MINISTRY FOR FORESTRY, ENVIRONMENT AND THE
PROTECTION OF NATURAL RESOURCES
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GENERAL
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**DIRECTORATE OF FAUNA AND
PROTECTED AREAS**
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# NATIONAL IVORY ACTION PLAN OF GABON
# 2015–2016

## Directorate of Fauna
## and Protected Areas
## (DGFAP) AND
## National Agency for National Parks (ANPN)

Acronyms and Abbreviations

DNA:        Deoxyribonucleic Acid

ANPN        National Agency for National Parks

APJ         Judicial Police Agent

TBPA        Transboundary Protected Area

CITES       Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

DGDI        Directorate of Documentation and Immigration

DGFAP       Directorate of Fauna and Protected Areas

DP:         Provincial Directorate

MEF         Ministry of Water and Forests

LAB         Fight against poaching

NGO         Non-Governmental Organization

OPJ         Judicial Police Officer

NIAP        National Ivory Action Plan

PSGE        Emerging Gabon Strategic Plan

SETRAG      Transgabon Operating Company

TRAFFIC     Wildlife trade monitoring network

WCS         Wildlife Conservation Society

WWF         World Wide Fund for Nature

# Summary

## Introduction

Gabon is a heavily forested country (80 per cent of its territory is covered by forests) with a very low annual deforestation rate (Hansen et al., 2013). The combination of its low population density and 1.7 million inhabitants, of which 87 per cent are in cities (UNDP), makes Gabon the country in Central Africa with the least-degraded forest ecosystem. Gabon is home to an animal population, the size of which makes it of international importance: this is particularly the case with the African forest elephant (Loxodonta cyclotis), as 50 per cent of the population is found in Gabonese territory (Maisels et al., 2013) even though the Gabonese forests only makes up 13 per cent of the total forest area in the Congo Basin (Iremonger et al., 1997).

Although Gabon has a significant elephant population, the strong demand for ivory and its high price on the market makes this species a particular target to feed a complex global ivory trafficking network (CITES et al., 2013; UNEP, 2013; Wittemyer et al., 2014). As Gabon is a signatory to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES),[1] it is obliged to implement recommendations with the purpose of reducing the intensity of poaching and the illicit trade in ivory.

Elephant poaching for ivory trafficking in Gabonese territory is considered by the national authorities to be a matter of great importance. As a result, it is urgent for Gabon to put in place an ivory action plan, as recommended by the CITES Standing Committee during its 65th meeting in Geneva in July 2014. The fact that this action plan is compatible with the direction of the Emerging Gabon Strategic Plan under the "Green Gabon" pillar demonstrates the determination of the Gabonese authorities.

The aim of this plan is to facilitate the monitoring and evaluation of the application of the law against big-term poaching and the illicit trade in ivory. The plan, which covers the period 2015–2016 can be considered as a road map for Gabon, presented as a dashboard in order to optimize monitoring activities and their appropriation by all stakeholders.

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[1]   http://www.cites.org/eng/disc/parties/alphabet.php.

## Description of the Action Plan

This ivory action plan comprises a vision, a goal, an overall objective and six priority measures:

### Vision

By 2020, reduce elephant poaching and ivory trafficking on national territory by 80 per cent.

### Goal

Implementation of strengthened efforts against trafficking in ivory at the national level, a more dissuasive legal system, an increased presence of officers in elephant range areas and a strong and concerted synergistic actions by all partners and permanent monitoring of activities.

### Overall objective:

Intensify the fight against elephant poaching and ivory trafficking at the national level.

### Priority measures

The activity tables for priority measures and monitoring indicators of this national ivory plan revolve around five [2] pillars to fight against fraud, namely:

### A. Legislation and Regulations

The legislation maps out the legal framework for the management of natural resources. It groups together tools that are the basis for application of the law. Current legislation is not sufficiently adapted to the extent of growth in big-term poaching and the high volume of ivory trafficking. A reform of specific texts has proved to be necessary and will pursue the criminalization of connected wildlife offences.

### B. Prosecutions

Application of the law is measured by the quality of prosecutions that are achieved and, above all, the capacity to see cases result in applicable sentences. Emphasis should be placed on achieving qualitative and quantitative improvement of prosecutions of ivory traffickers.

### C. Information and surveys

Good knowledge of the issue is contingent upon an efficient and reliable information system. It is therefore necessary to create and strengthen an information network through more efficient actions. The establishment of such a system requires collaboration with key partners.

### D. National and international cooperation on wildlife crime

As the issue of wildlife crime is quite significant and also assumes various forms, involvement of national and international actors is indispensable. At the national level, State sectors that have relevant tools should be aligned in a multifaceted manner in order to fight against the extinction of wildlife resources, particularly the forest elephant.

