

African wildlife NEWS

Your support at work in Africa's landscapes

Across Africa, wildlife populations are under threat from a variety of pressures, including deforestation, resource extraction and conflict with humans.

The Other Issues

Though they don't receive as much attention as wildlife trafficking, other conservation issues can nevertheless take a heavy toll on Africa's wildlife and wild lands

When left to its own devices, nature does a remarkable job of taking care of itself. Consider Chernobyl, the Russian city that was permanently evacuated when a nuclear power plant exploded in 1986. According to a study in the October 2015 issue of the journal, "Current Biology," wildlife numbers in Chernobyl now appear to be higher than before the nuclear disaster, largely because of the lack of human presence. "This doesn't mean radiation is good for wildlife," says study coauthor Jim Smith, "just that the effects of human habitation, including hunting, farming and forestry, are a lot worse."

Unfortunately in Africa, the effects of human habitation on wildlife are inevitable, as wildlife and humans increasingly come into contact with one another. And wildlife trafficking is only one of the handful of issues being confronted by conservationists today.

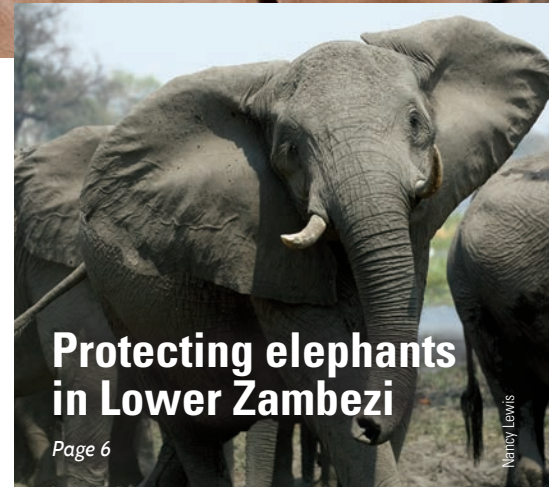
Following are just some of the "everyday" conservation challenges AWF is addressing on the African continent.

Deforestation & climate change

Africa is experiencing water stress, droughts and an increase in arid lands due to climate change—effects that are being exacerbated by deforestation. Because forests act as critical carbon sinks while also serving as water catchments, AWF is employing a couple of strategies to keep forests in Africa intact.

In Kenya, agriculture, logging and settlements have reduced the Mau Forest Complex, a water catchment for East Africa, to a quarter of its original size. AWF has been planting and protecting seedlings and implementing alternative livelihood schemes to minimize the impacts of livestock grazing in the forest. As of late 2015, AWF has rehabilitated about 437.5 hectares of the forest here.

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Protecting elephants in Lower Zambezi

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Nancy Lewis

PLUS:

AWF elects new African president



Craig P. Sholley

Ugandan native Kaddu Sebunya gives his take on why AWF is well-positioned to help Africa navigate this era of rapid change.

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The African Wildlife Foundation, together with the people of Africa, works to ensure the wildlife and wild lands of Africa will endure forever.

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More Than Trafficking



Wildlife trafficking receives significant attention, by media, the general public and conservation organizations—and rightly so. More than 1,000 rhinos have been poached in Africa in each of the past few years. Meanwhile, between 25,000 and 35,000 elephants are killed in Africa each year to supply the illicit wildlife trade.

As you know, African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) takes wildlife trafficking seriously. Through the Urgent Response Fund, we are working to stop the killing on the ground in places like Zambia (page 6) and stop the trafficking through judicial sensitization workshops throughout the continent (page 7). In Asia, we're addressing rhino horn demand with a new campaign with Virgin Group founder Sir Richard Branson (also on page 7).

This is not to say, however, that wildlife trafficking is the only thing AWF addresses. In fact, with change and development occurring in Africa at such a rapid clip, it's more important than ever for AWF to address the full spectrum of conservation challenges—from deforestation to extraction and beyond—confronting the continent today. You can read about these “other” conservation issues in our cover story.

I'm calling them the “other” conservation issues but they are in fact the central challenges faced by conservationists in Africa today. We need to be addressing them both on the ground and in the halls of power where decisions on these matters are being made every day. This is why I'm so pleased to announce that AWF has elected a new president, Kaddu Sebunya, effective this past January.

