

[CITES REPRESENTATIVE NAME]
[POSITION]
[ADDRESS]
[ADDRESS]
[ADDRESS]

[DATE]

Re: The rapid decline of the African elephant through continued illegal poaching

Dear Representative,

Elephants are the largest land mammal to walk this earth and amongst the most intelligent. It is incomprehensible that each year up to 38,000 of these incredible creatures are killed simply to supply the ivory trade. It is equally as shocking to hear that in as little as 15 years, elephants could be gone from the wild completely.

I am writing to express my strong personal views, shared by many others, on this tragic matter and I am asking you to **please listen**.

As a CITES representative, you are responsible for determining the protection of these vulnerable animals. 75% of ivory is being sold and bought by the Chinese and a kilogramme of ivory sells for as much as \$1,500 in the Far East. While the actual poacher can now expect to earn a staggering \$150 a kilo, up from a sum closer to \$4 a kilo just 4 years ago! Therefore even a small set of 10kg tusks could bring a poacher the equivalent of \$1,500, far more than casual workers earn in a year. A big bull elephant carrying 100kg of ivory would bring in a fortune - the incentive is substantial.

I am urging you as a member of the Animals Committee to recognise the urgency to protect Africa's Elephants in your decision-making. To **stop the slaughter of these majestic animals** there **must be a permanent ban** on the sale of ivory both internationally and within nations if we are to see a future with elephants.

There must be more public awareness campaigns in place to reduce demand. Similarly to the drug trade, if there are consumers willing to pay excessive prices for products, poachers will find a way to get the product to the buyer. The ethical issues which run as an undercurrent throughout these daily, emotionless activities need to be heightened and we can only do this through public awareness campaigns and effective words from expert speakers. It is also critically important that CITES place an emphasis on law enforcement and work with member states to enhance enforcement of existing ivory trade rules and support member states with elephant population to be better able to protect the species in situ. We can't do this alone.

Figures:

- 1979 – 1,300,000 African elephants
- 2013 – 470,000 African elephants
- 1 year – 35,000 - 38,000 elephants poached (International Fund for Animal Welfare)

Thank you for your attention to this matter and standing up for elephants, while there is still time.

Yours sincerely,

[FORENAME & SURNAME]