

Crisis in Africa: Elephants and the ivory trade

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/37373034>

The world's elephants are currently in crisis.

Tens of thousands are being killed every year for their ivory tusks, which are bought and sold by criminals around the world.

A count of Africa's elephants published in August 2016 found that nearly one in three has disappeared over the past seven years.

Leaders from across the world are meeting in Johannesburg in South Africa to discuss the future of the ivory trade, amongst other things.

At the meeting, they will decide if it should be made completely illegal in every country to buy and sell ivory, in order to save the planet's elephants.

Killing elephants for their tusks and selling these around the world is illegal, but some of the ivory trade is still legal.

Many experts are worried that unless we do something to address the problem of elephants being killed for their ivory, there is a very real danger that elephants could die out completely within our lifetime.

Why should we protect elephants?

Elephants are extremely important to the places where they live.

Firstly, they help to shape the landscape. When they trample through forests and undergrowth, they create clearings, making space for new plants and trees to grow. They also help to spread seeds, which may be too big for smaller animals or the wind to carry. Seeds are left on the ground in elephant dung and they can then grow into new plants in new places.

They also bring a lot of money to areas of Africa for tourism, as people come to the continent to see these amazing animals.

Elephants are a vital part of the range of animals and plants that Africa has to offer. It is important to protect this variety of life, known as biodiversity.

However, the ivory trade is causing the number of elephants in the world to decrease, as many elephants are illegally killed by poachers for their ivory tusks.

What is ivory?

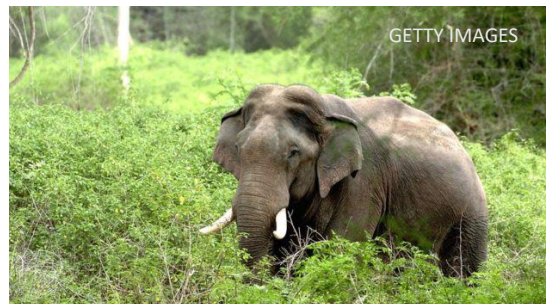
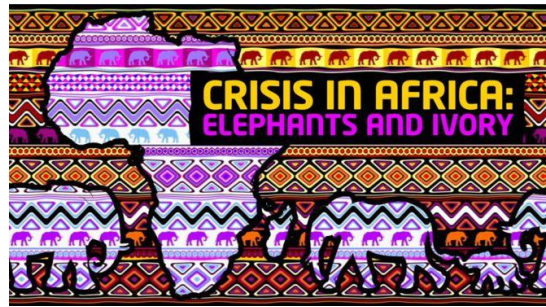
Ivory is the hard, white material that some animals' teeth and tusks are made from. It is not only found in elephant tusks, but also in some other animals like hippopotamuses and some whales.

For hundreds of years, ivory has been considered a valuable material.

It has been used to make things like jewellery, combs, piano keys and religious ornaments.

Even today, people like to buy ivory products for a number of different reasons.

For example, some may want the items for a religious or decorative purpose, while others consider ivory ornaments as a symbol of importance in society.



An Asian elephant walks through the undergrowth



Ivory products in a factory in Hong Kong

What is the ivory trade?

The ivory trade is the name given to the buying and selling of ivory.

Currently, there is an international ban on buying and selling it across borders, but it is allowed inside certain countries.

Some ivory that is bought and sold may be legal, like old ivory from many years ago before the ban. Many see this kind of ivory trade as acceptable.

However, poachers are killing healthy wild elephants in order to steal their tusks too. This is illegal and means the number of elephants in the world is decreasing very quickly.

There are different opinions about whether or not the ivory trade should be allowed.

Some countries believe they should be able to trade legal ivory because they can use the money to pay for elephant conservation projects and other positive things.

Many other countries believe the ivory trade should be banned completely in order to save elephants, as having any ivory trade at all encourages criminals to continue poaching.

Some countries have even **burned all their ivory** to show how determined they are to stop it being sold.

What effect has the ivory trade had on elephants?

Killing elephants for their tusks has led to them becoming under threat. They are being killed faster than new elephants are being born, meaning numbers are going down.

In 1989, in order to protect these animals from being killed for their ivory, a ban was introduced on buying and selling ivory to different countries. It helped the numbers of elephants in the world to go up again.

But since then, the illegal ivory trade has not stopped.

Poachers are still killing elephants for their tusks and the

ivory is being sent around the world by networks of criminals. It is often mixed in with legal ivory so that people can't tell the difference between the two.

What is being done to protect elephants from the ivory trade?

There are many things that are being done to try and protect these animals from being killed for their tusks.

Experts follow and monitor elephants, using devices like tracking collars, so they can look after them by watching what they're up to and where they're going. National parks and conservation areas hire rangers to patrol the parks on foot and keep poachers away.

Countries also work together to stop poachers smuggling ivory across their borders.

