

# The LVEMP II Civil Society Watch E-bulletin

A Monthly from the **East African Sustainability Watch Network** comprising: Uganda Coalition for Sustainable Development (UCSD), Tanzania Coalition for Sustainable Development (TCSD) and Sustainable Environmental Development Watch Network (SusWatch Kenya)

**April 2016**

## With 105 Tonnes of Ivory up in Flames in Kenya: What More is Outstanding?



**A Kenya Wildlife Service ranger sets fire to piles of ivory in Nairobi National Park, April 30, 2016. (Photo: AP)**

Kenya has just made history by setting alight the largest ever mound of ivory - 105 tonnes of tusks piled in pyramids, some three metres high (10 feet). The practice of burning ivory in Kenya goes back to July 1989 when Kenya's then-President Daniel Arap Moi ignited a pile of 12 tonnes of elephant tusks and helped change global policy on ivory exports. After that, the trade was banned under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species. The event will probably remain in our memories for some time. However, citizens across East Africa have had differing views on this historic event. While some are firmly in support of this action, others are cautious of whether this is going to change the trends – to deter poaching in Kenya and the region in general.

One view is that there is a larger problem that *what meets the eye*, in the sense that inefficient and uncoordinated institutions, corruption, lack of options for communities, and lack of coherent global response manage this heritage in Kenya and the entire East African region, is the consequence of this 105 tonnes collection, which was set ablaze. In addition, they argue so long as these and other underlying root causes are not settled, the future might be regular setting alight of ivory, rhino, plant and other animal parts.

Due to lack of options, the majority of the population in East Africa continue to rely on subsistence agriculture, growing just enough food to feed their families. A rapidly increasing population is likely to lead to deforestation and loss of fragile ecosystems as communities continue to live off the land to survive. Whether they exploit the forests for timber or cut trees for fuel, the deforestation rate is increasing at an alarming pace – more community-based interventions are needed to reduce the prospective stress on protected areas that play host to our wildlife heritage in support of national and global policy intentions.

Similarly illegal wildlife trade involves neighbouring countries. For example, East African states ranked top in Africa by the World Customs Organisation and Interpol in 2014, in facilitating illegal wildlife trade mainly with Asian countries. This means that the Kenyan efforts need to be equally and collectively reinforced by the other EAC states and more so, getting citizens to be the primary guardians against illegal wildlife practices.

Apart from this, there are other illegal wildlife activities that should be in public limelight. According to Conserve Africa International, African medicinal plant resources may be doomed to extinction by overexploitation resulting from excessive commercialisation, habitat destruction and other natural and man-made destructive influences unless energetic conservation measures are taken to ensure their continued availability. Therefore, having a high level political firmness to officially recognise, regulate and register herbal medicine and other plant uses that have been in existence for many years in East Africa is as urgent as protecting big game.

A similar response is needed to counter Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing (that which is conducted contradictory to legal conservation and management measures) in East Africa. According to *FISH-i Africa*, an estimated one in four fish caught off Africa's coasts is taken illegally. Out the potential for marine fisheries to generate 1-2 billion USD annually in Kenya, an estimated 10 billion shillings (118 million USD) is reportedly lost annually due to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in its territorial waters.

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## UCSD invited as Partner to the 10-Year Sustainable Consumption and Production's Sustainable Food Systems Programme



Uganda Coalition for Sustainable Development (UCSD) has been invited to be partner of the Sustainable Food Systems (SFS) Programme of the under the 10-Year Programme Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP SCP). UCSD is also Multi-Advisory Committee member of the Sustainable Lifestyles and Education Programme under the same Programme.

The goal of the SFSP is to accelerate the shift towards more sustainable food systems. Achieving this goal will require the active involvement of stakeholders across society and along the entire food supply chain, from service providers to primary producers including farmers, pastoralists, fisher folk, fish farmers and small-holders, as well as agro-food industries, business, processors, retailers, consumers and also governments as well as research and civil society organizations. The SFS Programme will also need to take into account the specific needs of indigenous people and vulnerable populations, such as, but not limited to, women and children.