Kaddu is a native Ugandan who has overseen conservation programs from Kampala, Uganda, and Washington, DC. He has served as an effective and inspiring leader throughout that time, and will be an eloquent voice for AWF and AWF's vision of wildlife thriving in a modern Africa. In his role as AWF president, Kaddu will liaise with key African institutions as well as national governments to ensure wildlife is prioritized as major economic decisions are made on the future of the continent.

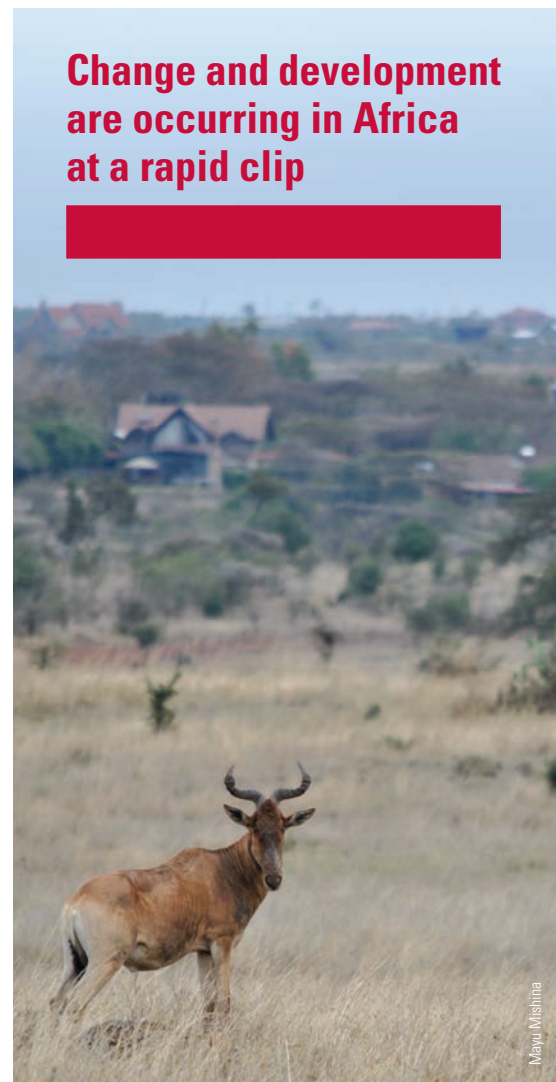
We hope that this issue of *African Wildlife News* will drive home how much your generosity is helping wildlife in Africa, and further underscores why you continue to support AWF. As these pages will show, Africa's wildlife and wild lands continue to face threats—but together, we are well equipped to battle them, both on the conservation frontlines as well as in the halls and boardrooms of Africa.

With heartfelt thanks,

Patrick Bergin

Patrick J. Bergin, Ph.D.
Chief Executive Officer

Change and development are occurring in Africa at a rapid clip



Mayu Mishina

AWF roundup

Good news for lions

With Africa's lion population expected to drop by half over the next couple of decades, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in December made the move to list two lion subspecies under the Endangered Species Act. *Panthera leo leo*, a subspecies found in West and Central Africa and India, was listed as endangered. This will largely prohibit hunters from importing this subspecies into the United States as a trophy. *Panthera leo melanochaita*, a subspecies found in East and Southern Africa, was categorized as threatened, with the USFWS working to establish a permitting system that would strictly regulate the import of lions and their parts into the country and ensure that all imports come from lion range states with good wildlife management programs. In addition, USFWS Director Dan Ashe further issued a Director's Order to ensure that those persons who have violated wildlife laws in the past will not be granted permits in the future to import trophies, live animals or engage in other wildlife-related activities.



Sharon Loudon Photography / sharonloudon.com

Road equipment in Uganda

Not all roads are paved in Uganda's national parks, and particularly when rainy season comes around, getting around the parks can be tough. In October, AWF donated a full set of road construction and maintenance equipment—worth US\$1.3 million—to Uganda Wildlife Authority to address these issues. The equipment included a grader, bulldozer, excavator and three other pieces. This machinery will improve the wildlife authority's ability to conduct ecological monitoring and maintain security from illegal poaching activities in its parks. The donation was part of AWF's ongoing implementation of the USAID/Uganda Biodiversity Program.