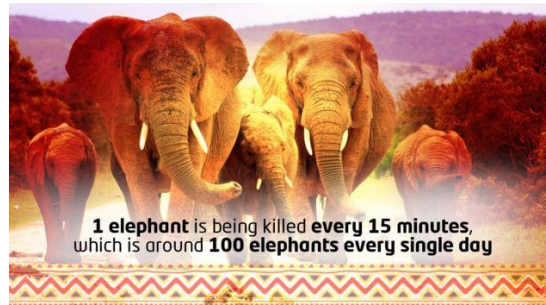
One of the ways they do this is to try to find this ivory and confiscate it. They do this using sniffer dogs and other detection methods, like scanners.

However, it is difficult to manage, as the ivory trade takes place across many different countries and continents. Criminals are also becoming more crafty so it becomes increasingly difficult to catch them.

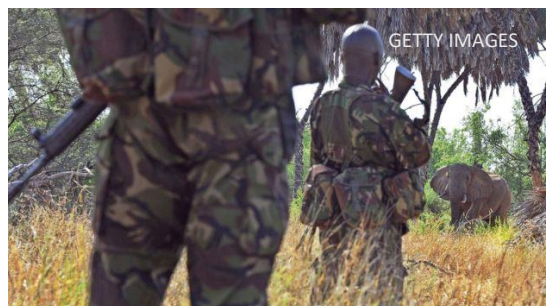
There are other factors that are threatening elephant populations too. For example, human beings taking the land where elephants live in order to farm and develop it. However, poaching remains one of the greatest threats facing these animals.

Many believe that the future of the ivory trade may well decide the future for the planet's elephants, which is why the world is watching the discussions in Johannesburg so closely.

For now, the world - and the world's elephants - will have to wait and see what is decided.



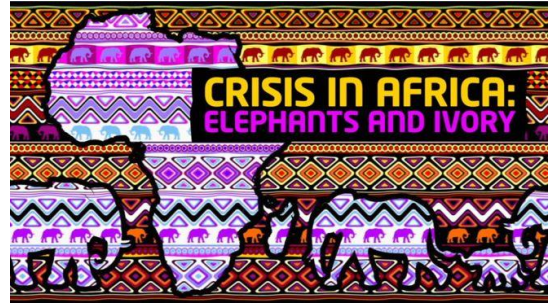
Fire burns a pile of ivory in Kenya



Members of an anti-poaching unit watch over an elephant

Crisis in Africa: Elephants and the ivory trade

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/37373034>



Mild

1. Nearly one in three of which type of elephant has disappeared over the past seven years? (1b)
2. True or False: All ivory trade is illegal. (1d)
3. What is ivory? (1b)
4. Tick the boxes which show what ivory is used for. (1b)

Jewellery	<input type="checkbox"/>
Piano keys	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lighting fires	<input type="checkbox"/>
Combs	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Predict what will happen if a ban is not put in place? (1e)
6. What word in the first paragraph tells you that the ivory trade is a serious problem? (1a)
7. Put these events in order. (1c)

World leaders meet in Johannesburg to discuss the problem	<input type="checkbox"/>
In 1989 a ban is put in place	<input type="checkbox"/>
People start using ivory to make items	<input type="checkbox"/>

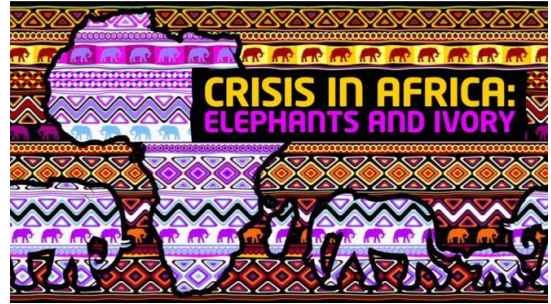
8. Draw lines to match the words to their meanings. (1a)

Illegal	A person who hunts and kills elephants and other animals
Poacher	Against the law
Criminal	Somebody who break the law

9. Why do you think that people poach the elephants? (1d)
10. How many elephants are killed each day by poachers? (1d)

Crisis in Africa: Elephants and the ivory trade

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/37373034>



Hot

1. When was an ivory ban introduced? (2b)
2. Name one other animal that has ivory. (2b)
3. Name a place where ivory products are made. (2d)
4. Draw lines to match the words to their meanings. (2a)

Illegal	A person who hunts and kills elephants and other animals
Poacher	Against the law
Ranger	Somebody who breaks the law
Criminal	A person who protects the elephants

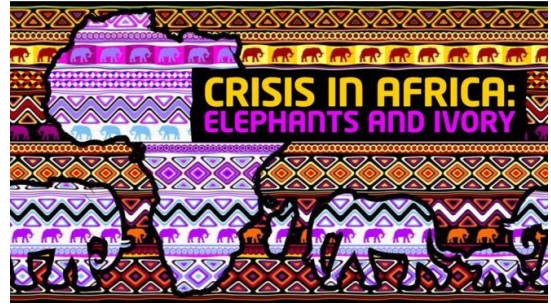
5. Put these events in order. (2c)

World leaders meet in Johannesburg to discuss the problem	
In 1989 a ban is put in place	
People start using ivory to make items	
Rangers are put in place to patrol conservation areas	

