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TRANSBOUNDARY WILDLIFE LAWS AND TRAFFICKING: 
THE PLIGHT OF THE AFRICAN ELEPHANT IN MALAWI 
AND THE NEED FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION 

EMILY SCHENNING†

I. INTRODUCTION

The African elephant (Loxodonta Africana) is one of the most 
iconic and arguably one of the most important species of the Afri-
can savanna.1 It has, however, seen a serious decline in population 
densities across the continent, due mainly to poaching and illegal 
ivory trade.2 This devastation of elephant populations has signifi-
cant implications, not only for the elephant, but for savanna habi-
tats and many other species that rely on elephants.3 Moreover, the 
transboundary nature of the species implicating several countries 
and their laws in the conservation of single populations of ele-
phants makes the issue of elephant conservation even more 
difficult.4

Focusing on Malawi and its border states, the elephant is af-
forded very different levels of protection in Southern Africa.5 In 
2017, according to the Convention on International Trade in En-
dangered Species (CITES), Tanzania had a quota (amount of tusks 
allowed to leave the country) of one-hundred elephants’ tusks, 
Zambia had a quota of one-hundred and sixty, Mozambique had a 
quota of thirty-eight, and Malawi had a quota of zero.6 Some Afri-
can countries also differ in the way the elephant is ranked as an

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Law; B.S., Environmental Science, 2016, Towson University.
1. See infra notes 32-56 (noting elephants are considered keystone species and 
ecosystem engineers who shape their habitat).
2. See infra notes 20-31 (stating elephant population has dropped from nearly 
two million to only 350,000 and that poachers kill up to 30,000 elephants each 
year).
3. See infra notes 32-56 (noting elephants are important for ecosystem health 
and other species).
4. See infra notes 46-56 (noting elephants are highly mobile species).
5. See infra notes 195-213 (showing elephants are listed differently on CITES 
among their range states and some countries allow trophy hunting while others do 
not).
speciesplus.net/#/taxon_concepts/4521/legal (listing amount of elephant tusks 
allowed to be taken from Tanzania, Zambia, Mozambique, and Malawi).
endangered species under CITES. An elephant crossing these arbitrary country borders faces different threats depending on the differing laws of each country.

In Malawi, the government partnered with an independent conservation organization (African Parks) to manage wildlife and national parks after poaching and lack of management nearly decimated local wildlife populations. Poverty and government corruption continue to be major drivers of elephant poaching in the country, with poor local attitudes toward wildlife and isolation of local people from national parks contributing further to the issue. The almost nonexistent recourse for those who violate wildlife laws making poaching a profitable enterprise is also concerning.

The driving force behind poaching in many African nations is the demand for ivory in international markets. CITES attempts to control the international sale of elephant parts, but significant illegal markets still exist in many Asian countries and the United States. The Lacey Act is an important legal tool in the United States used to combat the importation of elephant trophies illegally obtained from foreign jurisdictions. Under the Trump administration, the African elephant faces uncertainty as the ban on elephant trophies from Zambia and Zimbabwe has been lifted twice within five months.

7. See infra notes 195-213 (noting that not all of Africa lists elephants as appendix I species).
8. See id. (finding four nations in Africa list elephants as appendix II species while thirty-three list elephants as appendix I species).
9. See infra notes 101-112 (explaining Malawi entered into twenty five year agreement with African Parks for African Parks to take over management of some national parks because poaching had largely destroyed many of them).
10. See infra notes 57-77 (noting there is high incidence of corruption among ministry heads and yet they have great power; also finding many Malawians having to choose between degrading environment and feeding their families).
11. Id. (stating penalties for poaching are meager, with fines about forty dollars).
12. See infra notes 20-31 (noting illegal ivory trade is single greatest threat to elephants due to poaching and booming international ivory market).
13. See infra notes 195-214 (noting CITES is leading and only international agreement to control international wildlife trade and that China and United States have largest markets for ivory).
14. See infra notes 228-78 (explaining Lacey Act allows United States to prosecute those who have violated wildlife laws in other countries).
15. See infra notes 278-307 (noting Trump lifted ban on importation of elephant trophies from Zimbabwe and Zambia in November 2017 and again four months later after reversing his decision to lift ban due to public outcry).
The largest ivory markets in the world are in Asia, with China leading the way.\textsuperscript{16} In early 2018, China passed a ban on the legal ivory market, but the efficacy of the law has yet to be seen amid serious enforcement issues.\textsuperscript{17} One concern is that the market will merely shift to other Southeast Asian countries where there are still legal ivory markets.\textsuperscript{18} With elephant populations dwindling, coordination among countries from Asia to Africa is needed to save the elephant from extinction.\textsuperscript{19}

\section*{II. The International Illegal Ivory Trade}

The illegal ivory trade is the single greatest threat to the elephant due to poaching and a booming international ivory market.\textsuperscript{20} Poaching and the demand for ivory dwindled the African elephant population to less than half a million individuals.\textsuperscript{21} In the 1900s, estimates suggest there were as many as twelve million elephants in Africa; now there are less than 350,000.\textsuperscript{22} According to recent reports, up to 30,000 elephants are killed each year.\textsuperscript{23} The illegal wildlife trade is roughly worth between eight billion dollars and ten billion dollars in revenue each year.\textsuperscript{24} Figure 1 shows the range of.

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{16} See infra notes 214-341 (noting China and United States have largest markets for ivory).
  \item \textsuperscript{17} Id. (finding China passed ban on legal ivory markets but also noting that China has had serious enforcement issues with environmental laws).
  \item \textsuperscript{18} Id. (acknowledging that people in China are looking to neighboring countries for ivory and that ivory markets in neighboring countries where trade is legal are thriving).
  \item \textsuperscript{19} See infra notes 21-24 (describing decline in elephant populations due to poaching).
  \item \textsuperscript{20} See Keith Lindsay et al., The Shared Nature of Africa’s Elephants, Biological Conservation, 215, 260-267 (Nov. 2017) https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0006320717303890 (stating in some regions poaching has spurred decline of elephants by nearly eighty percent and that international wildlife trade is major crisis facing African elephant).
  \item \textsuperscript{21} See John Sudworth, Can China’s Ivory Trade Ban Save Elephants?, BBC (Mar. 31, 2017) http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-39410486 (explaining that due to poaching there are fewer than half million elephants left).
  \item \textsuperscript{22} See Scott Ramsey, Elephants Decline by 97\% in Less than a Century, AFRICA GEOGRAPHIC (Feb. 9, 2016) https://africageographic.com/blog/elephants-decline-97-less-century/. (stating that elephant populations have fallen from as many as 12 million in early 1900s to only 350,000 today).
  \item \textsuperscript{23} See Jafari Kideghesho, The Elephant poaching crisis in Tanzania: a need to reverse the trend and the way forward, TROPICAL CONSERVATION SCIENCE (Jan. 5, 2016) http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1940082916600900120 (noting that recent reports indicate that thousands of elephants are being killed each year).
  \item \textsuperscript{24} Id. (stating that illegal wildlife trade is worth billions of dollars a year).
\end{itemize}
the African elephant as of 2017. This is but a fraction of the historical range of the species which has declined by fifty percent since 1979.

