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**AFRICAN WHITE GOLD: ELEPHANT IVORY AND RHINO HORN TRAFFICKING—
US INTERVENTION AND INTERDICTION**

by

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Preface

During my time as a student at Air Command and Staff College, I had the opportunity to travel to Mozambique as part of the Embassy Immersion program in the Political Affairs Strategist (PAS) elective. As a C-130 pilot, I have extensive experience working in the Africa Theater, but most of my experience centered in the north and central parts of the continent, and my knowledge of the southern nations was limited. As I began researching Mozambique and communicating with members of the Political/Economic team at the US Embassy in Maputo, I was surprised by the amount of work they did on wildlife conservation efforts. I would not consider myself a conservationist, nor have I paid much attention to wildlife poaching but found myself intrigued by the security threats posed by the illegal trafficking and trade of elephant ivory and rhino horns. As I researched this topic further in depth I found troubling statistics that the cost of ivory and rhino horns surpassed the cost of gold and heroin on the black market. It became apparent that this growing and lucrative market presented an opportunity for dangerous organizations to develop a revenue stream for their operations while taking advantage of the notoriously porous borders and weak governance spread across Africa. While in Mozambique, I traveled to protected reserves and saw firsthand the struggles of defending these herds as many rangers died at the hands of violent poachers, and I witnessed the tactics that organizations used to smuggle tusks and horns, and undermine the rule of law. While the protection of elephants and rhinos is important from a conservation standpoint, it is becoming even more important as a security issue that requires greater attention from the United States before the problem begins to disrupt regional stability.

Abstract

One of the most overlooked aspects of wildlife trafficking and poaching is the impact to international security, regional stability, and to local governance. The rapid rise in the price of ivory creates an environment where the reward outweighs the current risk to poachers and criminal organizations. These revenue streams fund illicit activity and these groups create instability within the nations in Africa. Mozambique struggles with significant development issues to include lack of education, jobs, security, weak governance, the rule of law, and health concerns. Animal conservation is not their top priority, yet illegal poaching presents significant second and third order affects that impact their security, their rule of law, national sovereignty, and their future development.

The recommendations presented in this analysis will give Mozambique the opportunity to prioritize anti-poaching efforts without negatively affecting their limited capacity to attack their numerous challenges, and frames this problem as a security challenge and not just a conservation issue. With the support of the United States in fighting this poaching scourge, Mozambique and her neighbors can develop anti-poaching initiatives that will strengthen their rule of law and ensure security and stability for their region while also changing the perception that conservation is a burden and turning these animals into a national resource.

INTRODUCTION

For many Americans, Africa is the embodiment of the great unknown, as few do not have any more knowledge and understanding of the continent than what they glean from pictures in *National Geographic* or from movies such as *Tarzan* or *The Lion King*. Nineteenth century Welsh explorer Henry M. Stanley spent years exploring Africa and was the first European to trace the Congo River and is most famous for uttering the phrase “Dr. Livingstone I presume,” upon completion of his search for fellow explorer David Livingstone.¹ Stanley called Africa the “dark continent,” not only because of its unknown and mysterious nature to European settlers and colonizers, but also for what was described as a “shadow of death” that seemed to loom overhead throughout the continent.² For centuries, explorers and colonists have exploited Africa for its natural resources. Whether for gold or diamonds, or ivory or furs, or even its human inhabitants for the slave trade, the wealth of the land has beckoned those who would continuously take and rarely give back; with the world only taking notice if the African “shadow of death” risks spilling across the waters that separate them. It is not a surprise then that US policy focused primarily upon challenges like HIV or Ebola, even as terrorist and criminal organizations turned their sights to the porous borders and shores of Africa, and the lucrative trade of ivory on the black market.³

More recently, the National Security Strategy of the United States highlights the importance of “deepening security partnerships with African countries and institutions” to strengthen their capacities to ensure stable regions and governments, and to “counter transnational security threats” and terrorist organizations seeking to expand their sphere of influence such as ISIL and Al Qaeda.⁴ As Africa grows economically, they will continue to be an attractive destination for exploitation, and nascent governments will require assistance to protect

its resources from those who follow the historical path of taking but never giving back. As resources such as elephant ivory and rhino horns, become more lucrative, transnational terrorist organizations, and criminal networks seek sources of funding to continue their operations. They create violence, and take advantage of underequipped security forces, and corruption, to develop operational safe-havens, and further their extremist causes that threatens US national security.

Research Question

Both the recent spike in elephant and rhino poaching, and the rapid rise in the price of ivory creates an environment where the reward outweighs the current risk to poachers and criminal organizations. These revenue streams fund illicit activity and these groups create instability within the nations in Africa. With globalization eliminating the isolation and safety that oceans once gave, the United States faces a future where activity in nations as far away as eastern Africa can have potential impact to national security. United States Agency for International Development (USAID) states that “wildlife trafficking is an international threat to conservation, economic development, the rule of law, and security.”⁵ Mozambique was recently admonished by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) for its porous borders, its failure to combat transnational criminal networks that operate from within their country, and their inability to implement laws and procedures governing anti-poaching efforts in the nation.⁶ These organizations operate freely within Mozambique, and conduct cross-border activities, which undermines local governance, and threatens regional stability. They not only conduct illegal poaching but also operate smuggling rings, create violence, and fund insurgencies to undermine the legitimacy of local governance. While there is no evidence currently to suggest that the criminal networks in Mozambique aligned with terrorist groups, such as al-Shabaab or Boko Haram, the operational safe haven in Mozambique with a steady

revenue stream from trafficking, is attractive to these groups. The US must be proactive in developing partnership assistance plans with Mozambique to implement anti-poaching measures before these terrorist organizations find a foothold and destabilize the nation and the region.

