

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

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Seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties  
Johannesburg (South Africa), 24 September – 5 October 2016

Species specific matters

Elephants (Elephantidae spp.)

ADDENDUM TO THE REPORT ON THE ELEPHANT TRADE INFORMATION SYSTEM (ETIS)

1. This document has been submitted by the Secretariat on request from TRAFFIC. It has been prepared by TRAFFIC on the basis of information received by ETIS since the submission of document CoP17 Doc. 57.6 (Rev. 1). The addendum provides an update on trends in the illegal trade in ivory up to the end of 2015.

**Addendum to the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS)**  
**and the Illicit Trade in Ivory: A report to the**  
**17<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES**

**T. Milliken, F.M. Underwood, R.W. Burn and L. Sangalakula**

TRAFFIC  
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Introduction

In CoP17 Doc. 57.6 (Rev. 1), the ETIS trend analysis described the illegal ivory trade for the years 2007-2014 because 2015 was data deficient at the time the analysis commenced. It was noted, however, that “*TRAFFIC hopes to conduct another analysis through 2015 prior to the commencement of CoP17 to derive a revised trend. Notification to the Parties No. 2016/037 of 1 April 2016 is presently requesting the Parties to submit all ivory and other elephant product seizure data to ETIS by 31 May 2016 for this purpose.*” With generous funding from WWF, updating the trend analysis through 2015 has now been possible. This document constitutes an addendum to CoP17 Doc. 57.6 (Rev. 1) and extends the trend in illegal trade in ivory to 2015.

Number of Records

An additional 1,387 seizure records were added to the 9,899 cases previously analysed. Of these, 1,311 seizures occurred in 2015, another 55 cases concerned seizures that happened in 2013 or 2014, and an additional 19 cases were in the period 2008-2012.

Notes on Methods:

The estimation of missing weight values, bias adjustment, the use of weight classes and the selection of countries all followed the methods and models described in CoP17 Doc. 57.6 (Rev. 1). Three additional countries, the Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea and Mauritius, are included in this analysis.

The Transaction Index – assessing the frequency of illegal trade in ivory

Figure 1 depicts global illegal ivory trade transactions by two ivory types, raw and worked, in five weight categories. Based upon bias-corrected data, this Transaction Index provides a measure of the frequency of raw and worked ivory transactions occurring over the period, with 2007 set to 100 to constitute the baseline.

As noted previously, the three figures for raw ivory seizures in Figure 1 are primarily indicative of ivory supply from Africa, which remains the principal source of elephant ivory today, whilst the two figures for worked ivory provide insights on demand and consumption in domestic ivory markets. The most striking result in Figure 1 is the continuing upward trend in the large raw ivory weight class (shipments of 100 kg or more) in 2015. The addition of another year's data, but also a dataset that included additional large seizures in 2013 and 2014, has changed the overall pattern that was noted in the previous assessment. This is a worrying development as the large raw ivory weight class is where the activity that relates to organised crime is captured, and where most ivory is found; it is this class that contributes most to the Weights Index (Figure 3). Thus the pattern of continuing escalation seems to indicate that the international community was not meeting with success in disrupting and curbing the operations of transnational wildlife crime syndicates by the end of 2015. The pattern of trade in the small and medium raw ivory weight classes, however, remains essentially stable. Turning to worked ivory transactions, a suggestion of a modest increase in small worked ivory transactions also appears to have occurred in 2015, whilst a more significant decline now characterises the medium/large worked ivory weight class.

Figure 2 presents the overall trend of the Transaction Index with all ivory types and weight classes consolidated. Whilst the basic pattern of illegal ivory trade activity through 2014 described in the previous analysis has not really changed, but 2015 shows a level of increase over 2014, with the mean estimate basically equivalent to that for 2013. Indeed, the decline that was suggested in the previous analysis is now

not evident and, noting the overlapping confidence intervals throughout this period, the overall pattern since 2011 can be described as one of relative stability at record high levels of ivory trade activity.

