WEN, with a host of partners across 28 African and Asian countries, took part in an enforcement operation that resulted in more than 400 arrests and the seizure of 36 rhino horns, more than 3 metric tons of ivory, over 10,000 turtles, and over 1,000 skins of other protected species.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Since 2011,  
**the ARREST  
program has trained  
more than 8,500  
local government  
officials in law  
enforcement,**  
resulting in a tenfold increase in  
wildlife trafficking confiscations.

## STRENGTHENING ANTI-POACHING EFFORTS IN AFRICA

USAID's support of strengthened law enforcement in Africa is paying dividends:

- Kenya's new Wildlife Law increases penalties for poaching and trafficking. For instance, a man was recently caught with a 7.5 pound tusk and ordered to pay a \$230,000 fine or serve seven years in prison. Such higher penalties can discourage poaching.
- In Central Africa, more than 400 rangers, law-enforcement agents, and judicial officials were trained in anti-poaching techniques, which resulted in the arrest and prosecution of more than 130 criminal poachers and the seizure of dozens of weapons.
- Regional training workshops in Central and East Africa introduced the Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART) for making conservation patrols more strategic and accountable. SMART is being piloted in more than 20 sites across 12 countries in Africa.



The USAID-supported ARREST program is strengthening regional law enforcement. One component focuses on the detection of illegal wildlife products, including criminal investigations, forensics and border inspections. Photo: Tassanee Vejpongsa/FREELAND Foundation.