![Figure 1: The range of the African Elephant as of 2017. Yellow shaded areas are known range while purple shaded areas are possible range areas.](image)

Not only does wildlife trafficking threaten the existence of species, such as the African elephant, but it also funds rebel militant groups and organized crime. Money from the sale of ivory is used by militant groups to fund war in countries like the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Funds generated through elephant poach-

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28. Id. (detailing how Lord’s Resistance Army of DRC smuggle ivory to fund their conflicts).
ing have been shown to finance known terrorist groups throughout Africa including al-Shabaab, the Lord Resistance Army, and Boko Haram.29 In 2013, at the annual African Development Bank meeting, the President of Gabon stated:

“Today wildlife crime has become a serious threat to the sovereignty and stability of some of our countries. More and more of the profits are used to finance civil conflicts and terrorist-related activities. Furthermore, illicit wildlife trafficking is often linked to other forms of illegal trafficking and to money laundering.”30

Halting the illegal wildlife trade is essential for the survival of the elephant, but also to curb terrorist groups and devastating civil wars.31

III. THE ECOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE AFRICAN ELEPHANT

The African elephant is considered a keystone species and an ecosystem engineer, playing an especially important role in preserving the savanna ecosystem.32 It has also been shown that as much as a third of tree species found in African forests require elephants to disperse their seeds.33 Elephants are considered “umbrella” species meaning they require a large tract of habitat.34 Elephants are also water dependent animals, migrating according to rainy seasons.35 Their diets vary according to precipitation levels; eating mostly grasses in the wet season and woody plants in the dry season.36

Second only to the human race, the elephant has more physical impact on its landscape than any animal.37 This destruction is

29. See Kideghesho, supra note 23, at 369-88 (stating al-Shabaab, Lord’s Resistance Army, and Boko Haram are among those terrorist groups thought to generate significant revenue through ivory sales).
31. See supra notes 20-31 (noting that up to 30,000 elephants are being killed each year; elephant population has dropped to only 350,000 from twelve million in early 1900’s; and that poaching helps to fund known terrorist groups and wars).
32. See Kideghesho, supra note 25 (stating elephants are critical to shaping savanna ecosystems and thus have been termed ecosystem engineers and keystone species).
33. Id. (noting as many as one-third of tree species depend on elephants for seed dispersal).
34. Id. (stating elephants have also been described as umbrella species and thus require large tracts of land).
36. Id. (discussing elephant grazing patterns).
37. Id. (discussing elephant’s environmental impacts).
beneficial, however, to other wildlife living in the African savanna. Elephants help create trails and wells and bring food that would otherwise be inaccessible within the reach of smaller animals.38 Furthermore, the destruction of trees by elephants, if spread out over an adequate range, helps promote habitat diversity and soil turnover.39 As a result, the species is even known as “ecological engineers.”40

The elephant has poor digestion, breaking down only forty four percent of its food.41 This incomplete digestion helps move seeds from where they were eaten to wherever the elephant has traveled, promoting seed dispersal.42 An ecological study found that amphibians and reptiles generally do better in habitats impacted by elephants.43 The study compared two areas, one with elephants and one without, and found that a greater diversity and number of amphibians were present in the habitat where elephants were also present.44 The survival of the African elephant is vital not only for its own sake, but for the continued survival of many other species.45

African Elephants are a highly mobile species requiring large tracts of land and habitat to survive.46 Global climate change is increasing the mobility of elephants since they now have to travel further to find adequate water resources.47 National parks are not large enough to contain the African elephant.48 A study published

38. Id. (describing benefits of elephant behavior and destruction).
39. Id. (describing benefits of elephant tree felling).
41. See Estes, supra note 35 (describing elephant diets and digestion).
42. See Kinver, supra note 40 (noting that elephants’ poor digestion promotes seed dispersal through elephant dung).
43. Id. (discussing study done in Northern Tanzania observing that areas with more elephant damage had higher incidences of certain species of amphibians and reptiles).
44. Id. (describing study and elements of study done in Northern Tanzania looking at how elephants impact amphibians and reptiles).
45. See infra notes 46-56 (noting many species are dependent on elephants to shape their habitat).
46. See Kideghesho, supra note 23 (stating elephants are umbrella species that require large tracts of habitat).
47. See Lindsay, supra note 20 (stating global climate change is increasing variability of food and water sources, forcing elephants to travel further for resources).
in 2017 found that over the course of the study, twenty percent of the elephants in question crossed the border from Zimbabwe into Botswana. 49 Transboundary migration occurred mostly during the dry season in response to changing surface water levels. 50 Most protected areas within African nations are on country borders, a vestige of colonial rule. 51 The migratory nature of the species also raises census challenges among countries if efforts are not coordinated. 52 Thus, some elephants go unreported or are double counted. 53 As seen in figure 2, Malawi’s national parks are located along its borders, further emphasizing the need for international cooperation. 54 At least one transboundary elephant population in Malawi, on the Zambia border has been identified as of 2017. 55 As a result, coordinated management is needed to adequately protect this population of elephants. 56

migrate out of protected areas; and finding specifically, twenty percent of elephants in Hwange National Park routinely migrate out of park).

49. Id. (finding twenty percent of elephants in Hwange National Park, in Zimbabwe, migrate out of park on regular basis).

50. Id. (stating elephant migrations in Hwang National Park mostly occur seasonally in response to water levels).

51. See Lindsay, supra note 20. (stating most national parks in Africa are located on or near national borders due to colonialism).

52. Id. (discussing migratory nature of elephants and census challenges that occur as result).

53. Id. (stating that if census efforts are not coordinated, elephants can be double counted).


55. See Lindsay, supra note 20 (noting population of elephants on Nyika, Malawi and Zambia border).

56. Id. (listing Nyika elephant population on border of Malawi and Zambia as transboundary population).
IV. WILDLIFE LAWS OF MALAWI AND ITS BORDER STATES

A. Malawi

Elephant poaching has been and continues to be a serious issue in Malawi.57 Within just twenty years the elephant population fell by fifty percent.58 A report written by the national parks system


58. Id. (stating elephant populations in Malawi have been poached extensively, resulting in population decline of fifty percent before partnership with African Parks).
of Malawi states that the risk of being prosecuted for wildlife crimes is low yet the reward for selling ivory is high in Malawi. The fines for trafficking ivory in Malawi are only about forty dollars or even less.

Another major issue in Malawi is that the country is often used as a through way to transport illegal ivory. The park service stated about Malawi being a transportation hub for ivory that, “Malawi is, geographically speaking, very conveniently i.e. centrally placed for this purpose.” With better wildlife trafficking legislation and enforcement, Malawi is in a prime position to help halt the Southern African illegal ivory trade.

1. Wildlife Laws of Malawi

Malawi received its independence from Great Britain in 1964. After gaining independence, Malawi was ruled as a brutal dictatorship under President Banda until 1994. President Banda’s government was overthrown in 1994 and a democracy was instituted in its place. A new Constitution was written and adopted in 1994 and lists environmental protection as a national policy. The Constitution of Malawi does have a special provision for environmental protection. The Constitution lists some of its principles of national policy are to: (1) prevent the degradation of the environment; (2) provide a healthy living and working environment for the people of Malawi; (3) accord full recognition to the rights of future generations by means of environmental protection and the sustainable development of natural resources; and (4) con-
serve and enhance the biological diversity of Malawi. A constitutional environmental right, however, is not provided in the Constitution of Malawi. Thus, this national policy is not binding on the government of Malawi.

Although the government of Malawi is now a democracy, it still functions like a dictatorship in some respects. Each department is run by a minister, and corruption among these government officials is rampant. Ministers are appointed by the President and do not need senate approval. These positions are highly political, and ministers will not do anything that will jeopardize their position. Corruption is also rampant among ministers. For example, the Minister of the Environment has been caught selling charcoal, an act that is highly unsustainable and illegal for Malawian citizens without a permit.

The controlling wildlife law in Malawi is the National Parks and Wildlife Act of 1992, which was amended in 2017. The National Parks and Wildlife Act is meant to control the illegal wildlife trade and conserve wildlife and habitats. This Act states in part, “The Director may issue to any person a permit in the prescribed form, to import or to export, or to re-export any specimen of a game species, protected species, or endangered species or listed species. . . .” Given the prevalence of corruption among government officials and ministers, this degree of power to hand out permits raises concerns.

69. Id. (describing environmental goals that are priorities of national policy).
70. See J. Kalma, Environment and development in Malawi – any balancing of interests?, BALANCING OF INTERESTS IN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW IN AFRICA, 219 (2012) (noting there is no explicit constitutional environmental right in Malawi).
71. See Banda, supra note 64 (lecturing on Constitution of Malawi).
72. Id. (discussing politics and government of Malawi post 1994).
73. Id. (discussing structure of Malawian government and government corruption).
74. Id. (describing structure and politics of Malawian government).
75. Id. (describing political nature of government appointments).
76. See Banda, supra note 64. (discussing government corruption in Malawi).
77. Id. (discussing illegal acts committed by government officials).
81. Id. (describing National Park and Wildlife Director’s power to issue permits); See supra notes 72-77. (describing structure of Malawian government and high incidence of corruption among officials).
The Act was also amended to include tougher fines and penalties, an issue with the past Act as seen in case law.\(^{82}\) In *Republic v. Akimu*,\(^{83}\) a woman was found in possession of illegally obtained ivory in 2003.\(^{84}\) Officials from the National Parks and Wildlife Department posed as buyers of ivory and arrested Maria Akimu when she attempted to sell pieces of ivory.\(^{85}\) When the officials arrested Akimu, they were faced with hostility from her neighbors, and one wildlife official was severely injured.\(^{86}\) After being convicted of unlawful possession of ivory under the National Parks and Wildlife Act, Akimu was only fined six-thousand Malawian Kwacha which translates to about eight USD.\(^{87}\) This sentence was the controversy over which the case was brought before the high court of Malawi in 2003.\(^{88}\) The concern the Department of National Parks and wildlife had over this low fine was that—considering the price that can be obtained from selling ivory is significantly higher than 6,000 Kwacha—the fine will be an ineffective deterrent.\(^{89}\)