This goal will be achieved at national, regional and global level, by raising awareness of the need to shift to more sustainable food systems and to apply a holistic, systems approach to addressing food security and nutrition; building capacity and enabling conditions for the identification, prioritization, development and uptake of sustainable practices across food systems and facilitate access to financial and technical assistance; taking stock of, categorize and disseminate – and if needed develop – accessible and actionable science-based and/or empirically-demonstrated information tools and methodologies to support governments, the private sector, farmers, consumers and other relevant stakeholders to contribute to more sustainable food systems; and bringing together initiatives and develop partnerships to build synergies and cooperation to leverage resources towards the mutual goal of promoting, enhancing and facilitating the shift towards more sustainable food systems.

'UCSD and the EA SusWatch Network is ready to contribute to this important global forum, given that much of Eastern Africa (our focus) is regularly affected by unfavourable climatic and drought conditions which undermine progress toward improving food security and nutrition', Kimbowa Richard, UCSD Programme Manager affirmed. He expressed fear that the Lake Victoria basin with its vast fish potential is slowly failing to feed its growing population. 'The EAC partner states' per capita consumption that is below 10 kilogrammes compared to World Health Organisation (WHO) recommended 25 kilogrammes per capita, calls for a review of current practices and priorities as well as embracing a systems approach to food security and nutrition in the Lake basin', he stressed.

The 10YFP SCP is a concrete outcome of the Rio+20 Conference (June 2012) for international cooperation to accelerate the shift towards SCP in both developed and developing countries. It supports the implementation of regional and national policies and initiatives and builds capacities for the mainstreaming of SCP into sustainable development policies; facilitates access to financial and technical assistance for developing countries; and serves as an information and knowledge platform on SCP to enable all stakeholders to share tools, initiatives and best practices. The SFS programme is one of the six 'umbrellas' under the 10YFP mandate. **More about the Sustainable Food Systems Programme (SFSP):** <http://bit.ly/1rcKySH>

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## Some Facts on Illegal Trade in Wildlife (Source: UNEP, April 2016)

- ❖ African Savannah Elephants have declined by 60% in the **United Republic of Tanzania** and by 50% in Mozambique since 2009.
- ❖ Poaching has caused the forest elephants population to **plummet by 2/3** during 2002 - 2011.
- ❖ An estimated 170 tonnes of ivory was illegally exported out of Africa between 2009 and 2014.
- ❖ Poachers in Africa killed at least 1,338 rhinos in 2015, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).
- ❖ With over **one million animals** taken from the wild in the past decade, pangolins are the **most illegally trafficked** mammal in the world.
- ❖ Illegal timber trade is responsible for up to **90% of deforestation** in major tropical countries and threatens the livelihoods of around one billion forest people
- ❖ Each live gorilla is bringing **Uganda** about **\$1 million** per year in tourism revenues, while **Rwanda**, famous for its mountain gorillas made **\$304 million** in eco-tourism in 2014, a \$10 million increase over 2013.

## Resources and upcoming events

### International Day for Biological Diversity - 22 May: Mainstreaming Biodiversity; Sustaining People and their Livelihoods



Biodiversity is the foundation for life and for the essential services provided by ecosystems. By halting biodiversity loss, we are investing in people, their lives and their well-being. More: <https://www.cbd.int/idb/2016/>

Join the conversation! #IDB2016 #BiodiversityDay

### Second Meeting of the UN Environment Assembly: Delivering the 2030 Agenda



The UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) will convene for the second time in 2016. The UNEA of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) represents the highest level of governance of international environmental affairs in the UN system. Read more: <http://www.unep.org/civil-society/civil-society/PathTowardsUNEA2/tabid/1060485/Default.aspx>

### The 2016 edition of World Development Indicators

The edition includes indicators to help measure the 169 targets of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - these build on the 8 goals and 18 targets of the Millennium Development Goals we focused on in previous editions, but are far wider in scope and far more ambitious. More: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/23969/9781464806834.pdf>