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[2] Translator's note: The source text says 5, although there are 6 listed below. In one of the tables below, two of these are combined into one.

### E. Anti-fraud operations

All of these actions should be translate into the presence of anti-fraud operations on the ground. For ivory trafficking, the actions should directed at each level of the chain.

### F. Awareness-raising and communication

Communication is also a means that contributes to changing habits. Communication and awareness-raising can play in a decisive role in the fight against poaching and ivory trafficking.

## Table of activities to carry out

| Anti-fraud pillar | Priority measures | Entity responsible | Deadlines | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | From now until 30 April 2015 | From now until 30 October 2015 | From now until 30 April 2016 | From now until 30 October 2016 |
| **A.   LEGISLATION** | A.1  Strengthen the sentences and fines for actors in ivory trafficking (Penal Code, Forest Code, National Parks Act) | DGFAP/ANPN Min Justice/Parliament | Have submitted the 2 draft texts | Verified texts | Enter into force | Application |
| | A.2  Translate the CITES provisions related to ivory trafficking into national legislation through specific regulatory instruments | DGFAP Parliament / | Have organized consultations with a view to identifying the regulatory needs of the fight against ivory trafficking | Proposal and examination of texts | The texts to have been validated/signed | Enter into force and be applied |
| | A.3[3]Define a legal procedure for human-elephant conflicts and compensation | DGFAP/ANPN/ Ministry of Justice/Ministry of Agriculture/Ministry of the Interior/ Parliament | Organization of meetings on a legal framework to manage human-fauna conflicts with the relevant ministries | Proposal of a draft text | Validation and adoption | Enter into force and be applied |

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[3]    Human-fauna and human-elephant conflicts are a sensitive issue in Gabon and the Government ranks it among its priorities. Human-elephant conflicts could constitute open doors for elephant poaching if people resort to unauthorized compensation.

| Anti-fraud pillar | Priority measures | Entity responsible | Deadlines | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | From now until 30 April 2015 | From now until 30 October 2015 | From now until 30 April 2016 | From now until 30 October 2016 |
| B.  PROSECUTIONS | B.1  Adopt and make available to all a model for the drafting of statements in accordance with legal procedures | MF/ANPN/Public Prosecutor's Office/ Conservation justice | Have trained key partners | Application | | |
| | B.2  Ensure monitoring of legal proceedings (legal experts, lawyers, etc.) | ANP/DGFAP | Have defined a monitoring plan | Application | | |
| | B.3  Continue effective application of sentences and payment of fines incurred | | | | | |
| | B.4  Strengthen capacity of partner administrations with regard to the application of the law and development of legal procedures to fight against ivory trafficking in their department | DGFAP/ANPN/ Public Prosecutor's Office /Ministry of the Interior/ Ministry of Agriculture | Recruitment of legal experts | Training of field officers (OPJ, APJ) | Application | |
| | B.5  Establish a permanent database to store all information about prosecutions | DGFAP/ANPN/ Conservation justice | Collect existing information | Implementation of tools | | |

| Anti-fraud pillar | Priority measures | Entity responsible | Deadlines | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | From now until 30 April 2015 | From now until 30 October 2015 | From now until 30 April 2016 | From now until 30 October 2016 |
| C.  INFORMATION AND SURVEYS | C.1  Establish a specialized unit on the largest ivory trafficking networks (Identify poachers, traffickers and ivory traders, places, etc.) | ANPN/DGFAP/ Ministry of Defence/Ministry of Justice/Ministry of the Interior | Have created a framework, trained and equipped | Implementation | | |
| | C.2  Dismantle the networks illegally trafficking and selling specialized rifles and ammunition (bullets, handmade ammunition, poisoned spears, etc.) | ANPN/DGFAP/ Border police /Police force/ Customs/High Authority/ Ministry of Agriculture/ Ministry of Interior… | Identify the main black markets | Establishment of a remuneration system for informers/ Freephone number (hotline) for the reporting of ivory trafficking | Establish a network of informers | |
| | C.3  Creation of an information exchange system at the local level | ANPN/DGFAP/ Border police/ Police force/ Customs/High Authority/ Ministry of Agriculture/ Ministry of Interior… | Have organized consultations and adopted an exchange system | Implementation | | |
| D.  NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ON WILDLIFE CRIME | D.1  Sign or strengthen inter-State collaborative protocols on the fight against poaching and ivory trafficking with Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo and Equatorial Guinea | DGFAP/ANPN/ Interpol/ COMIFAC/UNODC | Have held consultations and preparatory meetings on the protocols | Validation of protocols | Implementation | |
| | D.2  Establish mixed, inter-State teams on the fight against poaching | DGFAP/ Customs / Police Force DGDI/ High Authority/ Ministry of Agriculture | Have signed cooperation agreements | Training on the use of tools for navigation and SMART data collection and on | Implementation | |