The National Parks and Wildlife Act states in part:

Any person who unlawfully possesses or who purports to buy, sell or otherwise transfer or deal in any government trophy shall be guilty of an offence. . . . . and shall be liable to a fine of K10, 000.00 and to imprisonment for a term of 5 years and in any case the fine shall not be less than the value of the specimen involved in commission of the offence.\(^{90}\)

The court weighed the opposing views, and placed high importance on the events that transpired during the arrest, including when the defendant incited her neighbors to violently attack the

\(^{82}\) See National Parks and Wildlife Act, *supra* note 78 (increasing fines for multiple wildlife trafficking crimes); *infra* notes 95-100. (discussing Malawian case where man was found guilty of wildlife trafficking, but his sentence was vacated due to his inability to pay fine).

\(^{83}\) Republic *v.* Akimu, Malawi High Ct. 96 (Dec. 29, 2003) (discussing case where woman trafficked in ivory and was given tougher sentence).

\(^{84}\) *Id.* (describing events that lead to arrest).

\(^{85}\) *Id.* (describing how officers made arrest of Akimu).

\(^{86}\) *Id.* (describing violence during arrest).

\(^{87}\) *Id.* (describing holding of lower court).

\(^{88}\) See Akimu, *supra* note 83 (stating that low sentence raised concern and is subject of this review).

\(^{89}\) *Id.* (describing concerns of the Department of National Parks and Wildlife).

\(^{90}\) *Id.* (reciting relevant section of the National Parks and Wildlife Act of 1992). Fine for possession of and selling of ivory under the amended act is now two million Kwacha and prison sentence of up to four years. See National Parks and Wildlife (Amendment) Act, *supra* note 78.
wildlife officials. The judges were also unmoved by the argument that the defendant was a single mother with children to care for and her imprisonment would cause undue hardship; finding that she should have had them in mind when she committed the offense. Ultimately, the court upheld the fine and gave Akimu a one year prison sentence. Media pressure and fears of a poor image also influenced the court to impose a higher sentence.

In Republic v. Namputo, a man (Isaac Namputo) was charged with being in unlawful possession of ivory in violation of the National Parks and Wildlife Act and was given the maximum fine of 100,000 Kwacha (about 133 USD). Having been unable to pay the fine, Namputo was imprisoned for a sentence of one year. The court found the fine excessive because the lower court did not take into account Namputo’s ability to pay the fine and it was his first offense. The sentence was vacated and a new sentence was to be decided based on the defendant’s ability to pay. This type of sentence reduction based on ability to pay will only encourage the poor to poach as the consequences will be almost nonexistent.

2. Wildlife Management in Malawi

Malawi is one of the poorest nations in Africa with a high dependence on foreign aid. According to the UK Business Insider, Malawi is the sixth poorest country in the world with a GDP per capita of only $1,132. One of the primary wildlife aid groups

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91. Akimu, supra note 83 (noting defendant was well connected to illegal trafficking rings; finding this major threat to ecosystem; and stating that punishment must be high to avoid violence).
92. Id. (finding domestic matters irrelevant during sentencing).
93. Id. (ruling of the court was to impose prison sentence).
94. Id. (noting high media coverage and public concerns over international interests in environmental conservation).
95. Republic v. Namputo, Malawi High Ct. 78 (Jun. 21, 2007) (describing case in which man was caught in unlawful possession of ivory and was sent to jail when unable to pay fine).
96. Id. (describing procedural history of case).
97. Id. (discussing how defendant ended up incarcerated for possessing illegal ivory).
98. Id. (discussing rationale for overruling jail sentence).
99. Id. (discussing standard for sentencing).
100. See Namputo, supra note 95 (vacating defendant’s sentence due to his inability to pay fine which resulted in jail time).
operating in Malawi is a conservation nonprofit known as “African Parks.” African Parks is responsible for much of the wildlife conservation efforts (specifically involving elephants) in Malawi. The conservation group entered into a public-private partnership with the government of Malawi to take over management of a few national parks, including Majete National Park and Liwonde National Park. Before African Parks took over management of Majete in 2003, most of the endemic species were completely gone and locals were cutting trees for charcoal production. One ranger in Majete noted a marked improvement in the state of the park since African Parks took over management fifteen years ago.

African Parks took over management of Liwonde National Park more recently back in 2015. Human wildlife conflicts combined with serious poaching eliminated the elephant population in the park. African Parks relocated 400 elephants into Liwonde and decided to combat human wildlife conflict and poaching by building a fence and posting guards; efforts that have seemed to work as the elephant population in Liwonde is now over 800. After taking over management of Liwonde, African Parks and rangers removed over 23,000 snares set by poachers. Now that Liwonde’s elephant population has recovered, conservationists are


104. Id. (describing major effort to relocate 500 elephants in effort to conserve elephants in Malawi).


107. Interview with Osmund, Game Ranger, Majete National Park, in Majete, Malawi (June 2018) (discussing how park has changed over his long time working in Majete).

108. See McKenzie and Swails, supra note 103 (discussing African Parks’ conservation efforts in Liwonde).

109. Id. (describing what happened before African Parks took over management of Liwonde).

110. Id. (describing efforts to relocate hundreds of elephants in to Liwonde).

111. Id. (describing state of park when African Parks took over management).
moving some of the elephants to other parks in Malawi that have dwindling populations such as Nkhotakota park.  \(^{112}\)

### 3. Local Attitudes Toward Wildlife in Malawi

One of the greatest obstacles to conservation, especially conservation of elephants who have high economic value by way of their ivory, is that Malawi is an extremely poor country.  \(^{113}\) When faced with the choice of killing an elephant for ivory and not being able to feed their families, most Malawians would choose to kill elephants.  \(^{114}\) According to Monica Namonde, a law student at the University of Malawi, many Malawians see wildlife more as a source of income or food.  \(^{115}\) Many Malawians also question “why animals have to be more protected than people.”  \(^{116}\)

Also, Malawians are systemically excluded from enjoyment of wildlife resources due to high park fees.  \(^{117}\) These fees are often more than many Malawians make in a month, making it impossible for locals to enjoy their own natural resources.  \(^{118}\) Smith Chaoneka, a fourth year law student at the University of Malawi, stated that many locals view wildlife as a source of wealth (in the form of ivory) and place less value on wildlife in terms of tourism.  \(^{119}\) Chaoneka also found that due to his environmental education he now places more value on wildlife and thinks that “wildlife [has] a right to exist in [its] own right.”  \(^{120}\)

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112. *Id.* (discussing success of African Parks’ conservation efforts in Liwonde).
113. See Banda, *supra* note 64 (discussing challenges of poverty in Malawi).
114. *Id.* (discussing poverty in Malawi and local attitudes toward wildlife).
115. Interview with Monica Namonde, Environmental Law Clinic Student, University of Malawi Chancellor College, in Zomba, Malawi (July 2018) (describing local attitudes toward wildlife in Malawi).
116. *Id.* (describing how Malawians feel protections of wildlife are misplaced when many people are suffering from poverty).
117. See Banda, *supra* note 64 (discussing how many Malawians cannot afford park fees that cost as much or more than monthly income).
118. *Id.* (discussing how high park fees exclude Malawians from enjoying their own environment).
119. Interview with Smith Chaoneka, Environmental Law Clinic Student, University of Malawi Chancellor College, in Zomba, Malawi (July 2018) (discussing his impression of local attitudes toward wildlife in Malawi).
120. *Id.* (describing how his own views have changed after being in law school).
B. Zambia

Zambia's controlling wildlife law is the Zambia Wildlife Act of 2015.121 This Wildlife Act makes several provisions for protected species and hunting.122 According to the Wildlife Act of 2015, any hunting of listed protected species absent a license is prohibited.123 The Wildlife Act itself does not specify which animals are protected, and which may be hunted with the possession of a license.124 The Minister of Tourism and Arts determines the status of species as protected or game species pursuant to a statutory order.125 In 2017, eighty elephants were killed as trophies in Zambia.126 This number is likely to rise due to the reversal of the trophy ban in the United States in March 2018.127

