

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES  
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA

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Sixty-fifth meeting of the Standing Committee  
Geneva (Switzerland), 7-11 July 2014

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Species trade and conservation

Elephants

ELEPHANT CONSERVATION, ILLEGAL KILLING AND IVORY TRADE

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. The Annex to the present document presents the report of the United Arab Emirates, pursuant to Decision 16.80. The report from the United Arab Emirates was received by the Secretariat on 3 July 2014, and could therefore not be taken into account in document SC65 Doc. 42.1. The report is presented in the language in which it was received.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT & WATER



الإمارات العربية المتحدة  
وزارة البيئة والمياه

# IVORY STATUS IN UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

## Introduction:

In 1979 there were an estimated 1.3 million African elephants and by 1989 only 600,000 remained. The loss of more than half a million elephants in a decade was due primarily to killing for ivory. Natural habitat loss was a second important factor, human population had doubled in elephant range states since 1970. Major public awareness campaigns were launched worldwide to save the elephant and stop the illegal trade in ivory. In October 1989, at the seventh meeting of the CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) Convention of the Parties (CoP7), governments banned international trade in ivory, with effect from January 1990. (wildlifedirect.org)

UAE recognized the importance of tackling illegal wildlife trade early on, in line with its keenness on protecting the environment, becoming the first nation in the Middle East to ratify CITES in 1990. The UAE regularly assesses the effectiveness of the country's abilities to implement the Convention successfully and has positioned itself as a leading nation within the region for these efforts. The nation's legislation on CITES were issued and became came into force in 2002, entitled Federal Law 11, which later qualified UAE for a category (A) status in the national legislation project. This meant that UAE's legislation pertaining to illegal wildlife trade completely fulfilled all requirements to implement CITES.

Moreover, UAE participated in "London Declaration" on the Elimination of illicit trafficking in wildlife in February 2014. The Declaration focused on the commitments and measures to take practical steps to put an end to the illicit trade in wild animals, which include rhinos, tigers, elephants and their parts.

## Legislation:

- Due to the geographical and strategic location of UAE as a link between the east and the west regions, it is considered to be a critical area for illegal wildlife trade trafficking. UAE government is aware of such matter, in efforts of controlling this issue, UAE enacted a number of legislations which includes the Federal Law No. (11) for the year 2002 concerning the regulation and control of CITES, and includes 40 articles governing the scope of implementation, the functions of the authorities, administrative and scientific authorities, international trade and documentation, exceptions, identifying the ports of entry, how to deal with non-member states, registration of establishments and companies, transit,

cooperation with the concerned authorities, and sanctions. It also includes , penal articles and sanctions for offenders which varies from fines up to 50 thousand dirhams and imprisonment up to six months. The penalties vary depending on the Appendixes to the Convention. Also, resolution of the Council of Ministries No. 22 of the year 2003, on issuing the executive By-law of the Federal Law No. 11 of the year 2002 on regulating and controlling the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna & Flora.

