

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



Sixty-sixth meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 11-15 January 2016

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Species trade and conservation

Elephants (Elephantidae spp.)

DISPOSAL OF IVORY STOCKS: THE GROWTH OF IVORY DESTRUCTIONS

1. This document has been submitted by Benin, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia^{*} and Kenya.[†]

Ivory Destruction Events 2011-2014

2. The acceleration of elephant poaching and ivory smuggling in the three years prior to the 65th meeting of the CITES Standing Committee in July 2014 prompted several countries to undertake and publicise the destruction of government-owned ivory, generally as a result of seizures by enforcement authorities. There were 11 public destruction events in 10 different countries (including 2 in China). More than half were in the six months prior to the CITES Standing Committee. All received media coverage, some of which was extensive. The data on these destructions is summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Destructions since 2011 and prior to 65th CITES Standing Committee in July 2014

Country	Year	Ivory destroyed (tonnes if known)	Comments
Kenya	2011	>5.0	2002 seizure in Singapore repatriated to Kenya in 2004 under auspices of LATF.
Gabon	2012	4.8	
Philippines	2013	>4.2	
India	2013	Unknown	Some doubts about whether this took place
US	2013	5.4	
China	2014	6.0	Guangdong
China HK	2014	>28.0	Planned in monthly tranches during year

^{*} Note from the Secretariat : no official submission of the present document has been received from this country.

[†] The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat (or the United Nations Environment Programme) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.

Country	Year	Ivory destroyed (tonnes if known)	Comments
SAR			from May 2014
France	2014	3.0	
Chad	2014	1.1	
Belgium	2014	1.5	
Portugal	2014	Unknown	
Total events: 11			

Recognition by CITES Standing Committee

3. Following an initiative by Chad and the Philippines, for the first time the CITES Standing Committee gave recognition in July 2014 to the process of destroying legal and illegally obtained ivory in Document Com 9, entitled *DISPOSAL OF IVORY STOCKS*. The SC made the following recommendations:
- a) Notes the action taken by Kenya, Gabon, the Philippines, India, United States, China including Hong Kong SAR, France, Chad, Belgium, and Portugal in destroying stockpiles of mainly illegally sourced ivory since 2011;
 - b) Requests the Secretariat, subject to available resources, to provide guidance[‡], in accordance with the provisions of Resolutions Conf. 9.10 (Rev. CoP15) and Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16) on “best practices” for management of legal and illegal ivory stockpiles and make it available to Parties.
 - c) Encourages governments, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations, if requested, to provide support to range States and other countries if needed to plan for and implement the management of ivory stockpiles for the purposes of these recommendations
 - d) Requests the Secretariat to report on progress made with regard to paragraph b) to the 66th Standing Committee meeting.

Ivory Destruction Events July 2014- August 2015

4. Since July 2014, a number of factors have increased the momentum leading to ivory destructions, with an average of one event per month in 2015. The main factors behind this include: the authority given by the CITES Standing Committee decision; steady campaigning for destruction by a number of NGOs at both national and global level; technical and financial support from bodies such as the Elephant Protection Initiative; and reports of continued pressure on elephant populations and ruthless poaching to supply illegal ivory markets. The data on destructions from July 2014 to August 2015 is in Table 2.

[‡] Guidance can include inter alia security, inventory procedures, transparency in tracking, reporting costs of storage/security, destruction options, DNA sampling and analysis, pre- and post- destruction monitoring, and the use of residual material;

Table 2: Destructions since the CITES Standing Committee in July 2014

Country	Year	Ivory destroyed (tonnes if known)	Comments
China Hong Kong SAR	Aug 2014	Included in Table 1	Up to 5 (monthly) destructions from Aug 2014
India	Nov 2014		Incinerated various wildlife products - Delhi
Kenya	March 2015	15.0	Government to destroy rest of stocks by end 2015
Ethiopia	March 2015	6.1	
United Arab Emirates	April 2015	>10.0	Dubai
Republic of Congo	April 2015	4.7	Entire stockpile
Peoples Republic of China	May 2015	0.6	Commitment to phase out domestic ivory trade
USA	June 2015	1.0	>1 US ton. Times Square.
Mozambique	July 2015	2.4	
Thailand	August 2015	>2.0	Ceremony involved faith leaders
Total events: 9 (excluding HK continuation)			

