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MISSING a VOICE

Animal Welfare Manifesto 2010



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**Animals can't
speak for themselves.
But you can speak for them.**

**Stand up against
animal cruelty.**

About IFAW

Founded in 1969, IFAW has representation in 16 countries and works in more than 40. IFAW campaigns to improve the welfare of wild and domestic animals by reducing commercial exploitation, protecting wildlife habitats and assisting animals in distress. IFAW seeks to motivate the public to prevent cruelty to animals and to promote welfare and conservation policies that advance the well-being of both animals and people.



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Foreword

We face, in the 21st Century, many serious environmental threats, from climate change to habitat destruction, pollution, loss of biodiversity and the extinction of species. Only with concerted international and national efforts at government level can we rise to meet these challenges. This is why politics matters to the future of our own species, our habitat and the survival of the other animals with which we share our planet.

In this manifesto we set out our vision of the responsibilities and challenges that face the next UK Government on the marine environment, trade in wildlife and animal welfare legislation. This is not an exclusive list; however we hope this snapshot will help persuade candidates from all political parties to not only carefully consider and support our recommendations, but realise the

importance of these issues, and the public's strength of feeling about them.

Since its founding in 1969, IFAW has grown to be one of the world's largest animal welfare organisations with representation in 16 countries and over one million supporters worldwide. As Director of the UK office, I am proud to have seen IFAW become a respected force for animal welfare and conservation worldwide. We now have around 400,000 supporters in the UK who assist our national and international efforts to protect animals from cruelty and preserve their habitats.

The Government we elect can make a difference not only to conservation and animal welfare within our own borders, but also around the world. Real progress has been made on animal welfare since



the 2005 General Election, with strong cross-party support for the legislation on animal welfare and the marine environment. We have also seen the ban on the cruel sport of hunting with dogs go from strength to strength with more than 100 people successfully prosecuted. Yet we have far more to achieve if we are to afford lasting protection to animals and the environment.

Let us ensure we rise to meet the challenge.



Robbie Marsland
Director, IFAW UK



Gandhi said:

“ **The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way in which its animals are treated.** ”



Summary of recommendations

The marine environment

Whaling

- Urge the International Whaling Commission (IWC) to focus on whale conservation and agree a clear timetable for phasing out all commercial whaling.
- Renew high-level diplomatic efforts to challenge whaling conducted by Japan, Iceland and Norway and counteract pressure from Japan to influence the votes of sovereign states at the IWC.
- Urge EU Member States and the European Commission to ensure the EU takes a strong common position at the IWC against any proposals which may undermine the maintenance of the ban on whaling.
- Urge EU Member States and the European Commission to resist any Icelandic requests for a derogation for whaling in the event that Iceland joins the EU.

Ocean noise pollution

- Implement the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and ensure that man-made ocean noise pollution is properly regulated.
- Participate fully in the International Maritime Environmental Protection Committee's new high priority work item on ocean noise pollution.



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Commercial seal hunting

- Support and enforce the EU ban on the commercial trade in seal products.
- Renew diplomatic efforts with Canada, Norway, Denmark (Greenland) and Namibia to seek an end to cruel commercial seal hunts.

UK seals

- Replace the Conservation of Seals Act with legislation giving seals real protection from being killed indiscriminately.
- Ensure all threats to UK seals, including bycatch in fishing gear and disturbance, are minimised.



Trade in endangered species

Elephants and ivory

- Financially support real conservation efforts in elephant range states and provide support to the African Elephant Coalition.
- Monitor the effects of the 2008 ivory stockpile sales on elephant populations.
- Work with EU Member States and the European Commission to ensure the EU takes a strong common position in favour of real elephant conservation and against any ivory trade.

Wildlife trade on the Internet

- Enact robust domestic legislation on Internet wildlife trade.
- Launch a public awareness campaign targeting Internet users who may unwittingly buy or sell animals or products illegally and a hotline/email system for easy reporting of suspicious trade by Internet users.
- Call for and urge countries to agree and enact an international action plan at CITES to tackle illegal wildlife trade on the Internet.