Therefore, it becomes important to ask how the United States can intervene and assist Mozambique and its neighboring countries, as well as apply pressure to the international community to change policies to counter the illegal trade of elephant ivory and rhino horns, and to reduce the demand on these living resources. This examination of wildlife trafficking demonstrates how future initiatives will create regional stability by removing a revenue stream from criminal networks and transnational terrorist organizations leading to the conservation of elephants and rhinoceros. Moreover, these initial efforts with Mozambique can be a framework for partnership activities across the continent.

Thesis

The US should increase financial, military, and technological assistance to Mozambique and to CITES anti-poaching efforts because the illegal ivory trade not only threatens the extinction of these animals, but also provides critical funding for criminal networks and terrorist organizations that threatens regional stability and US interests in the region. The United States should focus its efforts on combating ivory poaching in three areas, first, combat poaching on the range by protecting herds through technological tracking and alert systems, and through joint interdiction training with Mozambique and its border nations. Second, by applying diplomatic pressure to the Mozambique government to enact and enforce stricter smuggling and poaching laws, and assist in the development of regional partnerships to ensure Mozambique joins and cooperates with regional networks to increase their capacity to fight against criminal networks. Third, pressure CITES to permit the trade of legally obtained ivory through natural death of these

animals to nations that observe and are in good standing with CITES regulations, and use all proceeds from the sale of ivory to fund conservation and anti-poaching efforts.

Research Methodology and Assumptions

Through a problem/solution methodology, the United States can answer how to stem the illegal ivory trade in Africa and destroy the highly profitable revenue stream that terrorist and insurgent organizations use to fund their illicit operations. This research focuses on how to attack the poaching problem as a continental challenge, but using Mozambique as an initial opportunity to build a framework and benchmark for further partnership activities in the region. While a discussion of international supply and demand is important, specifically in regards to high demand in China and East Asia, this analysis does not seek to address US-China relations, or to make recommendations on US-China foreign policy. The scope is limited to recommendations specific to US-Mozambique policy and US influence within CITES. Recent efforts by Mozambique to develop anti-poaching laws and to adhere to CITES regulations are a positive indication of a desire to improve their efforts. Additionally, this analysis recognizes that all nations that are Parties to CITES attempt to adhere to their regulations and policies and will implement legislation as dictated in the Convention.

Finally, for clarification purposes, it is important to define the difference between illegally obtained ivory and rhino horns versus legally obtained ivory and horns. Elephant tusks and rhino horns that come from animals that are killed through illegal hunting, poaching, or obtained from a deceased animal that was not approved by CITES is considered illegal, to include illegally purchased or stolen from government supplies. Legal ivory and rhino horns are obtained from animals that die from the natural selection process, or through legally permitted hunting and are approved to be extracted by CITES.

BACKGROUND

Increased Poaching In Africa

The ivory from Elephant tusks and Rhinoceros horns have a long history as a coveted luxury and decorative item for over 3,000 years. Civilizations such as the Greeks and Chinese carved sculptures and ornaments, made religious icons and jewelry from tusks and horns from these animals. Ivory became highly sought after as it adorned palaces and became benches in the Roman Senate and the throne of King Solomon. However, the wealthy class was not the only driver of the demand for ivory as the middle and lower classes valued it for its utility as a precursor to modern day plastics and as a container due to its ability to create airtight seals.⁷ Additionally cultural traditions, like those from Vietnam that suggest rhino horns may be natural cures for ailments, continue to drive the demand for ivory in the present day. Historically the demand for ivory was worldwide and not localized to one region, which drove poachers from all over the world to hunt in Africa to procure this valuable commodity, with some hunters killing up to two hundred animals in one safari.⁸ The market for ivory became so powerful that by the early twentieth century it dominated the economies of many nations in central and eastern Africa. By the 1980s nearly “half of the continents elephants were being killed every eight to ten years,” with exports (both legal and illegal) of ivory rising by more than 300 percent to over “900 metric tons.”⁹

In response to the dramatic rise in poaching over the last half century, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) attempted to smother poaching activities by implementing an immediate ban on rhino horns and increased restrictions on elephant ivory which eventually led to a ban on all ivory sales and trade in 1989.¹⁰ CITES is an “international agreement between governments” which the United States is a party

along with Mozambique and more than 180 nations worldwide.¹¹ Its goals are to ensure “that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival,” and their resolutions are legally binding to the signed parties.¹² While initially, the bans on rhino horns and elephant ivory appeared to stabilize the respective herds and species by reducing the demand through punitive legal actions, more recently the level of poaching began to rise again as the bans created a lucrative black-market for these restricted commodities. The reduction in supply resulted in a significant increase in prices, as some estimates claim that a rhino horn can cost as much \$30,000 per pound through illegal trading which is more than the price of crack cocaine.¹³ This lucrative market drives poachers back into the field to reap rewards that seemingly outweigh the current risks within the system.