6. What do you think will happen if a complete ban is unsuccessful? (2e)
7. What animal is used to help prevent poaching? (2b)
8. What word tells you how important elephants are to the place where they live? (2a)
9. What phrase tells you that when ivory is found it is taken away? (2g)
10. How do you know the 1989 ivory ban has not been completely successful? (2d)

Crisis in Africa: Elephants and the ivory trade

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/37373034>



Extra Hot

1. In which city will leaders across the world meet to discuss the future of the ivory trade? (2b)
2. What phrase tells you that the ivory trade is not a new thing? (2g)
3. Name two other animals that have ivory. (2b)
4. What do you think will happen if a complete ban is unsuccessful? (2e)
5. How do you know the 1989 ivory ban has not been completely successful? (2d)
6. Put these events in order. (2c)

World leaders meet in Johannesburg to discuss the problem	
In 1989 a ban is put in place	
People start using ivory to make items	
Rangers are put in place to patrol conservation areas	
The number of elephants begins to increase	

7. What word in the text means, 'the variety of plants and animal life in a particular area'? (2a)
8. Where was a pile of ivory burned to prevent it being sold? (2b)
9. What word in the text means, 'to seize with authority'? (2a)
10. Put a tick in the boxes which are true. (2d)

Poachers use underhand means to continue the ivory trade	
The ivory trade happens in more than one country	
The ivory trade was completely once stopped	
Around 100 elephants are killed each day	

Crisis in Africa: Elephants and the ivory trade

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/37373034>

Mild Answers

- Nearly one in three of which type of elephant has disappeared over the past seven years? (1b) *African*
- True or False: All ivory trade is illegal. (1d) *false, it is still legal to trade old ivory from before the ban*
- What is ivory? (1b) *Ivory is the hard, white material that some animals' teeth and tusks are made from*
- Tick the boxes which show what ivory is used for. (1b)

Jewellery	✓
Piano keys	✓
Lighting fires	
Combs	✓

- Predict what will happen if a ban is not put in place? (1e) *Elephants could die out*
- What word in the first paragraph tells you that the ivory trade is a serious problem? (1a) *crisis*
- Put these events in order. (1c)

World leaders meet in Johannesburg to discuss the problem	3
In 1989 a ban is put in place	2
People start using ivory to make items	1

- Draw lines to match the words to their meanings. (1a)

Illegal	A person who hunts and kills elephants and other animals
Poacher	Against the law
Criminal	Somebody who break the law

- Why do you think that people poach the elephants? (1d) *so that they can make money from selling the ivory*
- How many elephants are killed each day by poachers? (1d) *around 100*

Crisis in Africa: Elephants and the ivory trade

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/37373034>

Hot Answers

1. When was an ivory ban introduced? (2b) *1989*
2. Name one other animal that has ivory. (2b) *hippopotamus and some whales*
3. Name a place where ivory products are made. (2d) *Hong Kong*
4. Draw lines to match the words to their meanings. (2a)

Illegal	A person who hunts and kills elephants and other animals
Poacher	Against the law
Ranger	Somebody who breaks the law
Criminal	A person who protects the elephants

5. Put these events in order. (2c)

World leaders meet in Johannesburg to discuss the problem	4
In 1989 a ban is put in place	2
People start using ivory to make items	1
Rangers are put in place to patrol conservation areas	3

6. What do you think will happen if a complete ban is unsuccessful? (2e) *elephants may become extinct*
7. What animal is used to help prevent poaching? (2b) *sniffer dogs*
8. What word tells you how important elephants are to the place where they live? (2a) *extremely*
9. What phrase tells you that when ivory is found it is taken away? (2g) *confiscate it*
10. How do you know the 1989 ivory ban has not been completely successful? (2d) *poaching is still happening and the number of elephants is decreasing*

Crisis in Africa: Elephants and the ivory trade

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/37373034>

Extra Hot Answers

1. In which city will leaders across the world meet to discuss the future of the ivory trade? (2b) *Johannesburg in South Africa*
2. What phrase tells you that the ivory trade is not a new thing? (2g) *For hundreds of years ivory has been considered a valuable material*
3. Name two other animals that have ivory. (2b) *hippopotamus and some whales*
4. What do you think will happen if a complete ban is unsuccessful? (2e) *elephants will become extinct*
5. How do you know the 1989 ivory ban has not been completely successful? (2d) *poaching is still happening and the number of elephants is decreasing*
6. Put these events in order. (2c)

World leaders meet in Johannesburg to discuss the problem	5
In 1989 a ban is put in place	2
People start using ivory to make items	1
Rangers are put in place to patrol conservation areas	3
The number of elephants begins to increase	4

7. What word in the text means, 'the variety of plants and animal life in a particular area'? (2a) *biodiversity*
8. Where was a pile of ivory burned to prevent it being sold? (2b) *Kenya*
9. What word in the text means, 'to seize with authority'? (2a) *confiscate*
10. Put a tick in the boxes which are true. (2d)

Poachers use underhand means to continue the ivory trade	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The ivory trade happens in more than one country	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The ivory trade was completely once stopped	<input type="checkbox"/>
Around 100 elephants are killed each day	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>