

U.S. Efforts to Combat Wildlife Trafficking





What is the Problem?

- Dramatic increases in the scope and scale of poaching to supply illegal trade;
- Landscape-scale losses of wildlife populations, both iconic and little known;
- Wildlife trafficking undermines security, weakens institutions and exacerbates official corruption;
- More than 1,000 rangers have died in the past decade;
- Responses were insufficient.



Wildlife trafficking is taking a devastating toll on some of the world's most treasured species.



*1,028 rhinos
poached in South
Africa in 2017*

*More than 30,000
elephants poached
every year*





It's also impacting many lesser-known species that are important food sources for local communities, support healthy ecosystems, and supply clean air and water.



More than 1 million pangolins have been poached in the last decade

African grey parrots are poached to supply the pet trade





Internationally, wildlife trafficking has emerged as a crisis that imperils both conservation and global security. It can destabilize local communities and national governments by exacerbating corruption and poor governance and reducing ecotourism revenue, a major source of income for many nations.



A ranger is killed in the line of duty, on average, every three days.



Here in the U.S., wildlife trafficking can undercut legal trade and reduce populations of domestic species that are in demand around the globe. American ginseng, bobcat, alligators, and paddlefish are the foundation of significant economies that Americans depend on.



Declared values of U.S. exports of skins, 2013-2015:

American alligator:	\$355.9 million
Bobcat:	\$29.8 million
River otter:	\$4.4 million



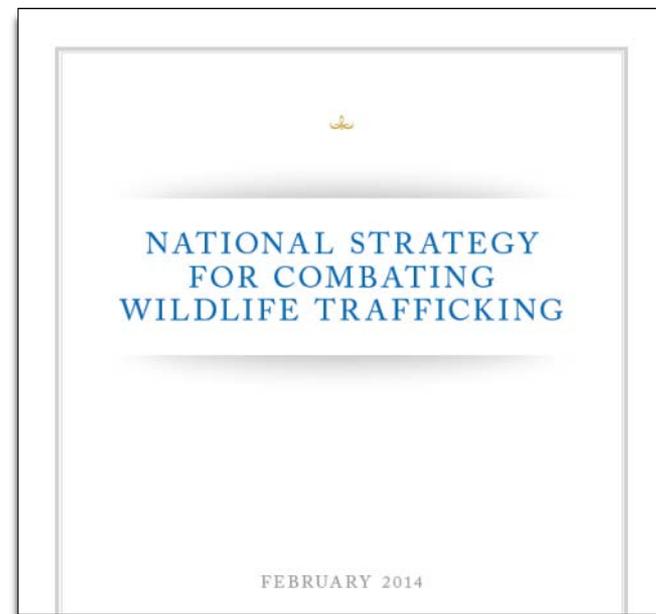
Executive Order: Wildlife Trafficking

- Executive Order announced July 1, 2013
- Established a Presidential Task Force
- Co-chaired by Departments of Interior, State and Justice
- Called for the Task Force to develop a National Strategy for Combating Wildlife Trafficking



National Strategy for Combating Wildlife Trafficking

- National Strategy for Combating Wildlife Trafficking signed on February 11, 2014
- Lays out a whole-of-government approach across 17 federal departments and agencies
- Focuses on three areas of intervention:
 - Strengthening enforcement and prosecution
 - Reducing demand for illegally traded wildlife
 - Expanding international cooperation and commitment