#### The Weight Index – assessing the scale of illegal trade in ivory

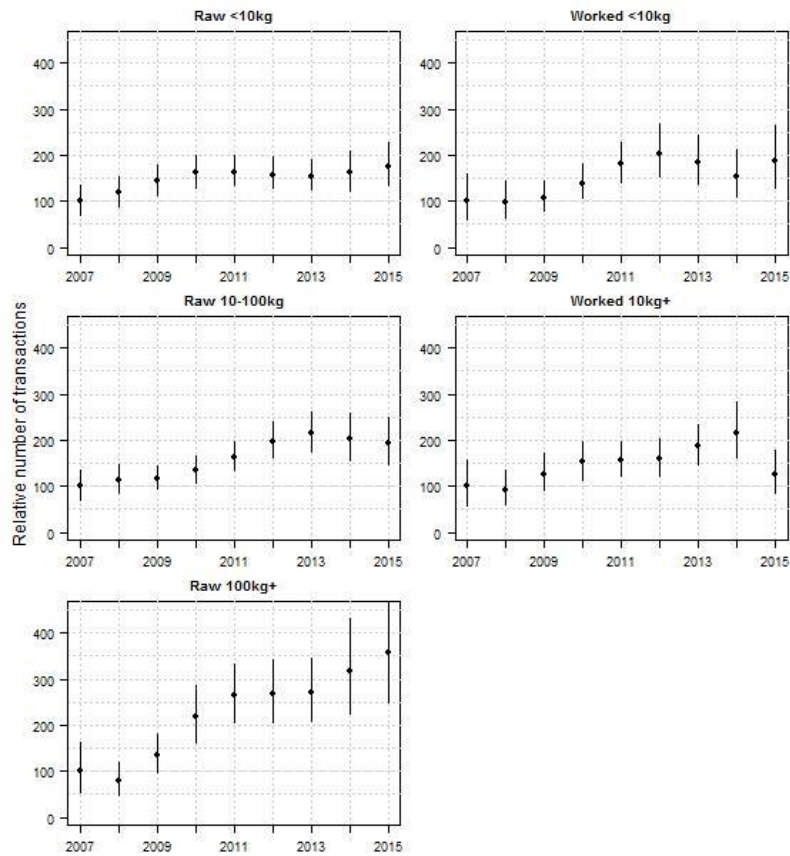
Turning to the Weight Index, which provides a means of relating the illegal ivory trade activity of the Transaction Index to the relative quantity of ivory it represents, Figure 3 depicts the relative contributions of each of the five weight classes. As in all previous analyses, the large raw ivory weight class accounts for the greatest quantity of ivory in illicit trade, followed by the medium raw ivory weight class. The two worked ivory weight classes contribute a small proportion of the overall total weight. Understanding the relative weight values of raw ivory trade in particular is important for assessing impact upon elephants and relating ETIS results to MIKE data on the illegal killing of elephants.

Figure 4 aggregates all weight classes and presents the overall trend in the relative weight of ivory in trade, with 90% confidence limits represented by the vertical lines. Whereas in the previous assessment, the mean estimate for 2014 suggested the possibility of a slight downturn, in this analysis that is no longer apparent and an ever increasing quantity of ivory has been entering into illegal trade from 2008 until 2015. The salient takeaway is that, since 2010, illegal ivory trade has remained fairly constant at unacceptably high levels.