The first part of the 21st century witnessed a steady increase of elephant and rhino poaching that is reaching the record-breaking level from the 1980s in which elephant numbers diminished from 1.3 million to approximately 600,000 because of poachers killing for ivory.¹⁴ In 2011 alone, poachers killed an estimated 25,000 elephants, yet that number does not fully represent the totality of the poaching as many poachers aim to hide their activities through destruction or burial of corpses.¹⁵ The United Nations estimates that the number of actual elephants poached for their ivory between 2010 and 2012 is close to 100,000, with the annual rates in 2013 and 2014 to be similar to those in the preceding years.¹⁶ Rhinos face similar poaching rates by percentage as nearly 1,215 out of the 28,000 remaining in Africa died due to illicit hunting, and poaching activities.¹⁷ These high rates are unsustainable for the long-term survivability of both elephants and rhinoceros, yet the challenge is developing strategies in underdeveloped nations with weak governance. While the 1989 ban on ivory initially curtailed poaching activities as prices for ivory remained stable, which helped stabilize the elephant and

rhino populations in Africa, the reduction in supply began to affect ivory prices as they slowly rose over the next few years. By 1997, the total amount of ivory traded in the market was relatively low at an estimated 17.3 tons or approximately 15,000kg, with a price point of around USD \$30 per kilogram.¹⁸ However, by 2007 the price of ivory increased to nearly USD \$70 per kg that began to attract more attention by criminal networks that were willing to risk the dangers of poaching and smuggling to acquire this new “white gold.” As prices increased so did the ivory trade and in 2012, the price of ivory reached more than USD \$125 per kg with a corresponding increase in ivory traded to more than an estimated 81,000kg.¹⁹ Rhino horns follow a similar trend with poaching numbers remaining stable and low in the 1990s averaging fewer than 20 poached rhinos a year with horns priced between USD \$4,700 per kg depending on the market. These numbers increased to 450 rhinos poached in 2011 with the price of rhino horns, according to some reports, at upwards of USD \$65,000 per kg on the black market.²⁰

Mozambique has two significant wildlife reserves that are home to a majority of the nation’s elephant and rhino populations. The Niassa reserve is located in the northern part of the country bordering Tanzania and covers more than 16 thousand square miles making it almost double the size of the state of Maryland. Within the Niassa reserve lives 70 percent of Mozambique’s elephant population with an approximately 50 thousand animals making it “Africa’s second largest” elephant population.²¹ The World Conservation Society (WCS), a U.S. non-governmental organization (NGO) entered an agreement with Mozambique to co-manage the area with the goal of mitigating threats to wildlife populations and to establish effective institutions and governance for management and protection of the reserve.²² The cooperative partnership between Mozambique and the WCS is a positive framework and a valuable support tool the fight against wildlife trafficking, but they still lack the capacity to prevent poaching

activities, and the authority to arrest and prosecute the offenders. The location and sheer size of the Niassa reserve complicates anti-poaching efforts, as Mozambique does not currently have the capacity or intelligence capabilities to patrol and monitor the smuggling routes as seen in figure 1. Moreover, the local population and law enforcement do not speak Portuguese, the official language of Mozambique, making coordination efforts difficult and intelligence gathering even more difficult. Combine those challenges with quick access to the porous border with Tanzania or to the seaports on the Indian Ocean, and Mozambique and the WCS quickly run out of capacity to cover all the ground required to combat the illegal ivory trade.