Change management

AWF CEO Patrick Bergin (pictured below from the 2000s) first journeyed to Africa as a fresh-faced, bespectacled Peace Corps volunteer in 1988. In 2015, Bergin celebrated 25 years with AWF, having started with the organization soon after finishing up with Peace Corps. In that time, he has successfully implemented our flagship large-landscape approach to conservation in Africa; expanded AWF's presence to Central and West Africa, emphasizing the protection of great apes; and oversaw the launch of a number of programs, including African Wildlife Capital and African Conservation Schools.

Bergin in the past couple of years has made sure to incorporate advocacy efforts within AWF's portfolio of work as well. "We've been an on-the-ground implementing agency for years," he explains, "but the pace of change is so rapid that we cannot do enough to turn the tide on the ground. There are forums beyond wildlife conferences where people are writing the future of the continent. If someone is not at the table when those decisions are being made, wildlife will lose out."



AWF



Rating given to AWF by charity evaluating group
Charity Navigator, the highest rating possible

Bipartisan agreement for wildlife

Even in today's divided Congress, there's one thing politicians on both sides of the aisle agree upon: ending the illegal wildlife trade. In early December, Senators Chris Coons (D-Del.) and Jeff Flake (R-Ariz.) introduced a bipartisan bill aimed at combating wildlife trafficking through a whole-of-government approach. The Senate bill, the END Wildlife Trafficking Act, complements the recent introduction

of a similar bill, the Global Anti-Poaching Act, in the U.S. House of Representatives. The END Wildlife Trafficking Act would authorize various assistance programs to address poaching and wildlife trafficking problems, including strengthening training for law enforcement and wildlife rangers in impacted countries. Once passed, the Senate and House bills would have to be reconciled before becoming law.



Sharon Loudon Photography / sharonloudon.com

Continued from page 1

Meanwhile, in southern Kenya, north-central Tanzania and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, AWF has been using Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) as a strategy to incentivize community conservation of forests. Communities can claim carbon credits for protecting a forest and sell those credits on the voluntary carbon market.

Resource extraction

Too often, governments in Africa have given mining or oil concessions inside, or perilously close to, national park boundaries. Such operations can damage the ecosystem and open up protected areas to illegal bushmeat hunting. In November 2014, AWF joined with seven other NGOs to call for a no-go policy around World Heritage Sites when it comes to mining, oil and gas activities.

As a founding member of the Africa World Heritage Site Support Network, an NGO consortium, AWF is also building the capacity of wildlife authorities in African World Heritage Sites. These include Simien Mountains National Park in Ethiopia and Dja Faunal Reserve in Cameroon. By providing rangers with the technology and training to accurately record and analyze ecological data from patrols, we are ensuring that wildlife authorities are well trained to protect these valuable areas from poaching—which typically escalates when mining is conducted nearby—and identify and report direct environmental impacts related to resource extraction.

Bushmeat hunting

For many in rural Africa, bushmeat hunting provides a much-needed source of protein for rural communities. But, says Alfred Ochan, a longtime Uganda Wildlife Authority ranger who heads up law enforcement and security at Murchison Falls National Park, “It has ceased to become an issue of being hungry. Bushmeat hunting has become commercial.” Rangers at Murchison Falls have picked up almost 5 tons of snares in the park in the past two years.

Sport Beattie, founder and CEO of Game Rangers International, sees similar trends in Zambia. “There’s definitely an upsurge in bushmeat poaching in Kafue National Park,” he relates. “Ninety-five percent of it has been poaching for the commercial markets. Poachers prepare the meat to go to Lusaka and some of the big mines.”

Through our Urgent Response Fund, AWF provides funding support to local groups like Game Rangers International to address bushmeat hunting. In the Congo landscape, where the bushmeat market is also alive and well, AWF is tackling the problem in slightly different ways. AWF conducted a six-month survey in 2014 to determine how much, and what types, of illegal bushmeat were being sold in four major local markets, then conducted a workshop to sensitize both local officials and those engaged in the trade.

Pauline Ekofi is a Congolese “market mama” who knowingly sold illegal bush meat to support her family. Since participating in an

AWF workshop, she has taken care not to sell illegal bushmeat, instead only marketing fish and honey at her stand in Mbandaka.

Human-wildlife conflict

Human-wildlife conflict is a big problem in many parts of Africa. In our Kilimanjaro landscape in Kenya, for example, only three elephants died in 2015 from poachers engaged in the illegal wildlife trade—but 24 were killed due to human-elephant conflict. “The historic Amboseli-Chyulu corridor that is used by elephants is shrinking quickly due to human settlement and agriculture,” says Kilimanjaro Landscape Manager Noah Sitati. As a result, elephants end up frequently treading on—or outright raiding—crops. People then spear and kill elephants in retaliation.