| Anti-fraud pillar | Priority measures | Entity responsible | Deadlines | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | **From now until 30 April 2015** | **From now until 30 October 2015** | **From now until 30 April 2016** | **From now until 30 October 2016** |
| | | | | legislation on fauna and the Code of Criminal Procedure | | |
| | D.3 Strengthen border controls (border police, Police force, Customs and immigration services, the High Authority) | DGFAP/Customs/ Police force DGDI/The High Authority/Ministry of Agriculture | Consultations with all the Government departments involved | Application | | |
| | D.4 Create sub-regional teams to fight ivory trafficking through border and cross-border activities | DGFAP/Customs/ Police force/ DGDI | Consultations with all the Government departments involved | Application | | |
| | D.5 Strengthen collaboration on the implementation of an information exchange system, an intelligence service and coordination with specialized agencies (INTERPOL, CITES/ETIS, etc.) | DGFAP/ANPN/ Interpol/ CITES/ETIS | Consultations with all the Government departments involved | Application | | |
| | D.6 Establish a permanent working group to monitor the implementation of the action plan | ANPN/DGFAP/ Border police/ Police Force/ Customs/the High Authority/ Ministry of Agriculture/ Ministry of the Interior | Meetings and consultations and establishment of a protocol | Implementation of a working protocol | | |

| Anti-fraud pillar | Priority measures | Entity responsible | Deadlines | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | From now until 30 April 2015 | From now until 30 October 2015 | From now until 30 April 2016 | From now until 30 October 2016 |
| E. ANTI-FRAUD OPERATIONS | E.1 Strengthen the effectiveness of missions through the implementation of SMART and better coordination between different administrations | DGFAP/ANPN/ Police force/ Soldiers | Consultations and the development of work programme | Implementation of the work programme | | |
| | E.2 Using an evaluation grid, assess the regulations and measures taken by forest concessionaires to fight poaching, particularly elephant trafficking | DGFAP / NGO (WCS and WWF) | Consultations and the development of an evaluation grid (pending protocols) | Adoption of the tool and implementation in forest concessions | | |
| | E.3 Follow up on the monitoring activities of forest concessionaires by expanding the SMART network | DGFAP / DP / NGO (WCS, WWF) | Establishment of a local SMART database hosted at the Provincial Directorate level | Systematic reporting on monitoring and control activities to the local SMART database | | |
| | E.4 Strengthen the presence of the armed forces in national and cross-border parks for wildlife protection activities | DGFAP/ANPN/ Ministry of Defence | Consultation to identify high priority areas | Assignment of armed forces to the remaining parks | Effective presence of the armed forces in cross-border parks | |
| | E.5 Establish team to fight ivory trafficking in ports, airports, markets, jewellers, at land borders, and in large urban centres | DGFAP/ Police Force/ Police/Customs, the High Authority | Working sessions with all relevant parties | Development of memoranda of understanding | Implementation of protocols | |
| | E.6 Strengthen the capacity of the Canine Unit (staff, logistics and dogs) | DGFAP/ANP | Appoint 10 agents (ANPN/DGFAP); recruit and train additional 4 service dogs | Addition of more logistical and financial means Acquisition of 3 sniffer dogs and | Operations in the field (ports, airports and urban centres) | |

| Anti-fraud pillar | Priority measures | Entity responsible | Deadlines | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | From now until 30 April 2015 | From now until 30 October 2015 | From now until 30 April 2016 | From now until 30 October 2016 |
| | | | | training of these dogs/training of UCAC agents in the legal procedures related to seizures, PV, arrests, anti-poaching, PCR, etc. | | |
| | E.7 Build a secure storage area solely for seized ivory | DGFAP | Construction of a secure storage area solely for seized ivory | | | |
| | E.8 Establish a permanent computer-based monitoring system for seized ivory | DGFAP | Choice of a software programme | Training of managers in computer-based monitoring | Put into practice | |
| | E.9 Inventory of seized ivory (administration, CITES, TRAFFIC, etc.) with reports submitted to the Government and made public | DGFAP | National inventory of the ivory stocks | | | Burning of ivory stocks |
| | E.10 Draft memoranda of understanding with transporters (SETRAG, Syndicates, airlines, shipping companies, requiring systematic seizure of machines and vehicles incriminated in the transport of ivory | DGFAP | Meetings to make contact, drafting of memoranda of understanding | Validation of memoranda of understanding | Implementation | |
| F. AWARENESS-RAISING AND COMMUNICATION | F.1 Development of a communication plan | DGFAP/ANPN/WWF/WCS | Drafting and validation of a communication plan | Dissemination to all | | |
| | F.2 Organize awareness- | ANPN/DGFAP/ | Have carried out awareness-raising programmes | | | |