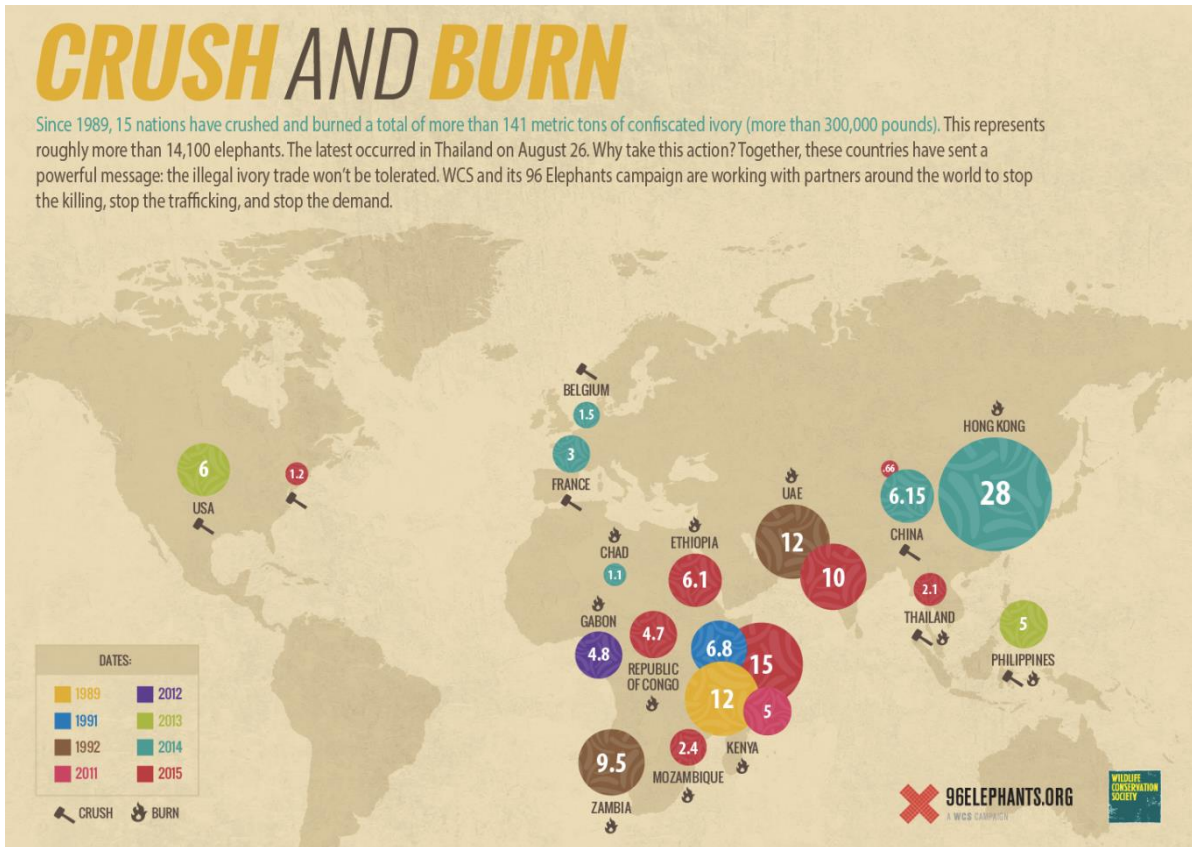
5. There have been reports that at least three other countries are considering whether to hold ivory destruction events: Malawi[§], New Zealand^{**} and Vietnam. The Tables above do not include relatively small quantities of mainly worked ivory destroyed symbolically by some NGOs, or the countries which regularly destroy ivory alongside other illegal wildlife items seized by their enforcement authorities of which Germany and UK are examples.

[§] Malawi was due to destroy a 2.6 tonne stockpile of ivory smuggled from Mozambique and Tanzania on 18 September but this was been delayed for 90 days by a Court Injunction obtained by the Tanzanian authorities who seek to use the ivory as evidence in criminal proceedings

^{**} http://www.parliament.nz/resource/mi-nz/50SCFDT_EVI_50DBHOH_PET3203_1_A401613/5a948b6a5e2e69c8f34d82bd39bf064b023afee7

Illustration of Ivory Destructions since 1989

6. The following infographic illustrates ivory destructions since 1989.



Source: Wildlife Conservation Society

Recommendation

7. The CITES Standing Committee is requested to endorse the action taken since the 65th Standing Committee by China, Ethiopia, Hong Kong SAR, India, Kenya, Mozambique, the Republic of Congo, Thailand, the United Arab Emirates and the United States, in destroying ivory stockpiles in response to the upsurge in elephant poaching and illegal trade.