Tigers

- Renew high-level diplomatic efforts to convince the Chinese government to adopt a clear and strict ban on any tiger trade in the future, including that from tiger farms, and to ensure full implementation of such a ban.
- Work with like-minded countries to ensure all governments fully accept a no trade at all policy for tigers.
- Help build adequate enforcement capacity and assist in developing solutions to protect viable habitats.



Hunting with dogs

- Ensure effective enforcement of the Hunting Act 2004.
- Introduce and promote a nationwide training programme for police officers and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) on enforcing the Hunting Act.
- Roll out best practice amongst police forces and the CPS across the country.
- Ensure Hunting Act offences are recorded correctly on the National Standard for Incident Recording (NSIR).



Introduction to IFAW around the world



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China



India



- IFAW's founding campaign to end the commercial seal hunt in Canada has made tremendous progress in achieving bans on imports of seal products – from the U.S. and Mexico to Europe – closing key markets that fuel the largest marine mammal hunt in the world.
- IFAW works on the ground and in the halls of government to prevent cruelty to animals, from ending hunting with dogs for sport in Great Britain to lobbying for stronger animal welfare legislation in the European Union.
- IFAW trains customs and law enforcement officials from the Middle East to the Caribbean to combat illegal wildlife trade, which is pushing many species to the brink of extinction.
- IFAW provides vital care for needy pets in the poor communities of South Africa, Mexico, Canada, the Navajo Nation, Indonesia and other places where veterinary services are scarce.
- IFAW is world leader in rescuing and rehabilitating orphaned and injured animals, then releasing them back to the wild, from bear cubs in Russia to elephants in India, penguins in South America and raptors in China.
- From Asia to Africa, IFAW works in dozens of countries to protect wildlife habitat, prevent human-animal conflict, and fight against poaching, all of which are critical to the survival of elephants, rhinos, tigers and other species.
- IFAW promotes responsible whale watching as a viable alternative to whale hunting and has helped make one-fifth of the world's oceans a sanctuary for whales. IFAW's Song of the Whale research vessel helps provide the scientific knowledge required to help safeguard the marine environment.



India



Indonesia



Australia



The marine environment

Water covers over 70% of the Earth's surface, and the marine environment supports one of the greatest diversities of life on Earth, from microscopic plants and bacteria to the largest animal on the planet, the blue whale.

Our knowledge of the total diversity of the sea is still limited, with new species being discovered every year. Marine habitats also hold many of our most pressing environmental challenges, including pollution, overfishing and habitat destruction.

Whales and whaling

Commercial whaling has driven several populations of the great whales to the brink of extinction: from a quarter of a million blue whales in the Southern ocean, only a few hundred now remain.¹ In 1982 this dramatic over-exploitation of whales finally led the International Whaling Commission (IWC), whaling's regulatory body, to adopt a moratorium on commercial whaling. This came into effect in 1986. However, whaling for commercial purposes still continues with Norway, Japan and Iceland killing thousands of whales between them every year.

International Whaling Commission

At the 2009 IWC meeting in Madeira, Portugal, IFAW was encouraged by the attention governments devoted to discussions of whale watching and new whale research and conservation initiatives. Furthermore, they ignored a proposed deal which would have legitimised unsustainable whaling by Japan in the North Pacific in exchange for some unspecified reduction in the number of whales killed by Japan within the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary.

However, threats to whales remain. Since the moratorium on whaling came into force, Japan has continued to hunt whales for commercial purposes by exploiting a loophole in the regulations which allows for so-called scientific whaling. Iceland also resumed commercial whaling in 2006, having conducted 'scientific' whaling since 2003; Norway continues commercial whaling under objection to the moratorium. IFAW believes it is time for these last three whaling nations to join the emerging global consensus for whale protection and cease whaling for good.

The integrity of the IWC is also under threat. Since the early 1990s, Japan has been working in a deliberate and sustained manner to take control of the IWC. By providing poor developing

countries, most with no obvious interest in whaling, with substantial aid packages as an incentive to join the IWC and vote for whaling, Japan has come close to creating a voting majority bloc in favour of whaling in the Commission. Anti-whaling nations must remain vigilant to ensure the balance of power within the IWC does not shift away from those against whaling.