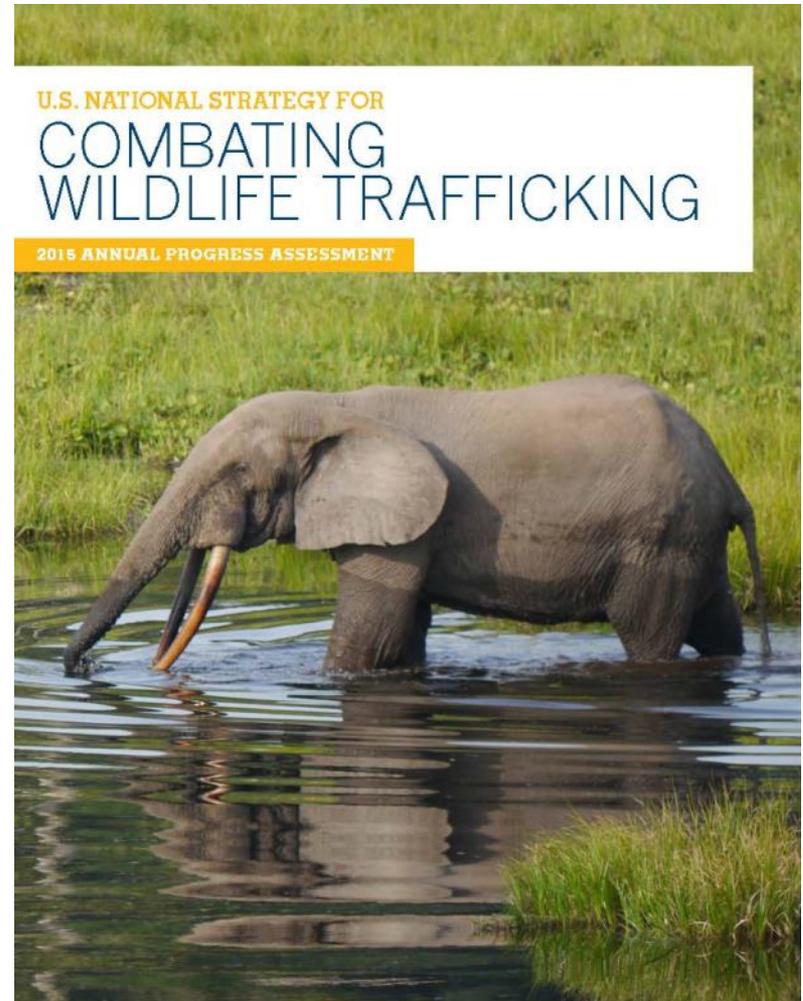
Implementation Plan

- Implementation Plan launched on February 11, 2015
- Outlines specific commitments delivering on each of the 24 objectives in the National Strategy
- Progress measures
- Lead and participating agencies identified



Annual Progress

- Annual Progress Assessments and Fact Sheets have documented major actions to date.





President Trump's Executive Order

- In February 2017, President Trump signed the Executive Order on Enforcing Federal Law with Respect to Transnational Criminal Organizations and Preventing International Trafficking, identifying wildlife trafficking as a focal area.



END Wildlife Trafficking Act

- Bipartisan Eliminate, Neutralize, and Disrupt (END) Wildlife Trafficking Act signed into law in October 2016
- Endorses and enshrines the Presidential Task Force on Wildlife Trafficking and its National Strategy and Implementation Plan
- Makes wildlife trafficking a liable offense for money laundering prosecution
- Requires an annual report that identifies “focus countries” determined to be a major source, transit point, or consumer of wildlife trafficking products and makes a special designation for “countries of concern”
- Requires USG to prepare and implement strategic plans for combating wildlife trafficking for these countries



Wildlife Trafficking Task Force

Some major actions taken under the National Strategy include:

- A near total ban on elephant ivory trade;
- A comparable Chinese ivory trade ban;
- Domestic and international demand reduction campaigns;
- Law Enforcement, prosecution and judicial training and capacity building;



Wildlife Trafficking Task Force

Some major actions taken under the National Strategy include:

- Stationing wildlife law enforcement attachés;
- Conducting long-term, covert investigations to address organized criminal enterprises;
- ARREST;
- Developing new technologies and partnerships.



Conclusions and Next Steps

- A whole-of-government approach bringing all relevant tools to bear.
- Addressing all parts of the trade chain.
- Implementing the END Wildlife Trafficking Act.