



WHAT IS IT?

This legislation combats today's unprecedented level of poaching and wildlife trafficking – a major financial lifeline for armed groups and terrorist networks – by holding foreign governments accountable and adding greater consequences for participating in this lucrative illicit trade.

WHAT DOES IT DO?

- Designates the worst wildlife trafficking countries.
- Gets park rangers the tools they need.
- Puts wildlife trafficking on par with other serious criminal acts.
- Expands regional cooperation on wildlife trafficking cases.
- Supports increased training standards for park rangers.

Director of National Intelligence, 2015 Worldwide Threat Assessment

“ Illicit trade in wildlife...threatens rule of law and border security in fragile regions. Criminal elements, often in collusion with corrupt government officials or security forces, are involved in poaching and movement of ivory and rhino horn across Africa. Poaching presents significant security challenges for militaries and police forces in African nations, which often are outgunned by poachers and their allies. ”

DESIGNATES THE WORST WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING COUNTRIES.

Currently, the U.S. has no reporting on countries prone to wildlife trafficking. Designating countries who have failed to meet a certain criteria has been an effective model to help counter drug trafficking, human trafficking, and promote religious freedom. This legislation establishes a designation for countries that are determined to be a major source, transit point, or consumer of wildlife trafficking products.



PUTS WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING ON PAR WITH OTHER SERIOUS CRIMINAL ACTS.

The same international gangs and criminal syndicates that are trafficking weapons and drugs are also trafficking wildlife. To give law enforcement the tools they need to respond, this legislation puts wildlife trafficking on par with other serious criminal acts, making it a liable offense for money laundering and racketeering. The legislation also goes after the finances of wildlife traffickers, putting any fines and forfeitures received in violations of these new penalties towards anti-poaching programs.

GETS PARK RANGERS THE TOOLS THEY NEED.

Park rangers are outmaneuvered and outgunned by poachers. Today's poachers are armed to the teeth – with RPGs, night vision goggles, and even helicopters. This legislation presses the U.S. government to provide security assistance to appropriate African security forces to counter wildlife trafficking and poaching.

EXPANDS REGIONAL COOPERATION ON WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING CASES.

Animals do not respect borders; neither do the gangs and criminal syndicates that are profiting from wildlife trafficking. For anti-poaching and counter-wildlife trafficking efforts to be effective, they must embrace a multi-country, regionally focused approach. This legislation supports the expansion and strengthening of regional wildlife enforcement networks (WENs). WENs are government-led, regionally-focused platforms that help countries strengthen coordination and promote intelligence sharing.

SUPPORTS INCREASED TRAINING STANDARDS FOR PARK RANGERS.

Park rangers are on the front lines of the fight to protect some of the world's most iconic and endangered species. This legislation supports the professionalization of the wildlife law enforcement sector in partner countries.