The UK delegation has played an important role in the IWC and its Scientific Committee. It is recognised within the EU and internationally as a leader in this forum, with many EU and other countries looking to the UK for leadership on this issue. Since 2008, the EU has voted as a bloc at the IWC. Given the large number of votes it carries, it is therefore imperative that the UK uses its position within the EU to ensure that no weakening of the moratorium on whaling takes place.

Japan and humpback whales

The humpback whale is well-known throughout the world as the 'singing whale' because of the complex sounds made by males during the breeding season. It is also one of the few whales that fully breaches, making it a favourite with whale watchers. Thanks to 30 years of protection from commercial whaling, several humpback populations are recovering, demonstrating the success of this policy. However, many populations are still at low levels and have shown little, if any, sign of recovery.

Japan has threatened to expand its 'scientific' whaling to include an annual take of 50 humpback whales within the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary. In the face of massive international opposition, Japan temporarily suspended this quota. Japan now appears instead to be using the possibility of hunting humpbacks as a bargaining chip in the IWC negotiations.



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Thanks to 30 years of protection from commercial whaling, several humpback populations are recovering.

Iceland and whaling

Iceland resumed 'scientific' whaling in 2003 and overt commercial whaling in October 2006; a serious blow to international conservation.

Iceland's government has in the past acknowledged that there was little market for whale meat within Iceland and its inability to sell the meat to Japan. Indeed, a Gallup poll² commissioned by IFAW in 2006 showed only 1% of Icelanders claim to eat whale meat regularly.

However, despite previous announcements by the Icelandic Fisheries Minister that there would be no more commercial whaling quotas until there was sufficient market demand, the Icelandic government introduced new quotas in 2009 for 200 minke and 200 fin whales.

In October 2009, 26 countries, including the UK, delivered a formal diplomatic protest (called a *démarche*) to the Icelandic government condemning Iceland's commercial whaling policy. Following Iceland's decision to apply for membership of the EU in 2009, IFAW believes the EU should stand by its anti-whaling commitment and not allow Iceland a derogation for any form of whaling when negotiating the terms of Iceland's accession to the EU.

Recommendations to Government

- **Urge the International Whaling Commission (IWC) to focus on whale conservation and agree a clear timetable for phasing out all commercial whaling.**
- **Renew high-level diplomatic efforts to challenge whaling conducted by Japan, Iceland and Norway and counteract pressure from Japan to influence the votes of sovereign states at the IWC.**
- **Urge EU Member States and the European Commission to ensure the EU takes a strong common position at the IWC against any proposals which may undermine the maintenance of the ban on whaling.**
- **Urge EU Member States and the European Commission to resist any Icelandic requests for a derogation for whaling in the event that Iceland joins the EU.**



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More than 3,000 whale watching operations around the world now employ an estimated 13,200 people.

\$16.7 million in 2008, and in the same year saw 114,500 people go whale watching. Whale watching and tourism are clearly worth far more to Iceland and other whaling nations' economies than whaling.

The UK and other anti-whaling nations must urge the governments of whaling countries to abandon whaling and instead support responsible whale watching.

Whale watching – a humane and sustainable future

IFAW believes whaling damages the reputations of the three countries which continue to take part in this barbaric slaughter. Scientific analysis of Japanese whaling footage shows whaling to be unacceptably cruel, with some whales taking over half an hour to die.

IFAW believes that responsible whale watching offers a humane and sustainable alternative to whaling. An IFAW report released during the 2009 IWC meeting documents the continuing dramatic growth and expanding economic contribution of whale watching worldwide.³

The country-by-country economic analysis shows more than 13 million people took whale watching tours in 119 countries worldwide, generating ticket fees and tourism expenditures of around \$2.1 billion during 2008. The report also shows dramatic growth of the whale watching industry over the past decade.