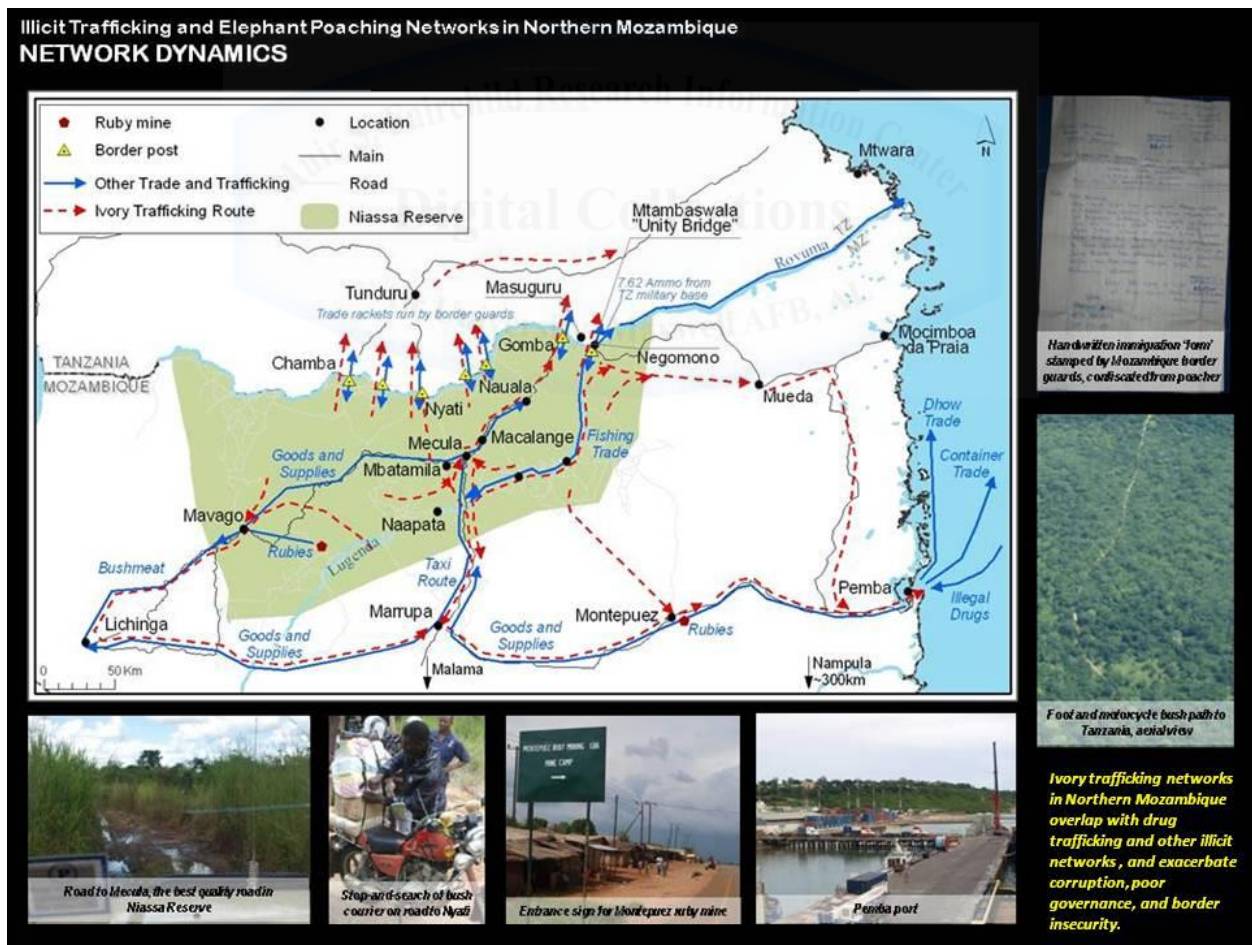


FIGURE 1: Illicit Trafficking and Elephant Poaching Routes in Niassa Reserve²³

The second significant wildlife reserve is Limpopo National Park located near Maputo in the south and overlaps without a fence line with South Africa's main reserve Kruger National Park just across the border. A coalition of the World Bank, the international community and the government of Mozambique established Limpopo in 2001 to ensure wildlife conservation in the region, and entered into a co-management agreement with the NGO Peace Parks Foundation to manage and protect the wildlife living within its borders.²⁴ The largest population of rhinos in the world live in the Kruger and Limpopo National Parks with an estimated 9,000 to 12,000 rhinos representing "90% of Africa's white rhinos and 40% of the rare black rhino."²⁵ The parks share 226 miles of border as seen in figure 2, which creates unique issues as each nation enforces different poaching laws, uses separate interdiction techniques, and debates questions of jurisdiction for criminal prosecution.²⁶ Challenges also exist to national sovereignty as poachers freely cross the border from Mozambique into South Africa and return to avoid capture as there is no agreement for law enforcement to cross the border for pursuit operations.

According to the wildlife trade-monitoring network (TRAFFIC), and the World Wildlife Foundation (WWF), Mozambican poachers killed 321 rhinos in Kruger National Park that includes shared areas with Limpopo National Park in Mozambique, and more than 2,500 elephants in other areas, such as the Niassa Reserve, within its provinces.²⁷ In response to CITES recommendations and possible sanctions, the Government of the Republic of Mozambique (GRM) began the legislative process to adopt stricter laws and passed a conservation law that criminalized wildlife poaching in June 2014.²⁸ In addition to new legislation they also developed the "National Rhino and Ivory Action Plan" (NIRAP) in January 2015 which laid out specific goals to include: a revision of the criminal code with heavier penalties and longer prison sentences, developing intelligence capacity to improve law enforcement, and raise awareness

through strategic messaging.²⁹ While these initiatives demonstrate positive steps towards anti-poaching, USAID observed that “not everyone involved in the fight against poaching—from interdiction to prosecution and conviction—understood the full scale and scope of the challenge,” as the lack of successful prosecutions indicate limitations of capacity and capability.³⁰



Figure 2: Limpopo National Park with border overlap to Kruger National Park in South Africa³¹