As a first line of defense against marauding elephants, community scouts figure prominently in efforts to minimize human-elephant conflict. From Kenya to Uganda, AWF-supported scouts use chili bricks, made from chili powder and cow dung and then lit to produce chili-infused smoke; beehive fences; and noisemakers such as vuvuzelas to turn elephants away from village farmlands.

Population growth, land-use change

For better or for worse, many of these conservation issues are interlinked—and many are the result of larger forces. Human population growth, for example, has resulted in people settling in once-open areas, exacerbating conflict with wildlife.

Population growth is also leading to rampant land conversion and land-use change—for agriculture, settlement and infrastructure development. The result, again: greater conflict with wildlife, less natural habitat for wildlife and so on.

Ultimately, it may come down to land-use planning, or zonation, to ensure sufficient space for human activities and for wildlife. Such plans allow for appropriate development while limiting sprawl. With perseverance, AWF’s combination of working at the government policy level and on the ground will result in big wins for wildlife and wild lands. In the meantime, AWF will continue to work, every day, on those “everyday” conservation issues affecting Africa. ■



LEFT: Bush meat has long been considered a ready source of protein for rural populations, but it has steadily become a more commercial business to appease appetites for “wild,” rather than domesticated, meat.

In a *Unique* Position



Rodger Bosch

A son of teachers, Kaddu Sebunya was introduced to international affairs and global issues early in life—an introduction that initially started him on a career focused on rural development and humanitarian relief. While studying in France, however, the Ugandan native became more attuned to issues around the environment. He eventually earned a masters of science in sustainable resource management and policy from the Imperial College of London and went on to work for the International Union for Conservation of Nature (or IUCN) and Conservation International, among other organizations. Most recently, he was leading the USAID/Uganda Biodiversity Program for AWF.

In January, Sebunya was appointed president of AWF, responsible for advocating for wildlife as part of Africa's future. Following are his thoughts on his new role.

Q: Congratulations on becoming AWF president! What will be your primary responsibility in this new position?

A: Thank you. I am excited to be stepping into this role at a time when the continent is developing rapidly and decisions are being made about how Africa will manage its natural resources going forward. In addition to explaining the AWF mission, as AWF president, it will be my responsibility to inspire African leadership at every level to incorporate wildlife and conservation into a vision for the continent's future. We want to build a network of supporters for AWF's mission across Africa, leveraging our already successful technical programmatic efforts to show why wildlife conservation is so important for Africa.

Q: Why should AWF take on an advocacy role on the continent?

A: The African continent is moving into rapid economic modernization. This reality will challenge AWF's mission and in particular pose threats to Africa's wildlife and wild land

ABOVE: New AWF President Kaddu Sebunya is a Ugandan native who also has experience working in Washington, DC. He will be at the forefront of AWF's advocacy efforts to ensure a place for wildlife even as Africa develops.

conservation as competition increases exponentially between people and wildlife for food and space. The search for ways to safeguard Africa's environmental future in sustainable ways is more urgent than ever before.

At the same time, public funding agencies and businesses are increasingly recognizing that conservation and development are often inherently compatible and have mutually supporting goals. The divisions that once separated the conservation and development communities are breaking down. It is therefore timely to strengthen our advocacy now—and as the oldest, largest and most truly African environmental organization, AWF is in a unique position to ensure wildlife and wild lands thrive in a modern Africa.

Q: What would you say are the most critical conservation issues Africa is now facing?

A: In many parts of the continent, food production lags behind population growth, famine strikes with dreadful persistence, soils are degrading, and wild lands, forests and trees are disappearing at unprecedented rates. While some people may argue that AWF's mission is narrower in perspective in the context of socioeconomic development, the reality is that the issues surrounding wildlife and wild land management are inseparable from Africa's broader crisis of population, food, poverty, land and natural resource management.

Africa's economic development is intertwined with the conservation of Africa's wildlife and other natural resources, and vice versa. Increasingly leaders understand this—but many have yet to act upon it. I look forward to building a true African network for conservation.

A Significant Contribution

Thanks to you, elephants in Zambia's Lower Zambezi landscape are better protected

Despite being home to one of the largest elephant populations in Africa, the Lower Zambezi ecosystem had not been experiencing significant elephant poaching. Poaching to supply the illicit ivory trade had largely been concentrated in Central and East Africa rather than this landscape, which spans Zambia, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Now, however, “that wave of poaching seems to be migrating south,” says Ian Stevenson.