More than 3,000 whale watching operations around the world now employ an estimated 13,200 people. In Iceland alone, the whale watching industry generated total expenditure of more than

Ocean noise pollution

Sound is vital to many marine animals, particularly cetaceans, which rely on it for communicating, navigating, finding food and detecting mates and predators. Sources of man-made ocean noise include commercial shipping, military sonar, seismic surveys for oil and gas exploration, construction and recreational activities.

Song of the Whale

Work carried out since 1987 on IFAW's research vessel, Song of the Whale, has made fundamental contributions to informing the conservation and protection of cetaceans (whales, dolphins and porpoises), as well as furthering understanding of the distribution, acoustics and biology of certain species. The Song of the Whale team has played a significant role internationally in training students and scientists, and in developing and promoting the use of benign methods for studying marine mammals. In the UK, Song of the Whale has conducted research into basking sharks on the west coast of Scotland and into harbour porpoises in the English Channel, as well as pioneering work in the field of ocean noise pollution.

Sound propagates efficiently in the marine environment, travelling almost five times faster in water than it does in air and at low frequencies can travel hundreds of kilometres. Such noise can be extremely harmful to cetaceans and in some cases can cause them to strand and even die. Unlike noise in the terrestrial environment, man-made ocean noise remains largely unregulated and unmonitored. IFAW would like to see adequate measures taken to mitigate effectively the detrimental effects of ocean noise pollution.

As shipping noise is by far the largest form of this pollution, IFAW believes that the government should focus its efforts on reducing shipping noise by working in the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and researching and promoting the adoption of ship-quietening technology.

The technologies to make quiet ships are well established, such as those used by the military, fisheries research vessels and even cruise ships. Subtle changes in design can make big differences to the noise output from a vessel.

For most commercial vessels, however, noise has never been a consideration, so there is plenty of scope for making these ships quieter.

Designing and building quieter ships need not be costly. Noise represents wasted energy so quieter ships are also more fuel efficient. In a world of ever increasing fuel costs, such innovations could help shipping companies by reducing costs and giving them an advantage over their competitors.

Recommendations to Government

- **Implement the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and ensure that man-made ocean noise pollution is properly regulated.**
- **Participate fully in the International Maritime Environmental Protection Committee's new high priority work item on ocean noise pollution.**

Ocean noise pollution can be extremely harmful to cetaceans and in some cases can cause them to strand and even die.



Seals

Commercial seal hunting

2009 saw two great victories in IFAW's campaign against commercial seal hunting. In March, Russia banned the hunting of all harp seals under one year of age. This decision heralded the ultimate end of the hunt in the northern White Sea region.

Following this ban, in May 2009, the European Parliament heeded the opinion of an overwhelming majority of EU citizens and voted to ban the sale of products from commercial seal hunts.

Canada has threatened to challenge the ban at the World Trade Organisation (WTO). The European Commission has previously made it clear that it will 'vigorously defend' the values of EU citizens in the face of such a WTO challenge. The seal trade ban was written in anticipation of such a challenge and is therefore expected to comply fully with the EU's international obligations.

IFAW's campaign has also seen progress in Canada where a Canadian Senator (Senator Harb) has drafted a Bill to ban commercial sealing. Canada's commercial seal hunt is the largest marine mammal hunt in the world, with over a million seals killed in the last five years. This figure does not include the thousands of seals which are killed in the water but not recovered. The majority of the Canadian public is opposed to the killing of seal pups.⁴ The lack of demand for seal pelts and the EU ban have already effectively saved the lives of over 200,000 seals from the hunt in 2009, with many sealers themselves deciding not to go out hunting.

The lack of demand for seal pelts and the EU ban have already effectively saved the lives of over 200,000 seals from the hunt in 2009.

