

## **The role of government in managing hunting and trade**

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To determine the role of governments in managing hunting and wildlife trade, clarification is needed on whether it is an international issue or the responsibility of local/national people and governments or some combination of them all.

It is an international issue because:

- biological diversity and the survival of endangered species are global interests;
- foreign countries often are markets for natural resources, thereby creating pressure on protected areas;
- the quality of life on the planet depends on intact ecosystems;
- political borders do not limit species or ecosystems.

Action at local level can be important in having wider international impacts because:

- local actions have global environmental impacts;
- protected areas, especially those which border other countries, often do not contain the entire range of a species or ecosystem;
- threats to protected areas often come from other countries, either directly or indirectly;
- direct threats can be poachers or illegal loggers who cross borders to exploit wildlife/natural resources in other countries;
- indirect threats can be posed by markets in other countries that create demand for wildlife products, wood and other natural products from protected areas, thereby augmenting pressure on those protected areas.

### **Roles of developed economies and governments**

The roles of developed economies and governments are:

- to support international treaties;
- to provide resources to international conservation efforts, both technical and financial;
- to enact effective domestic legislation to support international conservation;
- when invited, to support capacity building efforts;
- to promote and facilitate private sector engagement and responsibility, including amongst NGOs, local communities and industry.

Examples of international treaties of interest to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are:

- CITES;
- Ramsar Convention;
- Antarctic Treaty;
- Environmental protection treaty with the Russian Federation;
- Migratory bird treaties with Canada and Japan;
- Migratory bird and mammal treaty with Mexico;
- Polar Bear Treaty;
- Pan American Convention.

Examples of U.S. domestic legislation relevant to hunting and wildlife trade in countries outside the U.S. are:

- African Elephant Conservation Act;

- Asian Elephant Conservation Act;
- Great Ape Conservation Act;
- Rhino/Tiger Conservation Act;
- Neotropical Migratory Bird Act;
- Endangered Species Act;
- Foreign Assistance Act;
- Lacey Act.

### **Roles of developing economies and governments**

The roles of developing economies and governments are:

- to provide sufficient resources to protected areas, especially expertise and personnel;
- to establish national and regional policies that promote sustainable hunting and trade;
- to coordinate activities of relevant government departments, e.g., wildlife, economics, health, tourism, law enforcement, customs;
- to participate in and support international treaties/conventions;
- to develop an informed and supportive constituency for conservation;
- to promote leadership in government departments and the private sector to develop and support hunting and wildlife trade regulations;
- jointly with local partners, to develop management strategies and plans that mitigate the effects of illegal, unsustainable hunting.

### **Challenges to be met**

The whole issue of management of hunting and wildlife trade is so complex, it poses many challenges. These include:

- governments in developed countries sometimes do not meet their obligations to international conservation;
- developing economies might have the personal resources and expertise, but the economic background and political will are often inadequate;
- competing demands for the support of human populations are enormous, and often antagonistic to support for wildlife conservation;
- maintaining the balance between economic justification for wildlife conservation, which involves use, and nature's aesthetic value to humankind, is often difficult;
- war and civil unrest, along with the proliferation of arms, pose enormous threats;
- poverty and lack of economic alternatives often force people to over-exploit wildlife and compromise parks.

People's attitudes supporting conservation are essential. Moreover, human population growth and competition with wildlife might be the ultimate determinant of the viability of wildlife populations.