Criminal Networks and Threats to the United States

While some scientists and conservationists claim the most recent spike in poaching is part of a typical 10-year cycle, the most recent spike displays new characteristics that are different from previous peaks. *TRAFFIC* notes: “techniques used to kill rhinos have changed and these shifts are indicative of the new and decidedly uncharacteristic profiles of those behind the rhino deaths linked to increased involvement of organized crime syndicates.”³² These criminal organizations provide a level of sophistication and experience that is difficult to counteract for a nation like Mozambique with relatively young democracies, and insufficient enforcement resources. The President of the United States recognized the increase potential of profits from poaching funding terrorism when he established a task force through The President’s Advisory Council on Wildlife Trafficking in 2014. The President directed the Secretary of Defense to work with the task force to clarify guidance, increase intelligence, and “counteract the international wildlife trafficking syndicates that are destabilizing governments and providing funds to militias and terrorist groups.”³³ In testimony before Congress Tom Cardmore, the managing director Global Financial Integrity explained there is evidence that drug cartels smuggle animal products with shipments of drugs and provide weapons to poachers, that criminal networks establish shell companies for the bribing of officials, and money laundering connected to the ivory trade.³⁴ These criminal networks are now funding and equipping poachers, making them vastly more dangerous and difficult to counteract, and use existing drug smuggling routes, which makes it easier to distribute the ivory. Additionally, criminal networks in Asia are heavily involved in the Rhino trade as they finance illegal rhino hunts and “monopolize” the smuggling routes with many moving directly through the Maputo, Mozambique international airport.³⁵

These networks are dangerous because they create regional instability and fund the flow of a multi-billion dollar industry and threaten the security of the United States as “illicit traffic of wildlife appears to be one of the ways a number of Al-Qaeda affiliates have chosen to raise money to fund their operation.”³⁶ Specifically, al-Shabaab in Somalia works across multiple borders, using ivory, and rhino horns to raise funds.³⁷ The NGO Elephant Action League documented the use of ivory poaching to fund terrorist activities by al-Shabaab and the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) in an undercover investigation. They tracked money from poaching sales in Kenya to the accounts of members of al-Shabaab in Somalia which funded operations and the purchase of weapons in amounts that totaled between USD \$200,000 to USD \$600,000.³⁸ Congressman Ted Poe, Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Terrorism, cited this investigation when explaining that poaching accounts for nearly “40% of Al-Shabaab’s total operating budget,” and that the “fact that killers worldwide are using this money to fund terrorism makes it even more urgent that we stop this ruthless criminal enterprise.”³⁹ The infusion of sophisticated criminal and terrorist networks fuels the current spike in elephant and rhino poaching leading wildlife trafficking to become the fifth-largest “illicit transnational activity” behind only counterfeiting, human trafficking, drugs, and oil and ahead of the small arms trade.⁴⁰

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Criteria—US Interdiction and Intervention

To combat the growing trend of elephant and animal poaching and to combat the illegal ivory and horn trade, the United States must be proactive to maintain security to allies and US interests, to protect against violent extremists developing a funding source, and to ensure stability in the region. Any recommendation or plan must address all three phases of the ivory

trade process, the range, the smuggling routes and criminal enterprises, and the supply and demand. These efforts must be sustainable for underdeveloped nations in Africa to employ and sustain for the long-term and amenable to the Parties of the CITES convention. Lastly, the recommendations must be feasible for the host-nation to implement with their complete political buy-in, and therefore in this case must be Mozambique-led and approved.

Three Areas of Interdiction

Currently, the United States supports anti-poaching efforts through strictly enforcing the ivory ban, minimal military training through AFRICOM building partnership capacity (BPC) missions with select countries such as Botswana, and by being a party to CITES and supporting their efforts. While these efforts were adequate following the ivory ban of 1989, with the recent rise in poaching and the introduction of complex and dangerous criminal and terrorist organizations into this lucrative market, many African nation's capabilities to combat these challenges have fallen behind as they either lack the resources or motivation to enforce international norms and regulations. Most of the efforts against poaching traditionally focused on direct interdiction by directly protecting elephant and rhino herds with success measured by the amount of illegal ivory seized. In 2012, some of the largest seizures of illegal ivory occurred as authorities gathered more than 50,000kg following various raids, and law enforcement actions, yet this only represents seized ivory and not the entirety of ivory actually poached.⁴¹ While these efforts are a success in keeping illegal ivory out of the black market, it is only one small part of the total equation to combat this crisis. The Secretary General of CITES, John Scanlon, testified before the US Congressional Committee on Foreign Relations in 2012 and stated that "seizure is, in fact a failure, that the animal is dead. You have seized the contraband, but the person who wanted it still wants it."⁴² Seizure is only one aspect of the three levels of interdiction that

traditionally gets the most focus because it presents the best mechanism for quick measurement and statistics. When developing a strategy for combat or intervention, planners look at and develop lines of operation at three levels of war, tactical, operational, and strategic. Similarly, when confronting the poaching challenge, to have any hope of success, there must be intervention and interdiction at three levels of the illegal ivory trade, on the range (tactical), at the local governance level (operational), and with supply and demand (strategic).