Recommendations to Government

- **Support and enforce the EU ban on the commercial trade in seal products.**
- **Renew diplomatic efforts with Canada, Norway, Denmark (Greenland) and Namibia to seek an end to cruel commercial seal hunts.**





UK seals

There are also threats to seal populations in our own waters. Vast numbers of seals are being shot throughout the British Isles every year. Most seals are shot by the salmon fishing industry. This killing is even more alarming considering recent scientific research shows a sharp decline in UK seal numbers, with some regions witnessing a decline of around 40% in the numbers of common seals.⁵

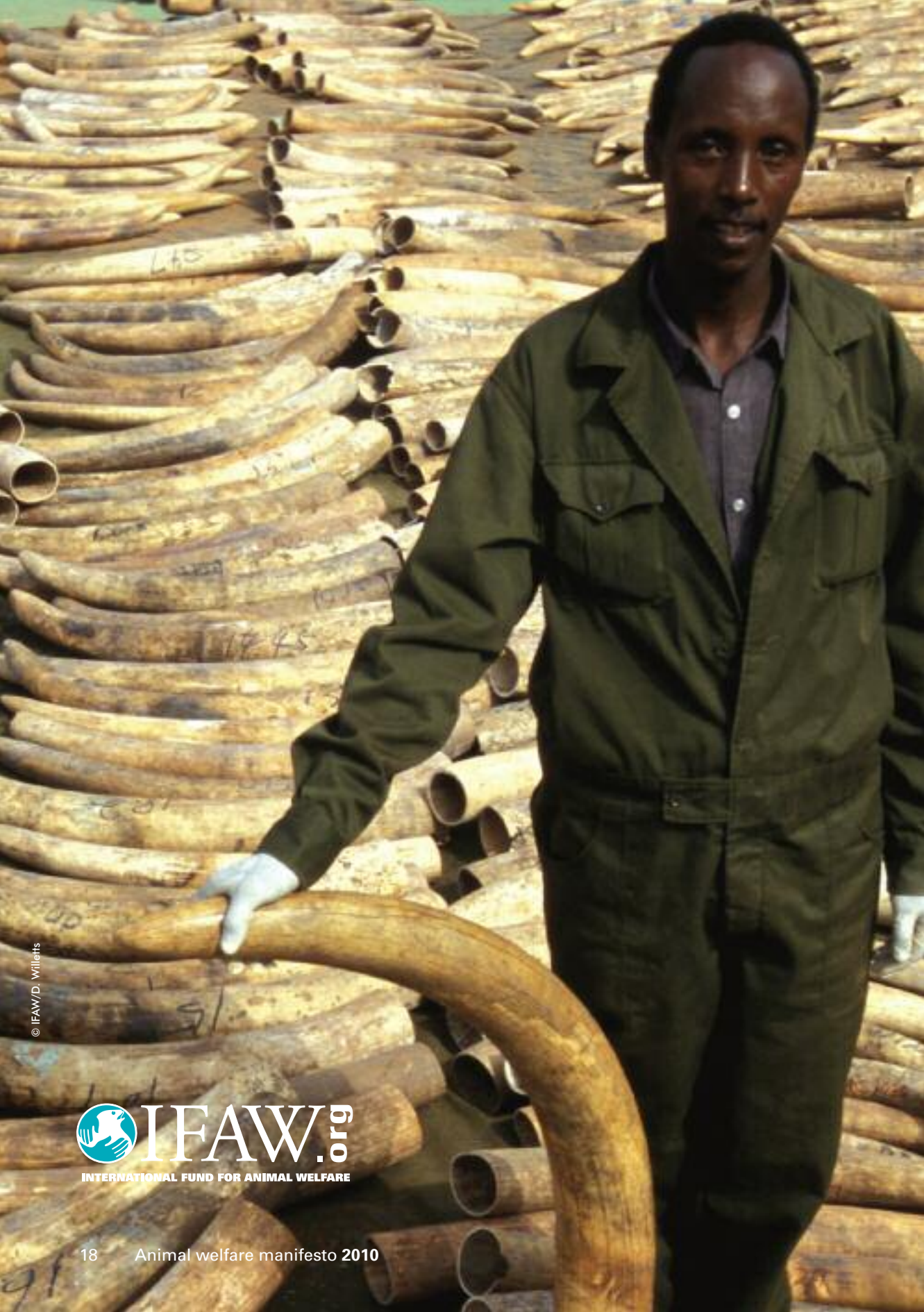
Fish farms need to protect their stock, but this can be done without killing seals.

IFAW believes the current Conservation of Seals Act (1970) needs to be replaced by better legislation in order to properly protect these important seal species.