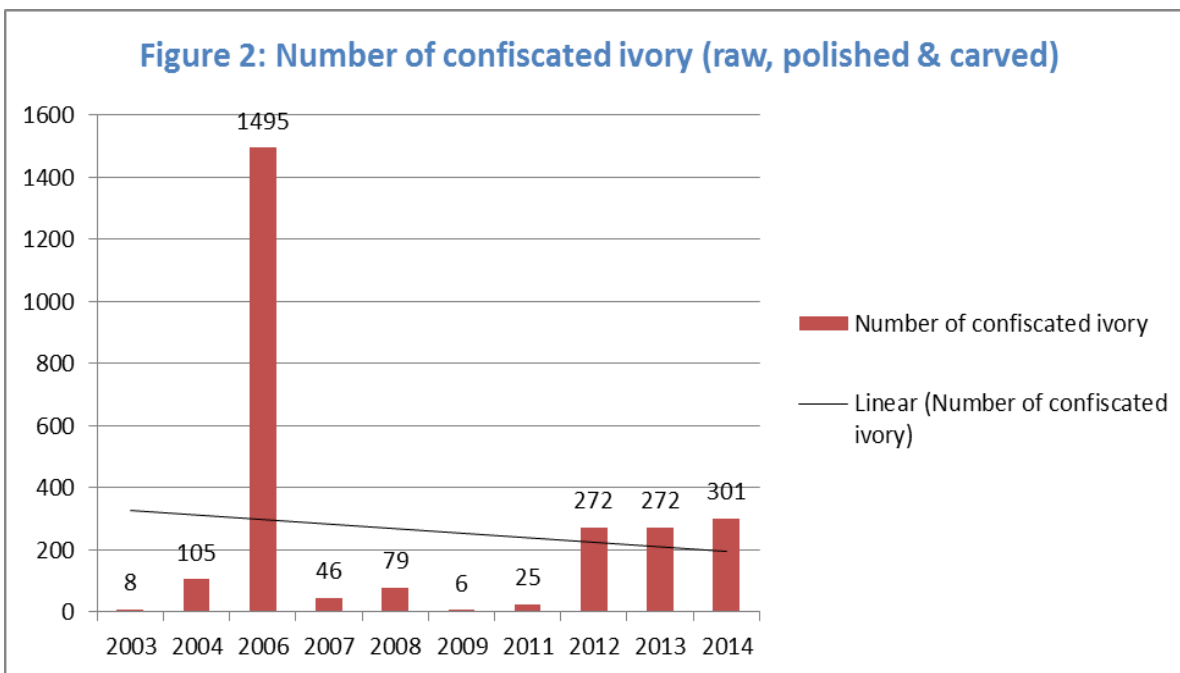
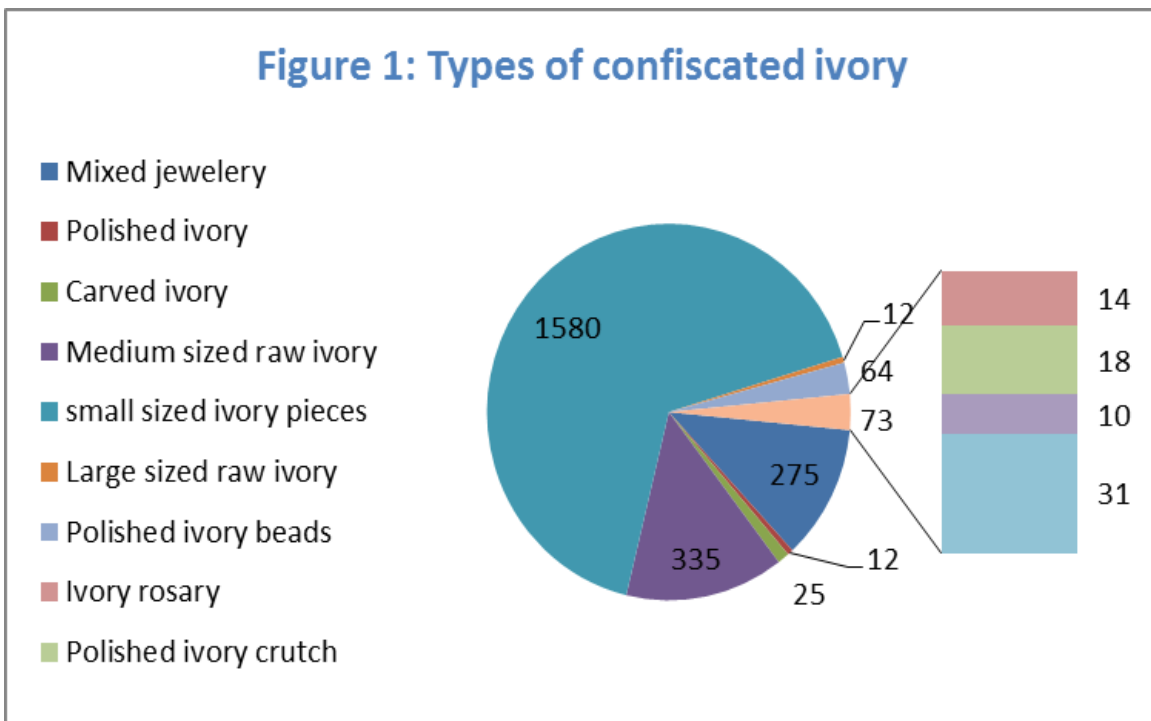
- Furthermore, in 1988 Dubai Government issued order for ban preventing the business of buying and selling and manufacturing of ivory and rhino horns. As a result of the previous law, in 1992 Dubai burns 12 tons of confiscated ivory to demonstrate support for United Nations ban on trading in elephant tusks. UAE CITES authorities working in collaboration with NGOs to evaluate and assess the enforcement effectiveness and identifying the gaps in order to improve the efforts of CITES implementation regularly.

### **Access points control:**

The Ministry of Environment and Water monitor all main border crossing points and equips ports with the latest techniques that would help to control illegal shipment. It also cooperates with international governmental and non-governmental organizations; to take advantage of the expertise and develop them is in line with the UAE strategy. In 2011, around 476 samples of live animals and plants, ivory and leather products were confiscated by main entry points being Dubai Airport, and Ghowaifat and Abu Dhabi border points. In 2012, the number of confiscation increased to reach 1376 samples where ivory consignments had the biggest share. In 2013, on the other hand, confiscations reached 463 samples varied between live animals and birds, mummified animals, leather goods and ivory products. These confiscations were conducted by cooperation and coordination between the Ministry and the competent authorities of law enforcement. Most of the confiscated ivory is either carried by a passenger or coming through transit without disclosure of the type of shipment. Ivory is smuggled through the UAE in raw form, carved trinkets and other forms. In 2009, the amount of ivory stock in Dubai municipality was six tons that differ between raw, polished, carved and powdered ivory.