The Great Elephant Census found that the Southern portion of Zambia is being particularly hard hit by poaching with elephant populations down a staggering ninety-five percent.128 The Sioma Ngwezi park has been especially hard hit according to the census data.129 It was found during the census that eighty-five percent of the elephants found in the park were already dead, as the census counts both live and dead elephants.130 Poachers in this area hunt elephants without any recourse due to the remoteness of the area.131 These poachers are also able to easily escape law enforcement by crossing into either Botswana, Zimbabwe, or Angola know-
ing that Zambian police will not cross borders to chase them.\textsuperscript{132} A more coordinated law enforcement effort is needed to curb poaching in Southern African nations.\textsuperscript{133}

C. Mozambique

Another border country to Malawi, Mozambique, has a turbulent history.\textsuperscript{134} Mozambique is home to one of Africa’s most breathtaking national parks, Gorongosa.\textsuperscript{135} Between 1977 and 1992, the country was ravaged by a deadly civil war.\textsuperscript{136} This civil war, in conjunction with the fight for independence from Portugal in the 1970s, led to the near total destruction of wildlife populations in Mozambique.\textsuperscript{137} Nearly ninety percent of the wildlife in Gorongosa were killed in the conflict.\textsuperscript{138} Between 1946 and 2010, war has impacted seventy percent of all national parks in Africa.\textsuperscript{139} Elephants are often killed in conflicts for their meat and their ivory; the ivory being used to further fund the conflict.\textsuperscript{140} Gorongosa park is now returning to its former glory thanks to a partnership between the Mozambique government and the nonprofit Carr Foundation.\textsuperscript{141}

In July of 1999, the Mozambique government passed Law No. 10, the controlling wildlife protection legislation.\textsuperscript{142} Decree No. 12

\textsuperscript{132} Id. (stating poachers have “easy escape route” because poachers could enter one of four different countries with law enforcement not chasing poachers across borders).

\textsuperscript{133} See Cruise, supra note 128 (noting law enforcement will not cross country borders to arrest poachers).

\textsuperscript{134} For a discussion on Mozambique’s civil war, see infra note 135.


\textsuperscript{136} See Elephants of Gorongosa, PBS.ORG http://www.pbs.org/gorongosa/gorongosa-national-park/elephants/ (last visited Nov. 26, 2018) (discussing how most elephants in Gorongosa were killed during civil war).

\textsuperscript{137} See Kelly, supra note 135 (stating that civil war in Mozambique led to fighting in park and much dependence on wildlife for meat and income).

\textsuperscript{138} Id. (noting that civil war and subsequent hunting destroyed elephant population in Gorongosa).

\textsuperscript{139} Id. (finding most national parks in Africa have been influenced by conflict).

\textsuperscript{140} Id. (noting elephants were killed to support war).

\textsuperscript{141} See Rob Morley and Ian Convery, Restoring Gorongosa: Some Personal Reflections, Displaced Heritage: Responses to Disaster, Trauma, and Loss, 129-140 (Dec. 2014) (discussing war in Mozambique and noting how Carr Foundation helped restore Gorongosa).

and the Penal Code are meant to enforce this wildlife law in the country. The law allows for hunting and sport hunting with the required licensing. The government of Mozambique is rife with corruption and scandal, calling into question the efficacy of its laws. Elephant poaching is still a major concern for Mozambique’s elephant population; a concern the government is ill equipped to handle.

D. Tanzania

Tanzania lies on the Northern border of Malawi and is likewise home to a substantial African elephant population. Illegal elephant poaching is the driving factor in declining elephant populations in Tanzania. Poaching has become a major issue due to the high demand for ivory products, poverty, unemployment, and corruption in source countries. Poaching has led to serious declines in the elephant population in Tanzania. In 2013, there were 50,500 elephants in Tanzania, but in 2015 that number dropped to 43,521.

Another major issue concerning wildlife trafficking in Tanzania, is the difference in laws between mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar. The laws of Zanzibar only protect and regulate the

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143. Id. (explaining legal framework for wildlife protection in Mozambique).
144. Id. (noting that it is violation to hunt without license).
146. See Poachers killed half Mozambique’s elephants in five years, THE GUARDIAN (May 26, 2015) https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/may/26/poachers-killed-half-mozambique-elephants-in-five-years (discussing government survey that found 48% decline in elephant population in Mozambique due to poaching in just five years).
147. See Ramsey, supra note 22 (noting Tanzania has over 40,000 elephants).
148. Id. (discussing seriousness of elephant poaching in Tanzania and East Africa).
149. Id. (discussing how elephant poaching and illegal wildlife trade are one of top wildlife crimes around world).
150. Id. (noting that elephant population in Tanzania dropped by sixty percent by 2015 from 2009 levels).
151. Id. (discussing how elephant population has plummeted in recent years in Tanzania).
trade in native species, thus excluding the African elephant.  
Consequently, the smuggling of elephant and other wildlife products through Zanzibar has become a serious problem in Tanzania.  

The disparity between the laws of mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar have created a legislative loophole that traffickers have been exploiting.  

This again highlights the need for coordinated wildlife laws between countries in order to avoid this kind of exploitation of the weaker legislation.

The Wildlife Conservation Act of 2009 is the primary law regulating wildlife in Tanzania.  One objective of the Wildlife Conservation Act of 2009 is to “foster sustainable and legal use of wildlife resources and take appropriate measures to prevent illegal use of wildlife.”  
The Act also lists as a goal to participate in international agreements and “co-operate with neighboring countries in the conservation of trans-boundary ecosystems.”  

While the Act lays out important goals for conservation, it lacks power, especially because the judiciary is weak.

The Wildlife Conservation Act explicitly permits licensed trophy hunting.  In 2017, Tanzania had a quota of 100 elephant tusks from fifty elephants hunted as trophies.  

The legality of trophy hunting in Tanzania has been shown to have effects on trans-boundary elephant populations.  

In 1973, Kenya banned trophy hunting.

153. Id. (noting law of Zanzibar only protects native species to Zanzibar and therefore not many listed CITES species).
154. Id. (noting difficulty of legislative loophole and discussing smuggling case through Zanzibar).
155. Id. (noting need to address difference in wildlife protection laws between mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar).
156. Id. (noting difficulties of legislative loophole and need to coordinate laws).
158. Id. (stating under Part II objectives of Wildlife Conservation Act).
159. Id. (discussing objectives of Act that promote conservation of species globally).
160. See Price, supra note 153 (discussing lack of training of judiciary on wildlife crimes).
161. Wildlife Conservation Act, supra note 158 (discussing in Part IV requirements to obtain game hunting license).
162. See UN Environment, supra note 6 (noting amount of elephant tusks taken from Tanzania in 2017).
hunting but the practice continued in Tanzania. This disparity in trophy hunting laws created issues for the elephant population of Amboseli National Park in Kenya. The elephants became complacent due to their safety on the Kenyan side of the border and became easy targets on the Tanzanian side of the border.

Enforcement of wildlife laws in Tanzania is a chronic problem both for lawyers and the judiciary. Most of the judiciary has little to no training concerning wildlife crime litigation. Persistent delays in the judicial system in Tanzania have stifled wildlife crime prosecutions. Currently, there is a case concerning the smuggling of ivory through Zanzibar that has not yet gone into the hearings stage after three years. A big challenge to the enforcement of wildlife laws and subsequent litigation in Tanzania is governmental corruption. Even with wildlife laws on the books and penalties for those who violate them, these laws will be ineffective with the slow pace of the judiciary and governmental corruption.

Tanzania has made some progress with the enforcement of wildlife trafficking laws. The Tanzania Wildlife Authority was established in 2014 and regulates wildlife outside of national parks. Border control started using dogs to sniff out illegal ivory and other wildlife products. This began in 2016 and has led to the apprehension of twenty-six individuals smuggling wildlife products.