Some regions are witnessing a decline of around 40% in the numbers of common seals.

Recommendations to Government

- **Replace the Conservation of Seals Act with legislation giving seals real protection from being killed indiscriminately.**
- **Ensure all threats to UK seals, including bycatch in fishing gear and disturbance, are minimised.**



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Trade in endangered species

Our planet is currently experiencing the biggest mass extinction since the disappearance of dinosaurs 65 million years ago. However, unlike previous extinctions, this is a man-made disaster.

One factor is overexploitation for trade in wildlife. The illegal trade is estimated to be worth \$20 billion annually and is second only to that of illicit arms and drugs.

Given the vast sums of money involved and relatively low penalties, organised crime and terrorist groups are now becoming involved in this trade.

It is a problem that has reached our own doorstep. London is a major hub for illegal trade in endangered species in Europe. The Metropolitan Police has seized over 40,000 endangered species items since 1995.

Wildlife trade

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is an international agreement between governments which aims to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival. 175 countries are parties to the Convention, which gives varying degrees of protection to more than 33,000 species of animals and plants, including iconic species such as elephants, great apes, the giant panda, tigers, rhinoceros and sea turtles.

IFAW is one of many NGOs that participates in CITES, where IFAW advocates a precautionary approach highlighting animal welfare concerns as well as conservation issues. The key species and issues that IFAW focuses on are elephants and the ivory trade, internet trade in wildlife and the trade in tigers and their parts and derivatives.



Elephants and ivory

Before CITES banned the global ivory trade in 1989, the African continent saw an astonishing decline in its elephant populations due to poaching for ivory. Although the 1989 ban and concerted enforcement efforts led to a steep drop in the poaching of elephants, numbers today are still only a fraction of the 1.3 million that existed in 1980. Unfortunately the illegal trade in ivory is again on the increase; in 2006 alone an estimated 38,000 elephants were killed for their tusks.⁶

IFAW is concerned that the ban is being undermined by ivory stockpile sales. Since the initial ban, CITES has agreed to two experimental sales of stockpiled ivory (gathered from elephants that have died naturally or so-called 'problem' elephants that have been culled). The first sale took place in 1999, and the second sale in October and November 2008.

The stocks were sold to Japan and China, which both have large, uncontrolled black markets in ivory. Following the sales, a nine-year moratorium was supposed to come into force preventing further ivory sales during this time but further sales have since been proposed for consideration at the CITES conference in March 2010. IFAW opposed the 2008 sales and warned that they would lead to a sharp increase in poaching.

Sadly, these fears appear to have been realised. Even in Kenya, a country recognised for its high level of enforcement action against illegal ivory trade, over 200 elephants were killed in 2009 compared with 47 in 2007.⁷

Unfortunately the illegal trade in ivory is again on the increase; in 2006 alone an estimated 38,000 elephants were killed for their tusks.

If action is not taken soon, increasing poaching threatens many African elephant populations with local extinction.

© IFAW

Furthermore, the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS), set up by CITES to monitor ivory seizures, has shown a dramatic increase in illicit ivory seizures in 2009.⁸

IFAW has also become concerned over the links between the illegal trade in wildlife products and organised crime and terrorism; a concern shared by the House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee⁹ and the US State Department¹⁰ and members of Congress.¹¹ Ivory is fast becoming a 21st Century 'blood diamond'; lured by easy money and low risk of prosecution, groups such as the Janjaweed have expanded their killing to that of endangered species.

IFAW believes any legal ivory trade leads to illegal killing. The legal market gives poachers an easy way to sell their illegal stocks. The only solution is to reinstate a total, permanent ban on ivory sales. If action is not taken soon, increasing poaching threatens many African elephant populations with local extinction, especially in West and Central Africa.

