

New analysis points to ivory enforcement failures in parts of Africa, Asia

March 17 2010

Urgent law enforcement action by governments in Central and West Africa and South-east Asia is crucial to addressing the illicit ivory trade, according to a new analysis of elephant trade data released today.

Detailed regional summaries of the data held in the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS), the world's largest database on ivory seizures, highlight the failure of law enforcement in key elephant range States facing an increasing threat from organised crime and the presence of unregulated markets.

The re-analysis comes as 175 governments meet in Qatar for the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species in Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), where they will consider [ivory trade](#) issues.

"It's clearer than ever that governance shortfalls and weak enforcement allow illicit ivory trade to go unchecked in West and Central Africa and in South-East Asia, where large domestic ivory markets openly sell ivory illegally," said Tom Milliken of TRAFFIC, who undertook the ETIS analysis.

"What's needed is urgent action by government enforcement agencies in these regions and strong collaboration with counterparts in Asia where many of the current seizures are being made."

"If there was adequate political will, a commitment to law enforcement would shut down the illegal markets and check corruption. That isn't

happening." Milliken said.

ETIS is compiled by TRAFFIC on behalf of CITES, and comprises more than 15,400 ivory seizure cases compiled over the last 21 years.

The re-analysis of the data was made by region rather than by country, and was carried out to align the data with MIKE (Monitoring the Illegal Killing of [Elephants](#)), another of the CITES tools used to monitor poaching, which also shows that the Central African region is losing the most elephants.

"Until this strengthened law enforcement happens, ivory will continue to leak out of [Africa](#)" said Elisabeth McLellan, Species Manager, WWF International.

"We're not talking small-time smugglers here, we're talking hardened, organized criminal gangs," McLellan said.

More information: The analysis can be downloaded from the CITES website at: www.cites.org/common/cop/15/inf/E15i-53.pdf

Provided by World Wildlife Fund

Citation: New analysis points to ivory enforcement failures in parts of Africa, Asia (2010, March 17) retrieved 18 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2010-03-analysis-ivory-failures-africa-asia.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.