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164. Id. (discussing differing wildlife laws in Tanzania and Kenya).
165. Id. (describing how elephants become vulnerable when migrating across country borders when countries have different levels of protection for wildlife).
166. Id. (stating it was observed that elephants didn’t run from hunters in Tanzania because they didn’t expect to be shot by tourists).
167. See Price, supra note 153 (discussing lack of training of judiciary on wildlife trafficking issues).
168. Id. (describing study conducted by TRAFFIC finding judiciary has little knowledge of wildlife crimes).
169. Id. (noting there are often delays and frequent adjournments that lead to derailing of wildlife crime cases even with great evidence).
170. Id. (discussing delays in ivory smuggling case through Zanzibar in its third year).
171. Id. (noting corruption is serious issue in Tanzania).
172. See Price, supra note 153 (finding corruption to be rampant in Tanzania).
173. Id. (discussing recent investments for enforcement of wildlife crimes in Tanzania).
174. Id. (describing Tanzania Wildlife Authority).
175. Id. (describing canine units deployed at borders).
176. Id. (noting success of canine units at finding illegal wildlife products).
E. Regional Agreements

Few regional agreements exist among Southern African countries that attempt to coordinate laws and goals in order to curb the international illegal wildlife trade. \(^{177}\) These agreements include the African Elephant Action Plan, the Arusha Declaration on Regional Conservation and Combating Wildlife/Environmental Crime (November 2014), and the Southern African Development Countries Protocol of 2003. \(^{178}\) These regional agreements hoped to coordinate efforts to combat the illegal wildlife trade, but they fell short as evidenced by the differing national strategies and burgeoning illegal market. \(^{179}\)

The range states of the elephant considered and adopted the African Elephant Action Plan in 2010. \(^{180}\) The eight main objectives of the action plan include: (1) reduced illegal killing of elephants and illegal trade in elephant products, (2) maintenance of elephant habitats and restoration of connectivity, (3) reduced human-elephant conflict, (4) increased awareness of elephant conservation and management of key stakeholders that include policy makers, local communities among other interest groups, (5) strengthened range states knowledge of African elephant management, (6) strengthened cooperation and understanding among range states, (7) improved local community cooperation and collaboration on African elephant conservation, and (8) effective implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan. \(^{181}\) The second goal of the Action Plan (increased connectivity) cannot be achieved through African Parks’ management style of completely fencing its parks. \(^{182}\)

The Arusha Declaration on Regional Conservation and Combating Wildlife/Environmental Crime was signed in 2014 by Malawi, Tanzania, Mozambique, and Zambia among others. \(^{183}\) The

\(^{177}\) See Price supra note 153 (discussing regional frameworks to reduce wildlife crimes).

\(^{178}\) Id. (listing and describing various regional agreements to address wildlife crimes).

\(^{179}\) Id. (describing regional agreements and their goals).


\(^{181}\) Id. (listing objectives of this agreement between African elephant range states).

\(^{182}\) Id. (stating objective two of Act is “maintenance of elephant habitats and restoration of connectivity”).

\(^{183}\) See Price, supra note 153 (discussing Arusha Declaration).
signatories to the agreement promised to take measures to combat the illegal wildlife trade.184 Some of the measures include

[c]ollaborating in combating illegal off-take; [d]eveloping protocols for the joint training and patrolling of wildlife and environmental law enforcement agencies where appropriate; and [c]oordinating the harmonisation of wildlife and environmental crime enforcement and penalties, with particular reference to elevating certain wildlife and environmental crimes to the level of serious crimes.185

The SADC Protocol contains similar goals of harmonizing wildlife trafficking laws in the region.186 Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zambia are all also signed on to the SADC Protocol.187 When signing the protocol, “Member States agree to policy, administrative, and legal measures for promoting conservation and sustainable wildlife practices within their jurisdictions.”188 “The Protocol advocates Member States harmonise legal instruments for wildlife, establish management programmes for wildlife, and create a regional database of wildlife status and management.”189 Under the SADC Protocol, members created a Technical Committee and a Wildlife Sector Coordinating Committee were created that were meant to improve execution of the agreement.190 They also made some cross-border control agreements in accordance to the agreement along with a few Transfrontier Conservation Areas.191 The successful implementation of these agreements remains a major issue and is key to protecting transboundary animals such as the African elephant.192 Given these regional agreements, the knowledge

184. Id. (noting that South African Development Community and East African Community signed agreement to improve cross border collaboration to reduce wildlife crimes).
185. Id. (describing measures taken in agreement to protect wildlife).
187. Id. (discussing signatories to SADC Protocol).
188. See Price, supra note 153 (describing obligations of parties to SADC Protocol).
189. Id. (describing suggestions to member states set out in SADC Protocol to meet goals of agreement).
190. Id. (discussing mechanisms meant to enforce SADC Protocol).
191. Id. (discussing conservation areas created across Mozambique and South African borders and South Africa and Zambia; meant to conserve wildlife across borders).
192. See Price, supra note 153 (noting regional agreements are under-utilized).
of the problem (need for coordinated wildlife trafficking laws) exists but execution remains a serious issue.¹⁹³

V. CITES AND INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING LAWS OF MAJOR IVORY MARKETS

A. CITES: Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species

CITES controls the international wildlife trade that threatens the survival of several endangered species.¹⁹⁴ CITES includes three levels of protection: Appendix I, Appendix II and Appendix III.¹⁹⁵ Appendix II listing regulates trade of species through a permit system while Appendix I listing bans all trade of species internationally.¹⁹⁶ During the ninth meeting of the parties, participants amended the listing criteria so that the precautionary principle is followed when deciding how to list a species.¹⁹⁷ For a species to be listed under Appendix I, the species must be currently in danger of becoming extinct and be threatened due to international trade.¹⁹⁸ To qualify for Appendix II listing under CITES a species must be likely to require Appendix I listing if international trade is not regulated.¹⁹⁹ Appendix III listing is available for any country that requires assistance in controlling the trade of a species and allows for cooperation in upholding domestic trade laws.²⁰⁰ Once a species has been listed under CITES it is up to individual countries and border control to actually enforce the agreement.²⁰¹ Enforcement of CITES continues to be a major challenge as the agreement must rely on the competence of international governments and border control for implementation.²⁰² CITES made steps to improve enforcement, most notably by directing the Secretariat "to pursue closer international liaison between the Convention’s institutions,

¹⁹³. Id. (describing multiple regional agreements between African countries to combat wildlife crimes).
¹⁹⁵. Id. (describing protections afforded endangered species under CITES).
¹⁹⁶. See Lindsay, supra note 20 (discussing differences in protection level between Appendix I and Appendix II listing).
¹⁹⁷. See Sands & Peel supra note 195 (Discussing CITES amendments).
¹⁹⁸. Id. (describing listing criteria for Appendix I protection under CITES).
¹⁹⁹. Id. (describing Appendix II listing criteria).
²⁰⁰. Id. (describing low level of protection granted to Appendix III species).
²⁰¹. Id. (discussing enforcement of CITES).
²⁰². See Sands & Peel, supra note 195 (describing issues with enforcement of CITES).
national enforcement agencies and existing intergovernmental bodies, particularly the World Customs Organization and ICPO-Interpol.”

In 1989, supporters tried to list the African elephant under Appendix I, but some opponents to this listing stated that the elephant did not require such a listing and it would be too protectionist. Some African countries disagree over the degree of protection to afford elephants under CITES. Four nations in Africa list the elephant as an Appendix II species while thirty-three list the elephant as an Appendix I species. Thus, even the protection offered by CITES is not uniform throughout the African elephant’s range.

The “Conference of the Parties” (CoP) meets once every two years in order to modify the agreement. The CITES 15th Conference of the Parties (CoP15), held in Qatar in March 2010 resulted in the creation of the African Elephant Action Plan by the “Range States” of the African Elephant. Priority 1 of the plan focuses on, “reduc[ing] illegal killing of elephants and illegal trade in elephant products” and strategy 1.2 in support of this priority is to “[h]armonize national policies and laws relevant to conservation and management of African elephants within and across range States where possible.” Priority Objective 6 similarly states the goal to, “strengthen cooperation and understanding among range States.” The thirty-eight parties to this agreement including Malawi, Zambia, Mozambique, and Tanzania have recognized the need for more uniform wildlife laws but these goals have not been met.

