Fig. 8 Number of African elephants ("definite" and "probable" population estimates) in 11 countries with insurgency and 43 countries at peace

453,392

20,405

Countries with insurgency

Countries at peace

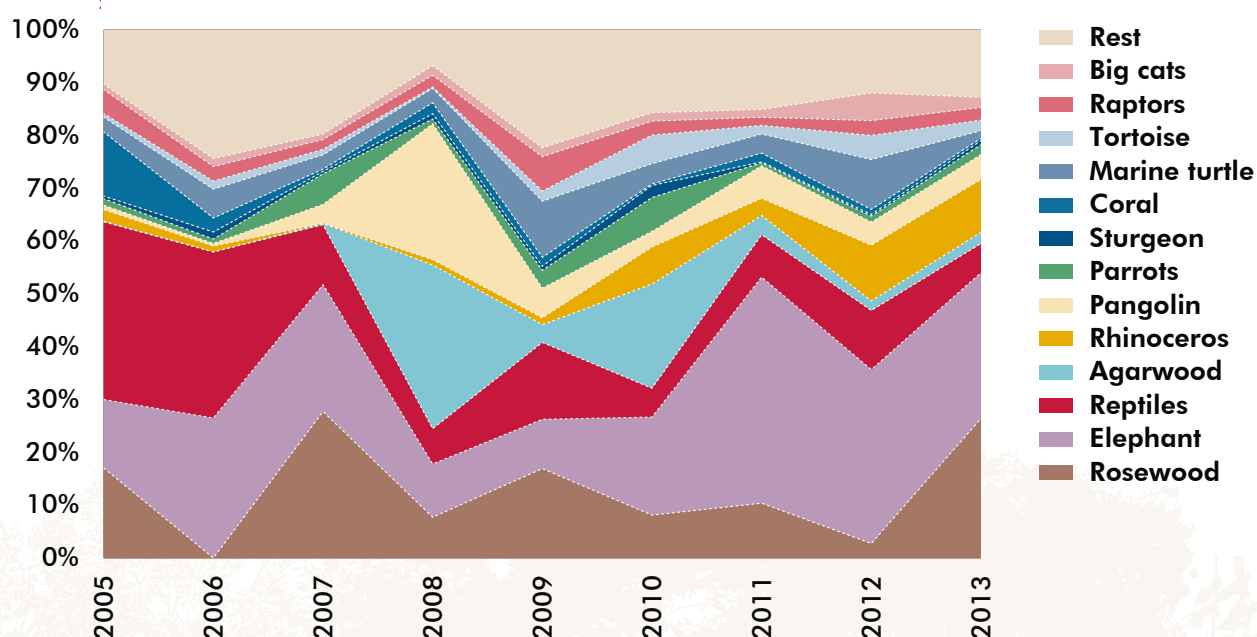Source: IUCN/SSC/AFESG African Elephant Specialist Group

How big is the market?

Many estimates have been touted for the annual value of illicit wildlife trade, but few with any transparency. While the markets for specific species products can be estimated with varying degrees of precision, it would be impossible to perform this level of analysis for all 7,000 species in World WISE, let alone all the species that do not experience CITES protection.

The point at which the product becomes "illegal" differs between species, and the value of illegal wildlife products can be substantially increased by legal value-added. While a US$10 illegally harvested snake skin can be transformed into a US$10,000 designer handbag sold in a boutique, it would be misleading to add this retail value to the illicit trade, because criminals do not generally operate designer boutiques.

of the illicit ivory is coming from just a few publically managed reserves, and the location of these reserves suggests that corruption, rather than conflict, is the primary enabler of elephant poaching (Chapter 4).

Wildlife trafficking has been the source of insurgent finance in the past, however, and cannot be categorically discounted. For example, fieldwork

conducted for this report indicates that a large share of the rosewood entering international trade through the Gambia is actually sourced by rebel groups in the Casamance region of Senegal. This illegal cross border trade allows dealers on one side of the border to profit from instability on the other (Chapter 3).

Furthermore, wildlife markets are apparently subject to considerable volatility. This characteristic is evinced in several ways. The valuated World WISE data show the variability in the composition of the seizure record,

Fig. 9 Share of type of wildlife among total seizures (standard value*), 2005-2013

Legend:
- Rest
- Big cats
- Raptors
- Tortoise
- Marine turtle
- Coral
- Sturgeon
- Parrots
- Pangolin
- Rhinoceros
- Agarwood
- Reptiles
- Elephant
- Rosewood

Source: World WISE
*see online methodological annex for details