Interdiction in the Field

The first level is the tactical level, or interdiction in the field, by protecting the herds at the source. Current efforts in this area include the tagging and tracking of elephant and rhino herds, and intelligence gathering by government and non-governmental organizations for law enforcement engagement. The tagging and tracking process hardens the targets and historically dissuades the average poachers from targeting those specific animals. However, the sharp rise in ivory prices creates a strong incentive to target “even closely monitored populations.”⁴³ Additional efforts in this area are the immediate protection of these animals by game wardens, rangers, and local scouts. Because of direct protection measures on the ground, levels of poaching in some areas of Africa dropped significantly, such as in the nation of Chad where direct anti-poaching tactics reduced the number of elephants killed from approximately 800 a year to only seven in 2011.⁴⁴ While these tactics prove fruitful and offer a blueprint for future success, they are expensive and require significant resources that nations such as Mozambique lacks.

In October 2014, the US Embassy in Maputo, Mozambique held a seminar with the GRM Attorney General’s Office and the Mozambique National Administration of Conservation Areas (ANAC), the agency that manages and supervises the games wardens and park rangers within the

national parks and reserves, to discuss issues relating to wildlife conservation and challenges with their newly passed anti-poaching legislation.⁴⁵ One of the major points of discussion emphasized the lack of resources for Mozambique's national parks and private game reserves in fighting poaching at the tactical level on the range. Most park rangers and game wardens often face overwhelming odds as they often lack technical resources, intelligence, the personnel, the training, and the equipment to fight against well-armed poachers, who more often than not, are "hardened soldiers," trained in the tactics of military infantry.⁴⁶ While increased financial support is important to build increased capacity, Mozambique struggles with how to use donated funds effectively, and requires assistance with type of equipment to acquire and training on interdiction tactics. Many governmental organizations express the need for assistance with logistics, purchases and training.⁴⁷ Thus, recommendations at the tactical level on the range focus on increased technological assistance for combating poaching, training for wardens and park rangers, and military BPC engagements.

The United States and international organizations earmarked funding for conservation programs in Mozambique's protected areas through two recently finalized Global Development Alliance's (GDAs) through USAID that will direct USD \$20 million from the United States over five years and USD \$24 million in additional funds from private sector partners.⁴⁸ However, these funds will not effectively build capacity and capability alone, unless allocated effectively to purchase the right technological equipment combined with expert training. Rangers and park wardens need access to better technology such as global positioning satellite (GPS) trackers and improved satellite radios that allow them to mark highly used routes with times of primary use. They also need training that will allow them to develop techniques using these technologies to focus their efforts on defending specific areas of emphasis and points of entry and departure.

While the purchase of GPS units and radios will signify an increased capability, the rangers also need additional training on effectively using the equipment to improve interdiction. The US should embed members from the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL), and the US Forest Service with Mozambican law enforcement and national parks to provide training and operational experience to these rangers to improve their overall capacity to interdict smuggling routes and poachers. Moreover, the US needs to bring Mozambican rangers and members of the newly created Mozambique Environmental Police (a federal bureau of law enforcement dedicated to wildlife conservation) to the United States for tactical training with the DEA and other law enforcement agencies to increase their capabilities and learn to synthesize their joint operations. Lastly, the US should fund scholarships for Mozambican officials to attend regional training programs on wildlife conservation such as Tanzania's College of African Wildlife Management.⁴⁹

In addition to GPS and radios, another required technological upgrade is the need for aircraft, both manned and unmanned, to provide intelligence to law enforcement agencies and act as a deterrent. Flyovers provide the type of intelligences and surveillance that park rangers currently lack, in that it can cover significant ground in short amounts of time and can implement minimal equipment, to include hand-held cameras to increase capacity ten-fold. As part of the increased funding piece, the US should provide up to four small aircraft, such as the C-208, to ANAC for increased flyover capability and intelligence gathering.

The US should also develop a partnership agreement with US Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) and Mozambique CBP for training agents, and creating an embed program. Mozambique's borders are porous creating a transit nation for Africa's criminal and terrorist networks. Customs and Border agents in general are either under-trained, or corrupt and willing

to take bribes from poachers to overlook ivory and horns being smuggled. In the north of Mozambique, many CBP agents do not speak Portuguese, the national language, and therefore have difficulty identifying illegal material, applying laws, and coordinating with federal law enforcement agencies on evidence hand-over. Mozambique CBP has already indicated willingness for US CPB agents and experts to embed at borders, in airports, and at ports to assist, offer expert advice, and train local agents

Lastly, while training and technical assistance are important for rangers and law enforcement agencies, military cooperation is equally important to maintain the sovereignty of Mozambique's borders. Although the Mozambican military lacks training and capacity, they do have a desire to be a larger regional player and use their growing economic growth to gain influence. They have visions of greater participation during military exercises with African nation, and this presents an opportunity for AFRICOM to engage in small bilateral Building Partnership Cooperation (BPC) exercises focused on anti-poaching interdiction. Joint military operations and training in Botswana and Tanzania by AFRICOM troops demonstrate the value of BPCs as poaching levels in both of these locations decreased as the US supported operations with logistics, intelligence, and training.⁵⁰ To achieve the same type of success in Mozambique, future military BPC and assistance will require the engagement of the AFRICOM Commander. Mozambique is a highly centralized government and even the smallest decisions require high-level approval and buy-in, which will require the AFRICOM commander to engage the Mozambique Chief of Defense to impress upon him the importance of wildlife interdiction and increased partnerships with the US military.