203. Id. (discussing ways CITES has tried to improve enforcement).
204. Id. (describing history of African elephant protection under CITES).
205. See Lindsay, supra note 20 (noting that some African elephant range states list elephant as Appendix II species while others list it as Appendix I species).
206. Id. (discussing protection afforded elephant under CITES).
207. Id. (discussing difference in protection afforded Appendix I species versus Appendix II species).
208. See Sands & Peel, supra note 195 (discussing procedures to update CITES agreement).
209. See Lindsay, supra note 20 (discussing international agreements to protect elephant).
210. See CITES, supra note 181 (listing priorities followed by strategies for achieving priorities).
211. Id. (listing priority objectives under action plan).
212. Id. (noting that Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zambia are signatories to action plan).
B. The United States

1. Ivory Market and Trafficking in the United States

The United States (U.S.) is one of the two largest markets for ivory in the world along with China.213 In 2016, the Fish and Wildlife Service made use of a rule making procedure under the Endangered Species Act to implement a ban on interstate trade of ivory and ivory products.214 The ban contains exemptions to this, however, for antiques and products with a small amount of ivory.215

The federal government banned the interstate sale of ivory, but this does not restrict the sale within states themselves.216 Only California, Hawaii, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, and Washington have banned the sale of ivory within their states.217 Without in-state bans on ivory, once in the state, traders can buy and sell ivory legally.218 After the bans took effect in New York and California—two of the largest U.S. markets for ivory—the markets simply moved.219 The District of Columbia is now a major market for ivory in the U.S.220 Like in other countries, the legal trade of “antique” ivory can be used as a cover for illegal ivory.221 Eliminating the legal trade throughout all fifty states will remove any legal cover for illegal traffickers in the U.S.222


215. Id. (discussing new ban on ivory trade among states).

216. Id. (noting ivory sales have been banned between states but says nothing about within single states).


218. Id. (noting federal government has no control over instate sales of ivory).

219. Id. (noting rise in ivory sales in D.C. after New York and California impose stricter bans).

220. Id. (discussing rise in ivory sales in Washington D.C. and noting lack of ban on ivory sales in D.C. besides federal restrictions).

221. Id. (discussing legal antique ivory market still in place).

222. See Bale, supra note 218 (noting legal antique market in U.S. is often used to smuggle illegal ivory).
Many states have considered ivory ban bills, but face strong opposition. During the 2017 legislative session in Maryland, politicians proposed legislation to ban in state sale of ivory, but the law faced much disfavor and did not even make it to a floor vote. Opponents showed concern over not being able to trade antique ivory goods. If the trade of ivory is to truly stop, states must start implementing bans.

2. The Lacey Act

a. Introduction

The Lacey Act remains the primary legal mechanism through which the U.S. may prosecute individuals for violating wildlife laws of other countries. Congress passed the Lacey Act in 1900 with several amendments added in 1981 and 2008. Section 3372 of 16 U.S.C.A(2)(a) states that it is prohibited to “import, export, transport, sell, receive, acquire, or purchase in interstate or foreign commerce—any fish or wildlife taken, possessed, transported, or sold in violation of any law or regulation of any State or in violation of any foreign law. . . .” The 2008 amendment further defined the term “plant” in order to protect endangered flora as well as fauna.

The Lacey Act makes it a crime in the United States to violate the law of a foreign country. For example, the courts ruled that the defendants in United States v. McNab were guilty of violating the Lacey Act when transporting Caribbean spiny lobsters to Alabama in violation of Honduran law. In order to violate the Lacey Act,
another law or regulation must have been violated first. The Lacey Act thus seeks to punish American citizens for crimes committed in other states or countries in which the defendant otherwise would not have been held accountable.

b. Conspiracy charges

Not only can individuals be charged with violating foreign laws under the Lacey Act, but they also can be charged with conspiracy to violate such laws. According to the Model Penal Code § 5.03, a conspiracy charge requires an agreement to commit a crime between two or more people. Therefore, the only act requirement is an agreement. Some jurisdictions as well as the MPC require an overt act requirement. An overt act is defined as an act “in pursuance of such conspiracy is alleged and proved to have been done by him or by a person with whom he conspired.” Therefore, in order to be charged with a conspiracy crime under the Lacey Act, an individual must have taken a step-in furtherance of the goal of violating a foreign law or regulation. Conspiracy charges are an essential deterrent to foreign wildlife law violations as they allow prosecution before the law is actually violated.

c. Predicate laws and regulations

The courts of the United States enforcing the Lacey Act have found that the predicate laws must:

1. Be valid laws or regulations,
2. Be published so as to give fair warning of illegality (does not violate the rule of lenity),
3. Be valid law when the crime was committed.

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233. See supra note 228, § 3372 (noting offense under Lacey is to import, export wildlife in violation of any law).
234. Id. (imposing liability for committing wildlife offense under foreign law).
235. See United States v. Molt, 599 F.2d 1217 (3d Cir. 1979) (defendant charged with conspiracy to violate wildlife laws).
236. See Model Penal Code § 5.03 (stating definition of conspiracy).
237. Id. (noting conspiracy charge requires an “agreement” between people to commit a crime).
238. Id. (stating actual act is prerequisite for conspiracy charge).
239. Id. (stating definition of overt act requirement for conspiracy charge).
240. Id. (noting that defendant must take action in order to be charged with conspiracy).
241. See Model Penal Code, supra note 237 (noting only act required for conspiracy charge is agreement to violate law; not actual violation of predicate law).
242. See infra notes 244-254 (noting requirements of predicate offense for Lacey Act liability as evidenced in case law).
The Court in *U.S. v. Reeves* found the predicate law must be valid. Defendant Reeves violated his oystering permit in New Jersey and sold his oysters across state lines. The court found that the violation of the terms of the permit was not a violation of any defined law or regulation. Therefore, there was no predicate offense that subjected the defendant to prosecution under the Lacey Act. The “any foreign law” language of the Lacey Act was found to encompass regulations as well as statutes. In *US v. 594,464 Pounds of Salmon*, the Court found a violation of the Lacey Act had been committed when the defendant exported salmon without the permit required by regulations.

Predicate laws for Lacey Act conviction must be published so as to give fair warning to the defendant. In *U.S. v. Cannon*, the Court found that predicate laws must be published, or the defendant have actual notice of the regulation in accordance with the federal Administrative Procedure Act. Finally, predicate laws must be valid at the time of the alleged offense. The Ninth Circuit found in *McNab* that even though the Honduran government later repealed the law that McNab was charged with violating pursuant to his charges under the Lacey Act, he could still be held accountable since the laws were valid at the time of the offense. The Court in *McNab* states, “if the laws were valid in Honduras during the time period covered by the indictment, the defendants

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244. Id. (discussing factual background of case and premise for Lacey Act charge).

245. Id. (finding permit violation to not be violation of law as defined in Lacey Act).

246. Id. (finding defendant did not violate any wildlife “law”).


248. See *United States v. 594,464 Pounds of Salmon*, 871 F.2d 824 (9th Cir. 1989) (finding violation of permitting regulation to qualify as predicate law for Lacey Act charges).

249. See *United States v. Cannon*, 345 Fed.Appx. 301 (9th Cir. 2009) (finding that Lacey Act conviction requires showing of actual notice or publication of predicate wildlife law).

250. Id. (noting Administrative Procedures Act requires publication of statute or regulation or actual knowledge of regulation).

251. See *McNab*, supra note 233 (finding defendant liable under Lacey Act even though law is no longer valid because it was valid at time of offense).

252. Id. (discussing ruling of court).
violated the Lacey Act by importing the lobsters in violation of those laws.\footnote{253}

d. Penalties

Those in violation of the Lacey Act are subject to both civil and criminal proceedings.\footnote{254} The civil penalty for violation includes a fine that “shall not exceed the maximum provided for violation of said law, treaty, or regulation, or $10,000, whichever is less.”\footnote{255} Section 3373 of Title 16 of the U.S.C. states that anyone in violation of the act could receive a fine or up to five years imprisonment.\footnote{256} Section 3374 also mandates forfeiture of illegally taken wildlife or plants.\footnote{257} The forfeiture requirement under the Lacey Act is a strict liability requirement.\footnote{258} Ignorance of the foreign law cannot provide a defense to the forfeiture requirement under the Lacey Act.\footnote{259}

A violation of the Lacey Act can be either a misdemeanor or a felony, depending on knowledge of illegality of the taking.\footnote{260} The mens rea necessary for a felony conviction is knowledge and carries a fine of up to $250,000 for individuals.\footnote{261}

e. Scienter Requirements

The scienter requirement for a Lacey Act conviction is “knowledge.”\footnote{262} In order for a Lacey Act conviction to stand, the perpetrator must have had the knowledge at the time of the offense that their act or agreement to act was against the foreign law they are charged with violating.\footnote{263}
f. International Cooperation