Recommendations to Government

- **Financially support real conservation efforts in elephant range states and provide support to the African Elephant Coalition.**
- **Monitor the effects of the 2008 ivory stockpile sales on elephant populations.**
- **Work with EU Member States and the European Commission to ensure the EU takes a strong common position in favour of real elephant conservation and against any ivory trade.**



Wildlife trade on the Internet

Increasingly, the Internet is a major means by which the illicit trade in wildlife is conducted. IFAW has been at the forefront of addressing conservation and animal welfare problems linked with trade of wildlife and its products via the Internet. Working with governments, CITES and other key players worldwide such as eBay has led to substantial improvements to curtail illegal trade online.

IFAW worked to move forward an Internet trade initiative at the 14th Conference of the Parties of CITES in June 2007. The initiative was overwhelmingly adopted and set up a process to ascertain the impacts of e-commerce on CITES-listed species. A subsequent workshop was held in February 2009 to assess the situation and develop recommendations for the CITES conference in March 2010.

Since 2005, IFAW has been collaborating with eBay to address the issue of wildlife trade on their sites and more specifically the sale of illegal ivory. Following IFAW's report, *Killing with Keystrokes*, eBay introduced a global ban on the trade in all animal ivory on eBay sites from 1 January 2009.

Despite recognition by governments and international enforcement agencies of the problems associated with this trade, current legislation and enforcement schemes have proven insufficient in dealing with the scale of the problem and more must be done.

Recommendations to Government

- Enact robust domestic legislation on Internet wildlife trade.
- Launch a public awareness campaign targeting Internet users who may unwittingly buy or sell animals or products illegally and a hotline/email system for easy reporting of suspicious trade by Internet users.
- Call for and urge countries to agree and enact an international action plan at CITES to tackle illegal wildlife trade on the Internet.

Since 2005, IFAW has been collaborating with eBay to address the issue of wildlife trade on their sites and more specifically the sale of illegal ivory.

Tigers

As a result of habitat degradation and poaching to supply illegal markets in tiger parts, the world's remaining wild tigers face a serious crisis.

According to the 2008 IUCN Red List, the total number of tigers left in the wild could be fewer than 3,500. Without urgent and intensive conservation efforts, the survival of the tiger is in jeopardy within the lifetime of our generation.

All tigers and other Asian big cat species are listed on Appendix I of CITES, meaning commercial international trade in tigers, their parts and derivatives is banned. Resolutions at CITES have urged Parties to improve legislation, prohibit international and internal trade of tiger parts, derivatives and products, enhance enforcement and destroy stockpiles of tiger parts.

Unfortunately, the positive actions taken by CITES and tiger range states have not been enough to stop the dramatic decline of wild tiger populations. Regrettably some countries, such as China, are pursuing plans to re-open the trade in tiger products from commercial tiger farms. This would be a recipe for disaster – the Chinese government must stop this move and adopt a clear and strict ban on any tiger trade in the future and ensure its full implementation if sufficient protection for wild tigers and their habitats is to become a reality. Permitting even a

limited trade in farmed tigers will undermine decades of conservation efforts by reigniting a demand that had nearly been extinguished, thus increasing poaching of wild tigers.

Killing a wild tiger will always cost less than farming a tiger because the cost of a bullet, trap or poison will always be less than the cost of raising a tiger to maturity on a farm. Allowing the legal sale of tiger parts from farms will provide opportunities for illegal tiger parts to be laundered into legal markets and fuel poaching.

Recommendations to Government

- **Renew high-level diplomatic efforts to convince the Chinese government to adopt a clear and strict ban on any tiger trade in the future, including that from tiger farms, and to ensure full implementation of such a ban.**
- **Work with like-minded countries to ensure all governments fully accept a no trade at all policy for tigers.**
- **Help build adequate enforcement capacity and assist in developing solutions to protect viable habitats.**

Unless all nations fully accept and implement a no trade at all policy for tigers, it may be impossible to save this species.



© League Against Cruel Sports



Hunting with dogs

IFAW was a leading organisation in the campaign for a ban on the cruel sport of hunting with dogs. That campaign was successful when hunting with dogs was banned in England and Wales with the introduction of the Hunting Act 2004. Hunting was banned in Scotland by the Protection of Wild Mammals (Scotland) Act 2002.