As CEO of Conservation Lower Zambezi, a conservation group that operates in Zambia's Lower Zambezi National Park and the surrounding game management areas, Stevenson has witnessed firsthand how elephant poaching has changed in the past few years. “2013 was our lowest elephant poaching year in our recorded history. 2015, on the other hand, saw a marked increase, with elephant poaching higher than it has been in years,” he explains. “The poaching has become more professional and sophisticated, with organized criminal syndicates at play, rather than subsistence poaching.”

AWF has been providing Urgent Response Fund grants to CLZ to help combat this increase in professional poaching, supplementing CLZ's work with Zambia Wildlife Authority (ZAWA) and with village game scouts. Thanks to your support of the Urgent Response Fund, in fact, these game scouts and ZAWA officers were able to arrest three suspects, destroy 11 poachers' camps and recover two firearms and 23 rounds of ammunition in a single quarter. We also helped CLZ purchase four specialized handheld GPS and data collection PDA units. These units allow rangers and game scouts to record the locations of illegal activity, such as poachers' camps and ecological data, which will better inform where patrols should be undertaken.

More bang for the buck

While wildlife protection remains a core of CLZ's work inside Lower Zambezi National Park, human-wildlife conflict remains a concern in the game management areas outside the park. Here, too, AWF support is helping.

“Thanks to AWF, we are trialing two pepper paintball guns that scouts can fire in the direction of elephants and divert them away from people's crops,” explains Stevenson. “It hopefully will be more effective and also safer for game scouts than some of the other methods of mitigating human-elephant conflict.”

AWF began funding CLZ in 2013. Its Urgent Response Fund grants have provided what Stevenson notes is a significant contribution to CLZ's budget. “We only have a few organizations that fund us to the extent that AWF does—you are definitely one of our key funders,” he observes.

“CLZ is a solid, well-known organization that has been working in the lower Zambezi for over 20 years. We have quite a bit of influence in the landscape,” Stevenson adds. “I believe AWF gets more bang for its buck by supporting an organization like us than doing one-off projects in the area.”

And, while elephant poaching has been increasing, CLZ's CEO says the outlook remains positive in this landscape. “Elephant poaching is still among the lowest in Zambia because of the protection supplied by us, with support from AWF. We have quite a healthy elephant population here still,” he concludes. ■

ABOVE: With your support, we have been able to assist in tracking and recording poacher activity both in and outside of Zambia's Lower Zambezi National Park.

Focus on *Vietnam*

AWF is leveraging the momentum from its China ivory awareness campaign to build awareness in Vietnam of the illegal rhino horn trade

Rhino horn demand is continuing to fuel the poaching deaths of African rhinos. In Vietnam, the largest consuming country of rhino horn, there is minimal public awareness about rhino horn and the impacts of demand on rhino poaching.

To address this issue, AWF and partner WildAid are working on a public awareness campaign in Vietnam to educate audiences about the need to curb rhino horn demand. Assisting in this effort is Virgin Group founder Sir Richard Branson.

In September 2015, Branson hosted a dinner in Ho Chi Minh City with an influential group of Vietnam's top CEOs. "I quickly learned how much the issue has already become part of a national conversation—one that has caused great embarrassment for a country of 90 million people that is rapidly entering the global market," Branson noted after the event. Because rhino horn is considered a luxury item in Vietnam, it is often given as a gift—but the dinner attendees signed a pledge committing to never buying, using or gifting rhino horn.

The famed entrepreneur is also starring in a new public service announcement that shows him chewing his fingernails. Though it is often erroneously touted as a miracle cure, rhino horn is



ABOVE: Virgin Group founder Sir Richard Branson is among the celebrities trying to discourage Vietnamese consumers from purchasing rhino horn in a new public awareness campaign from AWF and partner WildAid. The campaign has begun airing in China; a Vietnamese version is underway.

primarily made of keratin, a protein also found in human nails and hair. "Keratin. That's all it is," Branson says. "No different or more a medical remedy than your fingernails. So with a dwindling rhino population, why kill off one of our planet's greatest species for no reason?"