The Lacey Act is unique in that the predicate offense is often an offense under a foreign law.264 As a result, judges sitting in courts in the U.S. are not experts on international law that defendants in such cases are charged with violating.265 Many courts must seek the counsel and expertise of foreign governments to ensure accuracy when trying individuals for the crimes conducted in such foreign countries.266 In addition, courts have sought counsel from foreign jurisdictions in order to prosecute individuals under the Lacey Act including the court in *U.S. v. Molt* in which the court obtained legal advice from Fiji and Papa New Guinea.267 This ensures that the court properly understands and upholds the foreign law in question.

g. Conclusion

The United States is one of the major markets for illegal ivory along with China.268 The Lacey Act ensures that American citizens do not violate or conspire with others to violate wildlife laws in other countries.269 The conspiracy component to the Lacey Act is important because it holds Americans responsible for the illegal acts of others that supply Americans with illegal ivory or other wildlife products.270

Further, the Lacey Act underscores the importance that countries have their own robust wildlife protection laws, especially where these highly endangered and sought-after animals reside.271 The laws of Eastern and Southern African countries are especially critical to the protection of the African elephant under the Lacey Act.272 Therefore, in order to prevent Americans (or others in concert with Americans) from violating Malawi law in order to obtain

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264. *Id.* (discussing foreign law component of Lacey Act).
265. See *Molt*, supra note 235 (noting court sought expertise on foreign law during Lacey Act case).
266. *Id.* (noting expert witness testifying to state of law in Fiji).
267. *Id.* (noting court used expert witnesses to testify about purpose and characteristics of foreign laws).
268. See *supra* notes 214-26 (noting United States has large illegal ivory market compounded by lack of intrastate ivory bans).
269. See *supra* notes 227-41 (discussing Lacey Act predicate laws and conspiracy charges).
270. See *supra* notes 235-41 (discussing conspiracy charges under Lacey Act).
271. See *supra* notes 242-53 (discussing culpability for violating foreign laws).
272. See *supra* notes 242-53 (discussing foreign law provision under Lacey Act); and see figure 1 (showing range states of African elephants).
ivory, Malawi must have strict anti-poaching laws. Due to the migratory nature of the African elephant, border countries must also have strict anti-poaching laws in order to protect Malawian elephants. For example, even if an elephant in Kasungu National Park in Western Malawi were adequately protected under Malawi law, this same Malawian elephant would face serious risk by crossing the man-made border into Zambia because the level of protection differs in Zambia. This further highlights the need for cooperation between nations concerning wildlife protections.

3. Big Game Hunting: Current Issues in the United States

Big game hunting came to the forefront of the American conscience in 2015 with the slaying of Cecil the Lion in Zimbabwe. American hunter, Dr. Walter Palmer, lured the fabled lion out of a protected national park to kill the animal in unprotected territory. Charges were never brought against the American hunter by the Zimbabwean government because he had a permit, making the hunting of the lion technically legal in the country. Theo Bronkhorst, a local hunter, was charged, however, with conducting an illegal hunt for luring Cecil out of a protected area, but these charges were dropped. Reports state that Palmer paid over $50,000 to hunt Cecil. Dr. Palmer was forced to close his dental...
office due to public outcry and to take down his business’s website.282

Dr. Palmer and other big game hunters even go so far as to claim that big game hunting helps conservation efforts and supports local communities.283 These claims are contested, however, by most conservationists.284 The trophy hunting business employs only a small amount of people and a very small amount of the license fee actually goes to the community.285 The trophy hunting industry amounts to a mere two percent of the tourism industry.286 Hunters claim that the selling of hunting licenses for thousands of dollars monetarily supports the animals they pay to kill.287

The status of the African Elephant has been seriously threatened under the Trump administration.288 In November 2017 President Trump announced a lifting of the ban of elephant trophy importation into the United States.289 The Fish and Wildlife Service claimed that “[l]egal, well-regulated sport hunting as part of a sound management program can benefit certain species by providing incentives to local communities to conserve those species and by putting much-needed revenue back into conservation.”290 Yet, studies show that Zimbabwe and Zambia have management plans that are far from adequate and this problem is compounded by corruption concerns.291

The reversal of the trophy ban would have allowed elephant trophies to be imported to the United States from Zimbabwe and Zambia.292 Trump later reversed this decision due to public outcry, 282. Id. (describing public outrage over controversial Cecil hunt).

283. Id. (noting that big game hunters claim funds generated from hunting licenses ensure survival of endangered species).

284. See Morell, supra note 164 (noting conservationists and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature disagree with big game hunters that hunting helps conserve species).

285. Id. (discussing what actually happens with funds from hunting fees).

286. Id. (noting hunting funds do not contribute as much to tourism revenue).

287. Id. (noting hunters still claim funds from licenses significantly contribute to conservation efforts).


289. See id. (discussing Trump policy concerning elephant trophy ban).

290. Id. (discussing recent plans to allow for trophy hunting imports to United States from Zimbabwe and Zambia).

291. Id. (discussing reality of removing elephant trophy ban for elephant populations in Zimbabwe and Zambia).

292. Id. (noting specifics of plan to lift ivory ban).
stating via Twitter that “all conservation facts” would be considered.293 Ryan Zinke (Interior Secretary) issued a statement that the issuance of permits would be put on hold.294 Not four months later, Trump has lifted the ban once again. President Trump even stated after reinstating the ban on elephant trophies that “he would be ‘very hard-pressed’ to change his opinion ‘that this horror show in any way helps conservation of elephants or any other animal.’”295 Yet, Trump has once again lifted the ban on elephant trophies.296 On March 1, 2018 the Fish and Wildlife Service announced that they will now consider elephant trophy imports on a “case by case” basis.297 When questioned about how the money for trophies would supposedly help conservation efforts, Trump even admitted that the funds were unlikely to go to conservation efforts due to corruption.298

One could question Trump’s motives for reversing the ban on trophies.299 His own sons are notorious big game hunters, known for hunting endangered species in Africa.300 One of his sons has even been photographed next to a dead elephant, holding its tail.301 Even during the campaign, President Trump spoke of his own love of hunting.302

The D.C. Circuit found that the 2014 enhancement findings of the Fish and Wildlife Service (restrictions placed on elephant trophy importation from Zimbabwe) were invalid because they did not adhere to notice-and-comment requirements.303 Thus, in a memorandum the Fish and Wildlife Service released on March 1, 2018

293. See Wamsley, supra note 289 (discussing policy change due to public opposition to lifting ivory ban).
294. Id. (discussing announcement made by Secretary of Interior concerning ivory trophy ban).
295. See Joseph Hincks, President Trump Once Criticized the ‘Horror Show’ of Trophy Hunting. Now He’s Lifting a Ban on Elephant Part Imports, TIME (March 7, 2018) http://time.com/5188989/elephant-trophy-ban-fws/ (discussing Trump tweet pulling back from original position on ivory trophy imports).
296. Id. (noting Trump’s change in position concerning trophies).
297. Id. (discussing new announcement concerning trophy imports).
298. Id. (noting Trump himself conceded fact that much of funds generated from hunting permits are unlikely to go to conservation).
300. Id. (discussing Trump’s personal ties to trophy hunting).
301. Id. (noting controversial photo of Trump’s son with hunted elephant).
302. Id. (noting Trump went to Iowa to hunt pheasants).
303. See Safari Club International v. Zinke, 878 F.3d 316 (D.C. Cir. 2017) (discussing finding that 2014 negative enhancement findings were invalid and discuss-
the service withdrew ESA enhancement findings for African Elephants in Zimbabwe, along with several other enhancement findings for other species and nations.304 This effectively removed management plans for these species without any mention of a replacement.305 As of March 2018, President Trump has reversed the elephant trophy ban twice, indicating the uncertain protection status for the species in the United States.306

C. The Chinese Market and Regulations

1. 2018 Ivory Ban

In December 2017, the ban on ivory in China officially went into force.307 This means that China has now closed all of its ivory factories and shops, well over 150 combined.308 This is a crucial step, not only to eliminate legal ivory but also to stop the trade of illegal ivory.309 In accordance with CITES, China bought a sixty-two ton reserve of ivory in 2008 in an attempt to fill the demand for ivory in China with legal ivory and not poached ivory.310 The effect, however, was the opposite of what was intended.311 This influx of legal ivory only spurred the overall demand and provided a guise for illegal traffickers.312 The closing of the legal market will make it


305. Id. (noting removal of findings with no mention of replacement).

306. See supra notes 289-307 (discussing Trump’s multiple reversals of elephant trophy ban).


309. Id. (noting legal ivory trade in China spurred illegal ivory market).

310. Id. (discussing China’s ill-advised attempt to fill demand by selling stockpiled ivory).

311. Id. (describing how flooding legal market with stockpiled ivory resulted in surge in illegal market).

312. Id. (noting adverse effects of selling stockpiled ivory in China).
impossible for illegal traffickers to pass off their ivory as legal. Some question, however, what the government will do with their stockpiles of ivory and whether the allowance of trade in ivory antiques will still provide a loophole for traffickers.