| Anti-fraud pillar | Priority measures | Entity responsible | Deadlines | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | From now until 30 April 2015 | From now until 30 October 2015 | From now until 30 April 2016 | From now until 30 October 2016 |
| | raising projects in the 9 provinces in the country, involving the people | Border police/ Ministry of Justice/ Police force/ Customs/ High Authority/ Ministry of Agriculture/ Ministry of the Interior… | | | | |
| | F.3 Carry out programmes through the media | DGFAP/ANPN/ Ministry of the Interior | Preparation of programmes | Have carried out programmes through the media | | |
| | F.4 Establish a management committee for human-fauna conflicts | DGFAP/ANPN/ Ministry of Justice/Ministry of Agriculture | Organize meetings and review of the project and the drafting of documents establishing the committee | Implementation of the committee | | |
| | F.5 Organize an information seminar for parliamentarians | ANPN/DGFAP/Border police/ Ministry of Justice/ Police force/ Customs/ High Authority/ Ministry of Agriculture/ Ministry of the Interior… | Have organized the seminar with parliamentarians | | | |

**Table of monitoring indicators and means of verification**

| Pillar | Indicator | Database and means of verification |
|---|---|---|
| Legislation | Number of traffickers remanded each year | Written judgements of sentences for wildlife crimes |
| Prosecutions, information and surveys | Number of ivory trafficking networks dismantled | Report of control officers |
| National and international cooperation on wildlife crime | Number of joint reports and programmes | Reports on common achievements |
| Anti-fraud operations | Have covered of 2/3 of national territory | Programme reports and maps of areas covered |
| Dissemination, awareness-raising and education of the public | Have raised the awareness of 1000 people per province | Programme reports |

## Implementation of the National Ivory Action Plan

A systematic and integrated approach will enable the establishment of measures intended to prevent thwart and reduce activities in the ivory trafficking chain.

The implementation of the ivory action plan requires a variety of competences from different areas. Success will be obtained by the united efforts of all stakeholders.

**Tasks of the main stakeholders**

° **Directorate of Fauna and Protected Areas and National Agency for National Parks**;

The Ministry of Forestry, the Environment and Protection of Natural Resources is, through the Directorate of Fauna and Protected Areas (DGFAP) and the National Agency for National Parks (ANPN), the institutional body responsible for applying and monitoring the implementation of CITES recommendations. DGFAP and ANPN, leaders in the implementation of the National Ivory Action Plan, will complete the following tasks:

- Convene and organize working sessions with other ministerial departments;

- Draft texts and encourage their adoption;

- Publish and disseminate the new texts;

- Coordinate and implement activities in the field, particularly anti-poaching, anti-trafficking in ivory and anti-corruption activities and collaboration with other Ministries, cross-border collaboration and collaboration with agencies along the ivory trafficking chain (from Africa to Asia);

- Carry out monitoring and evaluation activities on the implementation of all processes in the National Ivory Action Plan.

° **Civil society partners;**

Fraud constitutes an obstacle to the socio-economic development of a country. In this respect, civil society is strongly involved in enhancing good practices. During the implementation of this national ivory action plan, civil society will be involved in the following areas:

- Making laws accessible to all;

- Fulfilling memoranda of understanding;

- Raising people's awareness;

- Providing technical support to different actors.

° **Other governmental institutions**

Many institutions are indirectly involved in the ivory issue. This plan to combat ivory trafficking aims to unite all the synergies in order to offer the best approach possible to combat the illegal exploitation of ivory. The Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Justice and Ministry of the Interior are some of the institutions that will work together to offer a more confident approach in the achievement of objectives related to a significant reduction in ivory trafficking.

**Monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the National Ivory Action Plan**

Mid-term technical evaluations will be carried out by DGFAP and ANPN, which are the entities responsible for the implementation of the National Ivory Action Plan. A status report will be produced every three months.

## Conclusion

This action plan is an administrative planning tool intended to facilitate communication between the partners involved in the fight against ivory trafficking. This plan is a consensus document which will enable better organization in the progressive and appropriate resolution of the scourge of ivory trafficking. Rather than mere words, this plan is a platform to harmonize the different synergies in order to protect a species in danger of disappearing. To put it simply, this plan is a technical guidance tool to strengthen the regulatory framework, survey techniques and anti-fraud operations.

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