Recommendation: Local Governance and Regional Partnerships

The second level of effort is the operational level with the local government through stronger governance and regional cooperation and alliances. As stated earlier, Mozambique struggles to implement new laws and regulations, specifically at the judicial and enforcement level as they continue to struggle with apathy and corruption. The most recent ivory seizure data demonstrates an increase of large-scale (weighing over 500kgs) ivory seizures which indicates sophisticated smuggling rings and larger criminal enterprises engaged in the process.⁵¹ These larger-scale seizures increased from 2008 to 2013 by over 800 percent, with expectations that numbers in 2014 will continue to show an increase, demonstrating that criminal and terrorist groups are taking notice of the increased value of this market and trade.⁵² As the sophistication of the smuggling operations and experienced criminal networks continue to enter this field, the local governments are going to need increased assistance and cooperation from international partners with more resources and experience to combat the ivory trade at the operational level.

Government officials and international organizations too often view the seizure of ivory at a tactical level as a success because the ivory did not get to the market, and in turn did not generate revenue for criminal networks.⁵³ While ivory and horn seizures are the most visible aspect of interdiction efforts, they are only a dressing for the visible wound and not a cure for the “disease” as animals are still dead, and crime syndicates are still functional. Additionally, challenges presented in border areas create questions of sovereignty, and the lack of regional unity allows smugglers to exploit weaknesses. For example, Mozambique does not allow South Africa to cross their border in the Limpopo and Kruger Parks while actively chasing poachers, essentially creating a safe-haven or an asylum in areas where Mozambique does not have resources to engage. Therefore, deterrence at the operational level has the potential for the most

significant impacts on wildlife trafficking. These recommendations focus on State Department and US Embassy pressure to build awareness within GRM and to enforce regulations and laws, and development of multi-lateral regional partnerships.

Recent laws and efforts by the US Embassy started to change the national conversation on poaching, and led to the creation of a new task force dedicated to stopping wildlife crime. However, Mozambique's capacity to coordinate between different ministries and the task force remains limited, which hampers their ability to put together criminal cases and obtain convictions as the new conservation laws lack specific regulations and fails to delegate authority.⁵⁴ "Effective deterrence will require not just harsher statutory punishments but also systematic application of the law."⁵⁵ Increased diplomatic pressure from high-level US diplomats to Mozambican governmental leadership is required to keep the momentum that began with legislations and move forward to build awareness and encourage decision-makers within GRM to act. The pressure to act must ensure GRM writes regulations and eliminates loopholes and weaknesses from their new law. Park rangers and game wardens must have the authority to arrest poachers for prosecution and maintain the chain of custody for evidence.

The cross-border challenges in Kruger and Limpopo with South Africa in the south, and in Niassa with Tanzania in the north requires the development of regional agreements that ensure sovereignty, yet also allows for law enforcement to engage poachers in the area. The US should engage these three nations to develop an agreement that allows law enforcement officials and game wardens, but not military units to cross borders within the parks to chase and engage if necessary poachers who were caught during active operations and return them to the country where the poaching occurred to face judicial punishment. These agreements must ensure cross-border intelligence sharing as well as joint training operation for wardens and rangers to ensure

standardized operating procedures. The US also should pressure Mozambique to become a member of the Wildlife Enforcement Network in Southern Africa (WEN-SA) sponsored by the State Department and USAID. The State Department established regional wildlife enforcement networks aimed at fighting poaching worldwide with a goal of establishing a “global network of regional wildlife enforcement,” with each region addressing specific regional issues.⁵⁶ This network would prove invaluable in the southern Africa region with South Africa, Mozambique, and Tanzania as members. This would create unified enforcement activities, cooperative agreements, a mechanism for formal communication between governments, and critical coordination efforts. Lastly, this cooperative alliance gives Mozambique, their partner nations, and international law enforcement the resources and intelligence to track, target, and eliminate criminal networks and syndicates, and tighten the borders to make smuggling operations difficult to impossible in the region, and remove the operational safe-havens they enjoy in Mozambique.

Recommendation: Supply and Demand

The third level of the ivory trade is the strategic level, or the international supply and demand equation. In 2008, CITES authorized a “one-off” sale of legal ivory to multiple countries which generated more than USD \$15 million, in an effort to raise funds for the protection of elephants and rhinos, and control the distribution and destruction of stockpile of legally obtained ivory.⁵⁷ By virtue of CITES regulations, they attempt to control the supply part of the equation, and can temper the international demand through policy, procedure modifications with access to existing stock of ivory, and public diplomacy educational efforts at the local level. The current prices on the black market of ivory and rhino horn continue to increase due to difficulty of commodity acquisition and the lack of alternative sources of ivory. The complexities in the

market, fighting cultural norms, and the intense emotions involved in conservation makes this level the most challenging.