In early 2018, Hong Kong banned the sale of ivory. Even though Hong Kong was a party to the CITES convention, the sale of hunting trophies and antique ivory were still legal until 2018. Even though the legal ivory market in China officially closed last year, many were traveling to Hong Kong to purchase ivory. Therefore, the closing of the Hong Kong ivory market is especially crucial.

Not only is transboundary coordination of laws important to protect elephants on the ground in Africa, so too is it important at the other end of the trafficking spectrum. The ivory market and demand in China will not be gone simply because there is a ban on ivory in the country. Some fear that with the ban in China, consumers will merely look to neighboring countries without such laws in order to find ivory. This was already occurring with the market in Hong Kong until it was finally closed. Reporters note that, with the ban in China, the ivory markets of neighboring countries are thriving including Laos which is becoming one of the leading

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313. See Sudworth, supra note 309 (noting legal market provided cover for illegal ivory).
314. Id. (discussing continued concerns over illegal ivory market despite recent ban on legal market).
315. See Nick Visser, A Great Day for Elephants: Hong Kong Votes to Ban All Ivory Sales, THE HUFFINGTON POST (Feb. 1, 2018) https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/hong-kong-ivory-sales_us_5a7265f5e4b05253b2757850?utm_hp_ref=animal-rights (noting Hong Kong allowed for trade in antique ivory and import of hunting trophies; thus, had major illegal ivory market as illegal ivory was passed off as antique).
316. Id. (discussing legal ivory trade in Hong Kong).
317. Id. (noting that most people who buy ivory in Hong Kong are from China where legal market has now closed).
318. Id. (noting many simply went to Hong Kong to buy ivory after market in China closed).
319. Id. (finding countries with less strict ivory bans or none at all provide loopholes for continued buying and selling of ivory across Asia).
321. Id. (noting other Asian countries must ban ivory trade or trade will just shift to other countries from China).
322. See Visser, supra note 316 (finding ninety percent of ivory purchasers in Hong Kong were from China).
ivory markets in Asia.\textsuperscript{323} As figure three shows, China borders several other countries some of which do not enforce ivory bans, making ivory trafficking relatively easy.\textsuperscript{324}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{china-border.png}
\end{center}

\textbf{Figure 3: China and its border}

A recent report by TRAFFIC indicates that Malaysia is also a key player in the trafficking of elephant products in Asia.\textsuperscript{325} Though Malaysia’s role is purely a transitory one, the amount of ivory making it through its ports is simply staggering.\textsuperscript{326} In an eleven-year period from 2003-2014, sixty-six seizures of ivory were linked to Malaysia totaling 63,419kg.\textsuperscript{327} Malaysia has even been named the principal transit point for African ivory headed to Asian markets.\textsuperscript{328} Though not a source state nor a major ivory market in

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{324} Id. (noting Laos does not police illegal ivory trade and does not have much interest in doing so).
\item \textsuperscript{325} See Kanitha Krishnasamy, \textit{Malaysia key conduit in global illegal ivory trade}, TRAFFIC (Sept. 1, 2016) http://www.traffic.org/home/2016/9/8/malaysia-key-conduit-in-global-illegal-ivory-trade.html (discussing Malaysia’s role in illegal ivory trade).
\item \textsuperscript{326} Id. (finding 63,419 kg of ivory have been moved through Malaysia from 2003 to 2014).
\item \textsuperscript{327} Id. (noting large amount of ivory being moved through Malaysia on its way from Africa to Asian markets).
\item \textsuperscript{328} Id. (noting Malaysia is principle transit point from ivory coming from Africa going to Asia).
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
itself, Malaysia is in a unique position to combat the illegal ivory trade within its own borders.\(^\text{329}\)

2. Enforcement

Serious questions remain as to whether China is equipped to enforce its ban on the trade in ivory.\(^\text{330}\) The trade in rhino horn has been officially banned in China for years with heavy penalties for offenders.\(^\text{331}\) However, rhino horn is still readily available for those who seek it.\(^\text{332}\) Even with the ban, a significant market remains with a culture that sometimes values ivory over elephants.\(^\text{333}\)

Enforcement of the ban is concerning due to a history of a lack of enforcement of other environmental laws in China.\(^\text{334}\) For example, enforcement of chemical regulations usually only occurs after safety or environmental accidents.\(^\text{335}\) Also problematic for enforcement is the fact that multiple agencies often manage the same environmental problem/regulation.\(^\text{336}\) For example, over ten different agencies have management duties and responsibilities under the chemical regulations legislation in China.\(^\text{337}\) Another issue is the lack of environmental knowledge of judges in the judiciary in China.\(^\text{338}\) According to Ferris and Wolfson, “... China’s State Council observed in 2005 that ‘it is not uncommon that environmental laws are not fully observed or strictly enforced.’”\(^\text{339}\) China’s poor track record of environmental enforcement combined with a

\(^{329}\) Id. (finding Malaysia’s role in illegal ivory trade is transitory and CITES identified Malaysia as country of ‘primary concern’).

\(^{330}\) See infra notes 335-341 (discussing China’s issues with environmental enforcement).

\(^{331}\) See Sudworth, supra note 21 (noting trade in rhino horn has been banned for more than twenty years in China).

\(^{332}\) Id. (noting rhino can easily be bought and sold on the internet).

\(^{333}\) Id. (finding rhino horn is easily obtainable with little risk involved in buying or selling).


\(^{335}\) Id. (noting enforcement of chemical regulations usually only occurs after accident).

\(^{336}\) Id. at 744. (noting ten different agencies in charge of regulating chemicals).

\(^{337}\) See Ferris and Wolfson, supra note 335 (noting there is no organization that has overall authority over chemical regulations).

\(^{338}\) Id. (noting judges have little training on complex environmental issues and government has invested very little in these skills).

\(^{339}\) Id. (noting China’s own state council noted that environmental laws are not fully enforced).
continuing demand for ivory does not bode well for the success of the ivory ban.\textsuperscript{340}

VI. Conclusion

The illegal trade in ivory has had devastating effects on the African elephant across its range.\textsuperscript{341} Not only is the elephant a keystone species, but they are an ecosystem engineer that many other species rely on to shape the environment.\textsuperscript{342} The transboundary nature of the elephant requires that range countries, including Malawi, make efforts to coordinate their wildlife laws and protections.\textsuperscript{343} It is only through coordination that wildlife laws will be effective.\textsuperscript{344} Coordination of laws is also required at the other end of the trafficking issue.\textsuperscript{345} We have continued to see countries ban the sale of ivory within their boundaries.\textsuperscript{346} This will all be in vain, however, if some countries continue to allow the sale of ivory, thus simply shifting the market.\textsuperscript{347} The fate of the elephant has not yet been sealed but quick action must be taken across the globe to save the species from the brink of extinction.\textsuperscript{348}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{340} See supra notes 335-341 (discussing environmental enforcement issues in China).
\item \textsuperscript{341} See supra notes 20-31 (discussing decline in elephant populations due to illegal ivory trade).
\item \textsuperscript{342} See supra notes 32-45 (discussing ecological importance of African elephant).
\item \textsuperscript{343} See supra notes 46-56 (discussing migratory nature of African elephant).
\item \textsuperscript{344} See supra notes 195-202 (discussing differing levels of protection for elephants in Africa).
\item \textsuperscript{345} See supra notes 308-341 (discussing ivory markets in Asia).
\item \textsuperscript{346} See supra notes 308-341 (discussing ivory bans in Hong Kong and China).
\item \textsuperscript{347} See supra notes 308-341 (discussing how ivory markets shift to countries that have yet to ban ivory or have poor enforcement).
\item \textsuperscript{348} See supra notes 20-31 (discussing decline in elephant populations across Africa).
\end{itemize}