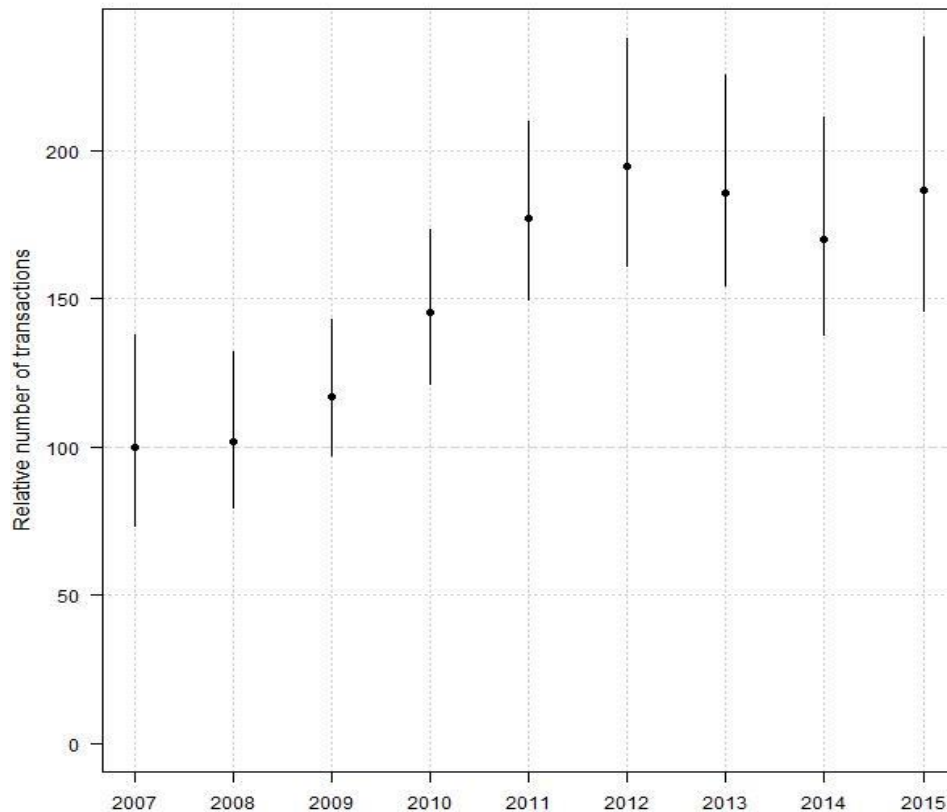
#### Conclusion

In summary, as previously reported, the illegal trade in ivory has progressively escalated since CoP14 in 2007 and the trend through 2015 further confirms this finding. Since 2010, illicit trade in ivory has been at record high levels. Extending the trend through 2015 allows assessment of a 36-month period of time following the conclusion of CITES CoP16 where the Parties set in motion a far reaching National Ivory Action Plans (NIAP) process to address a range of issues that potentially facilitate illicit trade in ivory. This analysis now provides insights into the first two full years of NIAP implementation and the results as yet show no evidence of a positive impact on overall trade patterns.

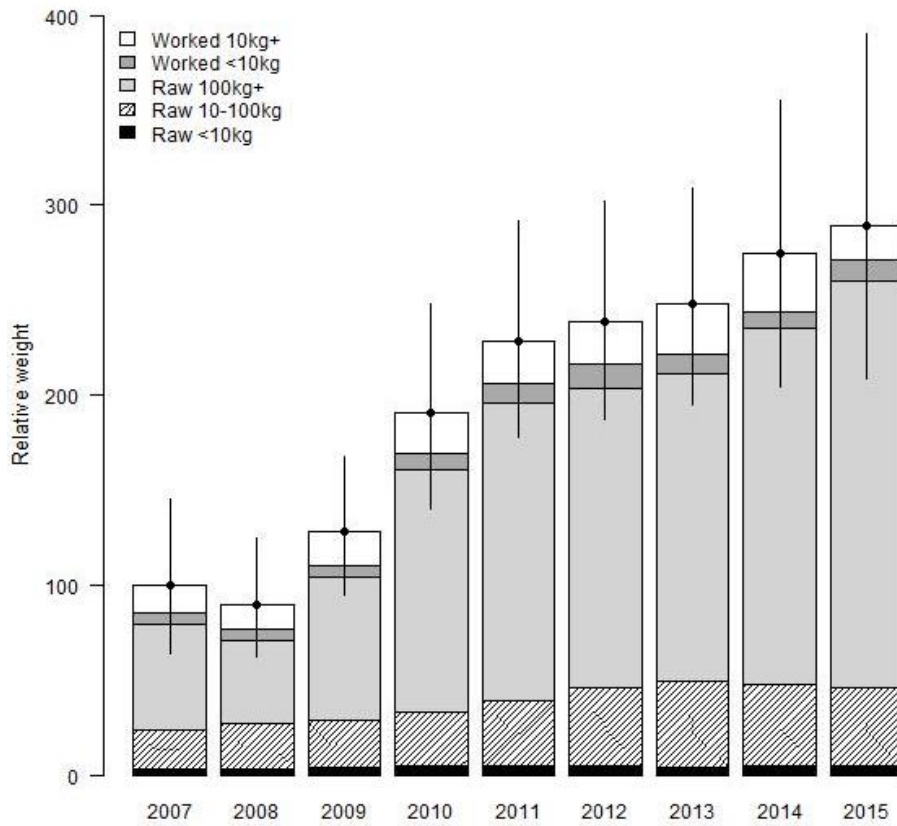
**Figure 1: Trends in Transaction Index by ivory type and weight class with 90% confidence intervals, 2007-2015 (ETIS 18 August 2016)**



**Figure 2: Transaction Index composite of all ivory types and weight classes with 90% confidence intervals, 2007-2015 (ETIS 18 August 2016)**



**Figure 3: Weight Index combining weight classes by ivory types with 90% confidence intervals, 2007-2015 (ETIS 18 August 2016)**



**Figure 4: Weight Index composite of all ivory types and weight classes with 90% confidence intervals, 2007-2015 (ETIS 18 August 2016)**

