

**PANEL 3:
REGIONAL ENFORCEMENT COOPERATION FOR
THE PROTECTION OF BIODIVERSITY**

Moderator: Ladislav Miko, Director, Directorate B: Protection of the Natural Environment, Environment DG, European Commission

Panelists: Rosalind Reeve, Associate Fellow, Chatham House, Kenya
Samuel Wasser, Professor, University of Washington, United States
Julius Kipng'etich, Director, Kenya Wildlife Service

Rapporteurs: Louis Kotze, North-West University, South Africa
Anel du Plessis, North-West University, South Africa

Summary Report:

This panel discussed how the illegal trade in flora and fauna is a grave threat to biodiversity, especially in Africa. Panelists emphasized how general enforcement cooperation is necessary at a regional level to enhance the efficiency of enforcement efforts. Especially critical is ensuring that the staff is properly trained and have the correct tools and the appropriate information not only to do their jobs locally, but also to work with neighboring countries and with trading partners.

Rosalind Reeve highlighted statistics on the illegal trade in wildlife, timber trade, and fisheries. She noted that the illegal trade in wildlife and environmental commodities is growing and that the major drivers include China's economic boom and the increased involvement of organized crime. Regional cooperation in combating this trade varies from region to region and there are gaps in the sectors covered. For example, no network exists for forest enforcement cooperation. For fisheries, several regional mechanisms exist under Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (other examples include North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission and Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources). West Africa has a surveillance operation-coordinating unit. East Africa has no significant cooperation and Kenya has no marine enforcement, highlighting that the situation in Eastern Africa is generally not good. Regions with networks include North America, South East Asia, Europe, and parts of Africa. Ms. Reeve felt that Africa's Lusaka Agreement Task Force countries should be expanded to include more African countries and existing efforts such as the Forest Law Enforcement and Governance process should be strengthened.

Samuel Wasser noted that illegal trade in wildlife is booming and involves a high profit and low risk. He observed that species at risk are often in high demand

and that free trade fuels this demand. There is heavy involvement of organized crime. The supply side is the most effective place to contain illegal trade and he proposed that enforcement be directed to these areas. DNA-based methods have been developed to track elephant gene categories in order to trace ivory crime back to its source. He spoke of two separate strings of seizures in Singapore/Malawi and Hong Kong/Cameroon. In looking at these seizures, the primary issues the research team assessed were (1) whether the poaching targeted specific populations for intense exploitation and (2) whether the ivory was shipped from the country where it was poached? His team used DNA methods to track ivory via Singapore and Malawi back to its source in Zambia and found similar poaching methods: tusks are gathered quickly from a localized area. This implies that outside targeting takes place with a goal of rapidly smuggling the tusks to another country. The DNA tracking highlighted the need for strong regional strategies to combat illegal ivory trade. A particular focus is required to coordinate activities and share data. Mr. Wasser suggested that the Lusaka Agreement Task Force could provide a vital path forward.

Julius Kipng'etich gave an overview of the two thousand staff member organization. KWS faces various challenges especially where Kenya borders other countries, such as Somalia, where smuggling is common. He noted that approximately 1.2 million arms are in the wrong hands. The numbers of elephants and rhinos have declined significantly from the 1960's as the result of poaching. The Service has very few vehicles and airplanes to assist in control. Its mandate covers water, fisheries, and power production, among other issues. However, collaboration has resulted in successes such as better control at airports in Nairobi, increased seizures, and a closer working relationship with the Kenyan judiciary in the enforcement of environmental laws. Wildlife plays a vital role in the GDP growth of the country and Kenya needs to be part of broader enforcement networks, such as INECE.

The panelist concluded that forestry, wildlife, and fisheries sectors are under heavy stress; and that science should feed into efforts to protect these resources. INECE should concern itself with summarizing ongoing trends and bringing to light the challenges faced in enforcing laws designed to protect these important sectors. Public education should be a critical component of this effort.

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