



BC High MUN 30

Illegal Poaching in Africa





Chair: Charlie Donovan'24
Co-Chair: Griffin Mozinski'24

I. Message from the Chair

Dear Delegates,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the committee on Illegal Poaching in Africa for BCHigh MUN 30. I am very excited to dive into this complex topic and am interested to see how you approach it. Since this topic is present-day, there is new information coming out daily about Illegal poaching of elephants in Africa. To avoid confusion, everything discussed in committee should have happened as of March 1, 2022. Keep in mind this background guide was written in January 2021, so there may be events missing because they have not happened at the time of writing.

I started Model UN in 7th grade and have enjoyed attending conferences all around Massachusetts since then. It has been a great experience for me because it pushes me out of my comfort zone and helps with public speaking. One of my favorite Model UN moments was this past March where we engaged in a lively debate regarding the Falkland War which ended in the assassination of Leopoldo Galiteri, Argentina's dictator, and Margaret Thatcher. I participated as a general who had first hand experience of the war and its troubles, and enjoyed relating "my" experiences to the political leaders in the war who were opting for more warfare.

This is my first time chairing a committee and I very excited to be working with you. Some of my other high school activities include rowing, aviation club, and french culture club.



Lastly, if you have any questions, feel free to email me (ce.donovan24@students.bchigh.edu).

See you all in March!

Charlie Donovan '24

II. Message from the Co-Chair

Dear Delegates,

It is my pleasure to be the Co-chair for the committee on Illegal Poaching in Africa for BCHigh MUN 30. I am very happy to dive into this multifaceted topic and am very intrigued to see how you approach it.

I am very excited to see what you do, what interesting points that you make as well as how you can bounce ideas off of one and other because that is my favorite part of all of my Model UN experiences. I enjoy all of these conferences because it is always amazing when you can connect with others and maybe make friends with people that you would never have met normally and enjoy your time with them at the conference.

This is my first time Co-Chairing a committee, so it will be an interesting experience. Some of my other high school activities include rowing, skiing, business club, investment club, choir, chess club, and Peretti scholars.

Lastly, if you have any questions, feel free to email me

(gt.mozinski24@students.bchigh.edu).

See you all in March!

Griffin Mozinski '24



Introduction

Thousands of African elephants are poached yearly by private organizations and in some cases through government hunting licenses. There are approximately 415,000 African elephants remaining after the nearly 30,000 killed yearly for their precious tusks. Botswana currently holds the largest elephant population in the world counting up to [293,000 or 70%](#) of the estimated remaining African elephants. In 2016, The Great Elephant Census, which spanned 18 countries and over 295,000 miles, reported a mere 352,271 savanna elephants in Sub-Saharan Africa. The IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature, currently states the African elephant population at “vulnerable” from its worst decline in 25 years.

The African savanna or bush elephant is the largest living mammal with a height of up to 3.9 meters and a mass of up to 10.4 tons. Each of their tusks can range from 110 to 220 lbs worth around 1500 dollars a pound. African bush elephants are a very sophisticated species with strong matriarchal groups. The largest tusks are most commonly found on the leaders of these groups, which causes a disarray of social structure.



IV. Background

History of (African) Savanna Elephants

The African savanna or bush elephant is the largest living mammal with a height of up to 3.9 meters and a mass of up to 10.4 tons. Each of their tusks can range from 110 to 220 lbs worth around 1500 dollars a pound. African bush elephants are a very sophisticated species with strong matriarchal groups. The largest tusks are most commonly found on the leaders of these groups, which causes a disarray of social structure.

History of elephant poaching in Africa

Between 1979 and 1989, the demand for ivory dangerously decreased elephant populations worldwide. The extremely high poaching rate nearly halved the number of African Elephants during this time. The larger, savanna elephant was initially targeted for its larger tusks, but as the population decreased, poachers searched the forests for its smaller kin. In 1977, there were 1.3 million elephants in Africa, but by 1997 nearly 600k remained. This figure has stabilized mainly due to the 1990 Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) ban on ivory sales around the globe. Despite this ban, in June of 1997, CITES temporarily lifted trade restrictions and allowed Zimbabwe, Botswana, and Namibia to sell their stockpiled ivory to Japanese buyers. This small opening is feared to rekindle the poaching of these treasured elephants.



V. Present-Day Conflict

The Rise of Savanna Elephant Poaching

Illegal poaching of sub-Saharan elephants started to rise in 2005. Scientists believe this was due to China's growing demand for ivory. By 2014, the population of Savanna Elephants dropped by about a third to around 352,000. Studies which analyzed elephant poaching in Africa from 2002 to 2017, discovered that the poaching of elephants in Africa peaked in 2011, with a loss of 10% of the population. Currently, this number stands around 4% each year. With no exact measurement of elephant ivory's worth, as it is illegal to trade, researchers observed the trading value of mammoth tusks, of less value than elephant tusks, but legal to trade, and found that these prices moved from 22 dollars per kilogram in 2002 to almost 90 dollars per kilogram in 2011.

Effects of Illegal Trading in Wildlife

Illegal trade of wildlife hurts local ecosystems and dangerously impacts upcoming state's economic stability. It negatively impacts tourism, lowers a region's investments, contributes to income inequality, and halts economic development. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) recognises that an increase in wildlife crime can lead to inequality, poverty, and the destruction of many conservation efforts. Tourism was recognized by General Assembly 66/288 for being capable of strongly contributing to its region's sustainable development, and also contributing to a green economy.

Governance and Enforcement

Ever since the early 1990s, local community conservation efforts have efficiently handled illegal wildlife poaching. African community conservatories are responsible for a vast majority of protected lands, which unfortunately only cover up to 7% of a land mass within an area, most



of which is home to the Savanna elephant. Although these conservation efforts strongly aid the government's reach in remote areas, their limited protection of land is often taken advantage of by ivory poachers.

Questions to Consider

1. What actions can hold countries or organizations responsible for these malicious acts?
2. How can the UNEP assist governments in their regulations of the current ivory trade?
3. Can foreign policy and UNEP action resolve tensions and improve relations between these organizations and their home countries?
4. How can the UNEP enforce illegal poaching in this region? For example will local governments abide by these regulations or secretly continue their licensing for a future profit?

VI. Positions

- Botswana
- Cameroon
- Central African Republic
- DRC
- Kenya
- Republic of Congo



- South Africa
- Namibia
- Zimbabwe
- Uganda
- Namibia
- Zambia
- Angola
- Kenya
- Gabon
- South Sudan
- Benin
- Ghana
- Nigeria
- Tansania
- Ethiopia
- Lesotho



VII. Works Cited

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