One of the reasons that hunting was banned was because the vast majority of the UK public find the idea of chasing and ripping apart wild animals for sport abhorrent. Public support for the ban has remained strong both before and after the ban. Indeed, support for the law is high across party political boundaries and in both rural and urban areas.

Despite this, the pro-hunt lobby are trying to turn back the clock and reintroduce cruelty into the countryside. But the Hunting Act does not need to be repealed, it needs to be properly enforced.

Hunting with dogs

The Hunting Act 2004 made it an offence in England and Wales to use dogs to chase or kill foxes, deer, hares and mink. This landmark piece of legislation was passed because the UK public abhors the idea of the hunting of wild mammals for so-called sport.

The pro-hunt lobby has resolutely refused to accept the fact that hunting with dogs now belongs alongside other outlawed cruel sports where animals are set on other animals for entertainment, such as dog fighting, badger baiting and bear baiting.

Public opinion continues to show strong support for the Hunting Act. Recent Ipsos MORI polling¹² has shown that the overwhelming majority (75%) support the legislation banning fox hunting and that seven out of 10 people in rural areas do not think fox hunting should be made legal again. This exposes the fallacy of the claim that hunting is polarised by a rural/urban divide.

Support for a ban in rural communities on other types of hunting was also high with 82% opposed to bringing back stag hunting and 86% opposed to changing the law to allow hare hunting or coursing.

The poll revealed that support for the ban outweighs opposition across political party boundaries, with 62% of Conservative voters, 83% of Labour voters and 77% of Liberal Democrat voters in favour of a ban on fox hunting.

Recent Ipsos MORI polling¹² has shown that the overwhelming majority (75%) support the legislation banning fox hunting.



© IFAW/J. Wright

The hunters have relentlessly sought to bring back their cruel and outdated 'sport', launching a campaign to repeal the law. IFAW is in no doubt that a repeal of the Hunting Act would mean the return of cruelty to the countryside. IFAW was instrumental in exposing the truth behind hunting in the run-up to the ban. Post-mortems showed foxes had suffered multiple bites, savaging and disembowelling before death while video footage and eyewitness accounts demonstrated that the hunting with dogs of foxes, hares and deer was designed to provide a deliberately prolonged chase for the pleasure and enjoyment of hunt participants.

Enforcement of the Hunting Act

Over 100 people have been found guilty of breaking the Hunting Act since it came into force in February 2005. This clearly shows that the legislation is enforceable.

While IFAW has concerns that illegal hunting may be taking place, this is no reason to suggest the law is unnecessary. Despite the 1968 Theft Act, burglaries still take place; this does not mean that the Act is wrong and should be repealed. What is required is vigilant enforcement.

This is a view supported by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), who in May 2009 issued guidance on enforcing the Hunting Act to police forces across England and Wales which stated that the Act is the law of the land, and that the police are under a duty to enforce it.

IFAW has been working closely with police forces since the ban came into force using a team of hunt monitors to peacefully and legally monitor the activities of hunts to ensure that the law is being obeyed. Where suspicious activity comes to light monitors report this to the police for investigation. IFAW also led a successful private prosecution against organised hare coursers.

IFAW has also responded to requests from various regional forces to assist with enforcement of the Act by providing training to hundreds of police officers on the Hunting Act.

Future of the Hunting Act

Any repeal of the Hunting Act would result in the return of not just fox hunting but other cruel activities such as hare coursing, condemned by politicians over time and across the political divide, from Margaret Thatcher and Harold Wilson to Ann Widdecombe and Tony Banks.

Public opinion and the law are on the side of the hunted animal, and IFAW will continue to work with police forces and CPS offices across the country to ensure the proper enforcement of the Act.

Any repeal of the Hunting Act would result in the return of not just fox hunting but other cruel activities such as hare coursing.

Recommendations to Government

- **Ensure effective enforcement of the Hunting Act 2004.**
- **Introduce and promote a nationwide training programme for police officers and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) on enforcing the Hunting Act.**
- **Roll out best practice amongst police forces and the CPS across the country.**
- **Ensure Hunting Act offences are recorded correctly on the National Standard for Incident Recording (NSIR).**

Notes

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