In November 2012, Dubai Customs seized a haul worth AED 15 million that was being brought into the country at Jebel Ali Port. The 215 tusks came from 108 African elephants and were hidden in 40 boxes containing beans. In May 2013, Dubai Customs seized ivory shipment being brought into the country at Jebel Ali Port. The 259 tusks came from 129 African elephants and were hidden in 212 boxes containing wooden furniture. In 2014, a total of 301 piece of ivory at Dubai International airports.

The Ministry of Environment and Water, in 2014, did a warehouse inventory regarding ivory stock, the result of that inventory showed that there is a 2380 specimen of ivory, The amount of such specimens in Kilograms is not yet measured, the types of ivory in stores diverse between large, small, and medium size ivory and carved, polished and raw ivory (Figure 1). The Ministry is planning to dispose the confiscated and accumulated specimens of ivory this year. Based on the recommendations of CITES secretariat in Conf. 9.10 (Rev. CoP15) which states: “Parties dispose of confiscated and accumulated dead specimens of Appendix-I species, including parts and derivatives, only for bona fide scientific, educational, enforcement or identification purposes, and save in storage or destroy specimens whose disposal for these purposes is not practicable.” the country is working for different options to destroy them.



### Online control:

United Arab Emirates also cooperates with international governmental and non-governmental organizations; to take advantage of the expertise and develop them is in

line with the UAE strategy. In addition, the Ministry of Environment and Water prevented the electronic illegal trade of endangered animal and plant species listed in the Convention, and in coordination with the authorities responsible for electronic communication sites on the internet, through the follow up on advertisements for the sale of endangered animals, where most of these ads were posted by fake communication channels outside the state, and 60% of such sites were removed, i.e. 800 sites, since such websites are unreliable sources of information which might carry a lot of exaggerations. The External Audit Department in the Ministry in coordination with the local environmental authorities conducts many inspection programs on pet shops and the related businesses, and takes the appropriate action against the violator of CITES legalization.



**Awareness:**

**Training courses:**

The Ministry of Environment and Water provides special training courses on a regular basis for veterinarians, agricultural engineers working in Enforcement Authorities such as: Ministry of Environment and Water, Ministry of Internal ,Airports security and Customs, and those who are assigned to implement federal law no. (11) for the year 2002 on the organization and control of international trade on endangered Fauna and flora . There are more than 21 training courses conducted for the different concerned authorities from year 2007 to 2013. Moreover, the International Fund for Animal

Welfare (IFAW) office in Dubai are playing an important role in cooperating with the Management CITES Authority in increasing the capacity building and awareness for the inspection officers and the community in general. These training sessions keep such individuals up to date with what is latest updates and to be in line with the best practices worldwide.



#### Public awareness:

UAE also concerned with increasing public awareness through the distribution of leaflets, posters and guiding brochures regarding CITES and the species listed in the appendixes of the Convention in different places in the UAE such as shopping malls, local markets, airports, schools and universities; to demonstrate the risks and dangers of illegal trafficking of rare and endangered species. Awareness campaign were carried out in 2009 till now, titled "What You carry May Harm You", which was aimed to spread awareness to travelers through border crossing points.

In 2003, The International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) – MENA office launched a campaign to battle the illegal trade in ivory at Dubai International Airport jointly by the airport security department of Dubai Police. Advertisements warning passengers that ivory smuggling leads to prosecution were being shown on video screens. These advertisements reached all transit and arrival passengers. The number of passengers who have seen the message is approximately 728,000.

In 2014, IFAW in cooperation with the Ministry of Environment and Water in UAE, Dubai Police, and Dubai International Airport conducted the "Ivory smuggling leads to



prosecution” campaign, aiming to reduce the demand on ivory worldwide. A stand was set up to display samples of confiscated ivory to educate passengers about the importance of the wildlife and the threats facing elephants. A survey was done on passengers to measure the impact of the Dubai Airport ivory campaign. The number of passengers who done the survey was 942 passenger with 93.62% of them agreeing that trade in all elephant ivory should be banned, and 91.08% of them agreed that ivory smuggler should be punished. The campaign message was delivered to around one million passengers. The significant of such campaigns come from the fact it reach an international audience which gives an impression of the international status of ivory trade awareness. Furthermore, many electronic awareness campaigns are carried through social networking channels such as Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.



The Ministry with corporation with the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) produced a number of leaflets, posters and printed mugs to increase the public awareness toward elephants and ivory’s status. They also, issued Elephant Never Forget: a scientific booklet with activities for schools, especially grade 4 and 5. The booklet main message was how to care and conserve elephants. Furthermore, The CITES scientific

Authority in UAE , Environmental Agency Abu Dhabi, published a handbook titled “UAE CITES Handbook” which include common CITES & Non-CITES species involved in UAE trade.