The US must work through CITES to develop a “favored-nation” status and sales program on legally obtained ivory. This recommendation is very controversial as conservationists argue that previous “one-off” sales of ivory by CITES in 2008 “whet the appetite” of consumers driving up demand.⁵⁸ However, poaching numbers were already rising prior to the “one-off” sales and this was an attempt to increase supply in the market to drive that demand down. These sales were to Vietnam and China, two of the largest consumer and importer of illegally obtained ivory and rhino horns in the world. The sales did not affect the market equation because consumers understood these sales were a one-time only exception to the rule and not enough supply entered the market to affect long-term change in the dynamic. Moreover, by opening sales to the worst offenders there was no reward or penalty incentive for those nations to implement and enforce existing bans on illegal ivory.

However, by developing a “favored-nation” status and opening limited long-term sales of legal ivory and horns to those nations found to be actively enforcing, engaging in anti-trafficking initiatives, and successfully prosecuting smuggling, CITES would create a reward incentive for nations that desire to apply for ivory purchases. This status would be given through CITES after establishing clear regulations, policy, and stringent steps that must be met for an extended period of time (possibly 5 years) for a nation to rise to a favored status, which would include domestic prosecution, ban enforcement, and conservation efforts. Much of the data and processes to create a favored status already exist as CITES already uses measurements to censure and sanction offenders that fail to meet specific standards and label them “parties of concern.”⁵⁹ Once a nation receives favored status they may apply for trade permits to purchase ivory from CITES

supervised stocks from a list of countries that also qualify to sale under similar requirements. Nations that sale the ivory then may tax the profits at a pre-established rate determined by CITES and then use the rest of the profits on conservation and anti-poaching efforts within their nation. This highly regulated market would allow nations such as Mozambique who have stocks of valuable ivory to use profits for conservation programs without stressing their fragile economy, and would give them a greater incentive to protect a valuable revenue stream. Elephant and rhino conservation would become a self-funded venture by using money gained from legal sales of ivory and would no longer be just a drain on resources. Moreover, this would constrict the illegal poaching market, as nations such as Mozambique would begin to increase their anti-poaching efforts and treat the animals as a natural resource and not just the international cause of the moment. Lastly, by opening legal sales of ivory and rhino horn, the international supply increases thus decreasing the overall cost and pricing-out the reward incentive for poachers. It would be naïve to believe that illegal demand would disappear under this system, yet the motive for this model is not to eliminate overall demand (this can only be done through significant education and generational reforms), but to increase the risk to poachers by driving down prices and incentivizing nations to increase their anti-poaching efforts.

CONCLUSION

These recommendations are not a panacea to the crisis of elephant and rhino poaching, and they will not produce an instantaneous cure for the problem, but they will change the risk-reward equation for the poachers making it more dangerous and costly for their operations. These recommendations will give Mozambique the opportunity to prioritize anti-poaching efforts without negatively affecting their limited capacity to attack their numerous other challenges.

Many nations in Africa, Mozambique included, struggle with significant development issues to include lack of education, jobs, security, weak governance, the rule of law, and health concerns. Animal conservation is not, and cannot be the top priority for many of these nations, yet illegal poaching does present significant second and third order affects that impact security, the rule of law and national sovereignty. The goal of US intervention and action on this issue must be framed within the context of national and regional security consequences. Mozambique has limited resources to confront the many issues they face and the only way to convince them to prioritize their anti-poaching efforts is to demonstrate through continued diplomacy and increased U.S. support that ivory and rhino horn trafficking presents a clear danger to their national sovereignty and to the rule of law.

The U.S. must increase Mozambique's capability to fight against poaching and smuggling by assisting at the three levels of interdiction, the tactical on the range, the operational with local governance and regional partnerships, and the strategic with supply and demand. The first level, the tactical level is the most dangerous as many rangers have lost their lives defending herds, but might be the easiest for implementation as success is measured through herd counts, rangers trained, number of poachers arrested or eliminated, and number of poaching incidents. The second level might be the most difficult as strengthening governance takes time and effort, and requires political will, effort and prioritization, yet will yield significant results as regional alliances and networks allow nations to track criminal networks, multiply resources, and strengthen national sovereignty. The strategic level recommendations are the most controversial as pure conservationists believe the only way to get rid of demand is through long-term bans and harsh sanctions against non-compliant nations. Yet these policies have not produced the desired results since the ban first went into 25 years ago, and trade sanctions will only stifle burgeoning

economies and will not increase their political will to act. Only linking conservation to security and presenting economic benefits will allow nations to increase capacity and will, and ultimately lead to long-term conservation of these endangered animals. The goal of any action and cooperation on the part of the United States cannot solely be from a bully pulpit implementing western values while discounting deep-seeded local cultural norms and beliefs. Thus presenting these animals as a financial resource in line with Mozambican traditional views, the United States can increase Mozambique's will and capacity to stop the illegal trade in ivory and horns.

Through these recommendations, the US can strengthen Mozambique and her neighbor's capabilities and capacities. This will in turn strengthen regional stability and help ensure that this region of Africa is no longer a location for exploitation by outside nations, nor a safe-haven for criminal and terrorist networks and their financial operations, but that this is a region of strength, security and self-determination. With the support of the United States in fighting this poaching scourge, Mozambique and her neighbors can eliminate the "shadow of death" early explorers said seemed to loom overhead throughout the continent and become a bastion of safety and life for these endangered animals and move to the forefront of the conservation battle through local reform and international cooperation.

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