

Shocking reduction in Africa's elephant numbers

Elephant populations in Africa have declined by around 111,000 over the past 10 years according to a new study.

The African Elephant Status report says that poaching is the main driver of the fall, the worst losses in 25 years.

However the authors say that long-term issues such as the loss of habitat also pose a significant threat.

The report has been presented at the Cites meeting which is considering new proposals on elephant protection.

War on elephants - Alastair Leithead, Africa correspondent

The growing demand for ivory in Asian markets means the illegal trade continues to threaten the future of elephants in Africa

ya seeking extra protection.

Others, including Namibia and Zimbabwe, are seeking to liberalise the safeguards and open up a trade in ivory. Another proposal here, which might garner more support, is aimed at ending all domestic markets in ivory. The meeting continues until 5 October.



Every year in Africa between 30,000 and 40,000 elephants are poached for their ivory, and it's thought there are only 400,000 left.

Even accounting for the newborns, this rate of killing calls into question whether these amazing creatures will still be around in a generation, especially as Africa's ever-increasing population is reducing the space for them.

Organised crime runs the ivory industry.

Extract from The War on Elephants; article on how the very existence of Africa's elephants is threatened by poachers

Figures published earlier this year in the Great Elephant Census indicated that African elephant populations had declined by around 30% over the past seven years.

This new study from conservation group IUCN incorporates this information but also uses data from elephant dung counts and individual observations amongst other sources.

The authors say the overall total for elephants in Africa is now around 415,000, although there may be an additional 117,000 to 135,000 in areas not systematically surveyed.

This represents a decline of some 111,000 from the report carried out in 2006.

Percentage change estimates are per year for 2010-2014, so total losses are three or four times the percentages indicated on the graphic

Poaching is the main driver of the drop. East Africa, the region most affected by killings for ivory, has experienced around a 50% reduction in numbers.

However it is not the only cause of concern to the authors.

"We are particularly concerned about major infrastructure projects that are cutting up the elephant ranges, this is a particular problem for road development in central and east Africa," said Dr Chris Thouless, one of the report's authors.

"These are all major issues that will have to be dealt with once the poaching crisis is over."

While report highlights the losses there are also some gains.

Elephant populations in South Africa, Namibia and Uganda have all increased. Elephant ranges have expanded in Kenya and Botswana, with community based conservation showing real success in Northern Kenya.

While these are positives, the overall picture is one of dramatic decline, fuelled by criminal activity that would decimate these giant creatures, if continued.

"Larger quantities of illegal ivory are leaving Africa than ever before," said Ginette Hemley from WWF.

"The transnational crime syndicates driving the slaughter must be dismantled, and consumer demand for ivory cannot persist if we hope to secure a safe future for elephants."

The report comes as the Cites meeting here in Johannesburg is facing significant division on how to handle the poaching crisis.

Talks on extra protections for elephants will begin on Monday with a number of countries led by Ken-

As conservationists work round the clock to save elephants and other endangered species, governments are urged to do their best to stem the tide of poaching worldwide...

Join a community discussion to **FIGHT SYSTEMIC RACISM.**

The Ontario government's Anti-Racism Directorate wants to hear your ideas on addressing systemic racism.

We are holding public meetings to hear which priority anti-racism issues you think the directorate should address.

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS AT A PUBLIC MEETING:

Monday, Sept. 26, 2016

7:00 – 10:00 p.m.

**McIntyre Performing Arts Centre,
135 Fennell Ave. W, Hamilton**

Tuesday, Sept. 27, 2016

7:00 – 10:00 p.m.

**International Centre,
6900 Airport Rd., Mississauga**

Wednesday, Oct. 5, 2016

7:00 – 10:00 p.m.

**Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Toronto,
5183 Sheppard Ave. E, Scarborough**

More public meetings will take place across the province. Visit www.ontario.ca/antiracism for more information.

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Kelechi not getting carried away

Nigeria striker Kelechi Iheanacho says that despite getting a chance under manager Pep Guardiola at Manchester City he is not taking his place in the team for granted.

Iheanacho joined City from the Taye Academy in Nigeria in January 2014 and broke into the club's senior side last season with some eye-catching displays.

His blistering form this season - which includes a goal and assist in City's 2-1 derby win at Manchester United - has earned universal plaudits again, but he refuses to get carried away.

"I'm definitely learning, quietly listening and watching others closely every day - I know in doing that I will achieve bigger things in my career"

"I'm not letting all the praise get to my head because I still have a lot to learn in this game," Iheanacho, who has scored three goals in seven appearances this season, told BBC Sport.

"It's been a very progressive period for me at the club, but playing alongside stars like Sergio [Aguero], Yaya [Toure] and other great players provides a big chance to keep working hard.

"I'm definitely learning, quietly listening and watching others closely every day - I know in doing that I will achieve bigger things in my career."

The 19-year-old scored 14 times and produced seven assists last season even though 25 of his 36 appearances were as a substitute.

That feat saw him finish as City's third-highest scorer in all competitions, behind Sergio Aguero and Kevin de Bruyne.

Guardiola has rewarded him with a long-term deal on much improved terms at the Etihad, but the player admits he has a lot of work to do before he can nail down a regular place in the starting line-up.

"We have experienced players in the team and as someone who is learning and improving, I am happy to take my chance when the manager calls," Iheanacho said.

"Our manager has confidence in me and has been encouraging me. All I want to do right now is to

keep learning under him and work hard for the club."

The young striker's goal-scoring form as a substitute is such that he is now seen as the most dangerous member of the squad on the bench.

But he is refusing to get swept away by his new star status, saying his goals and assists are down to teamwork.

"I score goals not just because I am playing up front but because I get to play in a fantastic team," said Iheanacho.

"Our defenders and midfielders supply the passes and support for me to deliver, so it is a collective



effort."

Iheanacho has scored three goals in five appearances for Nigeria since making his senior debut against Swaziland in November 2015.

He starred as Nigeria won the 2013 Fifa U-17 World Cup in the United Arab Emirates for a record fourth-time.

He emerged as the tournament's outstanding player, being voted the Most Valuable Player.

Iheanacho scored six goals to secure him the Silver Boot as the competitions' second-highest goalscorer.