

## China pledges \$2 million to curb poaching in Zimbabwe

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Early in July, Cecil the lion, the posterchild of Zimbabwean wildlife, was killed outside Hwange park by US trophy hunter Walter Palmer using a bow and arrow

China, which is accused of fuelling the trade in elephant ivory and rhino horn, on Thursday pledged equipment worth \$2 million to curb poaching in Zimbabwe.

The funding came after Zimbabwe's wildlife became the focus of global

attention with the killing of Cecil the lion, a well-known animal among tourists, by an American trophy hunter.

"By providing equipment for wildlife protection, China is willing to cooperate with our Zimbabwe friends to ensure that all of Africa's wildlife can survive," Chinese ambassador Lin Lin said at a news conference in Harare.

The equipment will include all-terrain vehicles, tents, telescopes, mobile radio sets and GPS tracking devices, Lin said.

China attracted criticism last month after importing 24 elephant calves from Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwean authorities have defended the sale as a measure to raise funds for conservation, saying the country has too many elephants.

Poaching is a major problem in Zimbabwe with the parks and [wildlife](#) authority operating on a scant budget and often appealing for donations.

Last year, poachers killed scores of elephants after poisoning the environs of their watering holes in Hwange national park.

Early in July, Cecil the lion was killed outside Hwange park by US trophy hunter Walter Palmer using a bow and arrow.

The hunt provoked worldwide outrage after it emerged that Cecil was a well-known attraction at the park and was wearing a tracking collar as part of an Oxford University research project.

Rhino horn is prized in China for its supposed medicinal properties, while [elephant ivory](#) is highly valued in artworks or jewellery.

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