Branson is joined in this "Nail Biters" campaign by Vietnamese-American actress Maggie Q, Chinese actress Li Bingbing and other Chinese celebrities. The PSAs will begin airing in China, with a Vietnamese version now underway. ■

In Africa, Addressing the Judicial Gaps

Through engagement with the judiciary, AWF is sensitizing officials on the impacts of wildlife crime—and enhancing much-needed interagency collaboration

Historically, wildlife crimes have been treated like petty crimes, similar to being drunk and disorderly," says Didi Wamukoya. "A person convicted of a wildlife crime may have been ordered to do community service for a day."

Wamukoya knows of what she speaks, having cut her teeth prosecuting wildlife crimes for Kenya Wildlife Service. Now, as AWF's law enforcement manager, the attorney is working across the African continent to address this lenient outlook on wildlife crime.

According to Wamukoya, a number of factors hamper wildlife law enforcement in Africa. To start, there appears to be a general lack of

awareness about the socioeconomic impacts of wildlife crime. Meanwhile, investigative, prosecutorial and judicial agencies often don't work together on these cases, despite wildlife crime cutting across multiple sectors. Finally, wildlife laws may simply be weak. Applying the law holistically is critical, then, as punishments for wildlife offenses may not be as severe as for other offenses. In South Africa, for example, three poachers charged in 2012 received a greater prison term for possessing a prohibited firearm—15 years—than for illegally killing a rhino, which carried a 10-year prison sentence.

As part of our "Stop the Trafficking" efforts under the Urgent Response Fund, AWF—together with Freeland Foundation and the International Fund

for Animal Welfare—has been hosting a series of judicial sensitization workshops to address these gaps. Workshops have already taken place in Kinshasa and Mbandaka, Democratic Republic of the Congo; Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; and multiple locations in Kenya. Participants in these trainings have included representatives from agencies across the criminal justice system: wildlife authorities, police, customs, immigration, prosecution and judicial branches. "We are trying to touch on all the agencies that address wildlife crime," says Wamukoya.

Read Wamukoya's blog post about our law enforcement efforts in African countries: Visit awf.org/wildlife-justice

Wildlife Watch *African civet*



Phil Perry Wildlife Photography

Though it likes the nightlife, the African civet is not what you'd call a party animal. Instead it's a bit of a loner, preferring to spend its days sleeping under cover of tall grasses and its nights hunting—by itself, thank you very much. The African civet eats small prey like mice, lizards, frogs and insects, as well as berries.

Unlike others in the civet family, the African civet boasts a distinctive appearance. Its grayish face sports a dark mask around the eyes like a raccoon. It has yellowish fur on its body, overlaid with dark spots arranged in rows. A dorsal crest of hair rises up if the animal feels threatened.

The African civet may be most well known for its musk. The civet secretes a waxy substance from its perineal gland to mark territory. The substance, also known as “civet,” can be overpowering to the senses, but surprisingly has been used as a base for perfume for centuries. Even with the development of synthetic musk, some perfumes reportedly still use civet today.

The African civet is found in decent numbers across sub-Saharan Africa, in both forests and savannas. That said, its future may be threatened by ongoing deforestation and habitat loss on the continent. Though AWF's work to protect forests and other wild spaces is often couched in terms of conserving habitat for larger mammals, these efforts ensure space for the African civet to live as well. Just don't expect it to be gathering with others to celebrate!

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WEB

AWF presence in China



If you've been keeping up with our 'Say No' public awareness campaign, you know we've been working to bring broader education about the horrors of wildlife trafficking to Chinese citizens. To take our efforts to the next level, AWF has launched a digital presence in China, including a presence on China's top social platforms—WeChat, Weibo and Youku—and a Chinese website.

Check out our new website:
awfchina.cn

WEB

Online art sale for Africa's wildlife

This spring the Society for Animal Artists is teaming up with AWF to launch a one-of-a-kind online art sale. The society is dedicated to promoting the creatures sharing our planet via artistic expression—and as an extension of their mission, the Society created a special African wildlife collection to benefit AWF's conservation efforts. Stay tuned for upcoming sale details, where you can get a wildlife art original and simultaneously help AWF protect Africa's species in the process!

VIDEO

Steller stories

AWF recently launched our presence on the photo-storytelling platform, Steller. We invite you to join us on this, our 10th social media platform, as we tell some of Africa's most important stories, including visually stunning updates on our sniffer dogs, lion conservation efforts and mountain gorilla work.

See the stories: awf.org/steller



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