

# Proposal to the African Elephant Fund

1.1 Country: Ethiopia

1.2 Project Title: Combatting the illegal killing of elephants and regional trade of ivory in southwest Ethiopia.

1.3 Project Location: Omo and Mago National Parks, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State (SNNPRS), Ethiopia

1.4 Overall Project Cost: 39,550 USD

1.5 Project Duration: 1 Year

1.6 Project Proponent: Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA), with Bureau of Culture, Tourism and Wildlife, SNNPRS

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## 2.0 Project Summary: (not more than 250 words)

Ethiopia is a source country for ivory and an internationally recognised key ivory transit hub between Africa and Asia. Three areas have been particularly affected by the poaching wave: Mago (MNP) and Omo National Parks (ONP) and the Babilie Elephant Sanctuary. The Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA) is committed to tackling these problems and has recently developed an Ethiopian Elephant Action Plan. However EWCA lacks capacity for implementation. This proposal focuses on two areas in south western Ethiopia, MNP and ONP where external support is not currently available. Priority activities are;

**i. Strengthening of field patrolling in MNP and ONP and crime scene investigation.** With resource protection the keystone strategy to prevent elephants poaching, basic scout equipment will be purchased and rations provided. Crime scene and risk management training will be delivered.

**ii. Community liaison and awareness-raising in MNP and ONP.** Law enforcement efforts require community support to be effective and minimise retaliation.

Community meetings with key groups (e.g. elders, women, youth) will be held to discuss the importance of elephants, the impact of poaching and the current ivory trade, the legal framework and the consequences of lawbreaking. Local security task forces will be formed.

**iii. Training of regional customs/enforcement/judiciary officials at key sites and trade routes.** Most customs and enforcement officers at site level in SW Ethiopia lack the skills to identify elephant ivory products and the judiciary consider wildlife crime relatively unimportant. Detailed training will be provided to these groups.

### **3.0 AEAP Priority Objectives and Activities**

This project falls principally under the African Elephant Action Plan's Priority Objective 1, but also addressed other activities under Objectives 2 and 4. It also falls within the Ethiopian Elephant Action Plans Objectives 1, 2 4 and 7.

The project will address the following Activities under the AEAP:

Objective 1 Reduce Illegal killing of Elephants and Illegal Trade in Elephant Products

Activity 1.1.1: Assess law enforcement and capacity needs in respective range States

Activity 1.1.2: Recruit and train staff at all levels to combat poaching and illegal trade in ivory and other elephant products

Activity 1.1.3: Equip wildlife authority staff on the frontline of enforcement with appropriate tools to carry out their mission as safely and effectively as possible.

Activity 1.3.2 Sensitize legislators on the importance of the species to make them enact appropriate laws on conservation and management of the African elephant both at the national, regional and international level.

Activity 1.4.1 Build capacity of judiciary, police and other enforcement agencies to effectively enforce laws both at national and international levels

Activity 1.4.2 Enforce CITES provisions regarding trade on ivory and other elephant products

Objective 2. Maintained Elephant Habitats and Restored Connectivity

Activity 2.4.1 Provide adequate resources for effective management of existing protected areas and dispersal areas

Activity 2.4.2 Improve or maintain good management in existing protected areas in AE range states

Objective 4. Increased awareness of elephant conservation and management of key stakeholders

Activity 4.1.1 Consolidate and disseminate reliable information on the conservation and management of the elephant for local communities, scientific and political audiences

Activity 4.1.2 Develop and implement awareness programs targeting schools, local communities, policy makers etc

Activities 4.1.3. Develop and implement a communication strategy to justify management decisions and actions.

### **4.0 Project Rationale –**

Elephant poaching for the illegal ivory trade is the most serious threat facing elephants across Africa. Ethiopia has not been exempt from the tsunami of poaching sweeping the continent and has suffered a recent escalation in poaching at key sites, particularly the Babile Elephant Sanctuary (20% decline in 5 years) in eastern Ethiopia and Mago and Omo National Parks (MNP, ONP) in southwestern Ethiopia. In recent months Mago NP and Omo NP have been targeted, with at least 3 animals killed in 2 months and ~12% of the population in the last 3 years. Moreover in the late October and 5<sup>th</sup> November 2014, 1 scout in MNP and 1 scout in ONP was killed in a shoot-out when they detected poachers. Measures must be taken urgently to counteract this escalation, but the relevant wildlife authorities namely EWCA (ONP) and SNNPRS Bureau of Culture Tourism and Wildlife (MNP) do not have the knowledge, equipment or operational funds to provide effective law enforcement on the ground nor to limit ivory trafficking from this region.

During the formulation of Ethiopia's Elephant Action Plan (EWCA, 2014: now in final draft) a number of priority actions and sites were identified. MNP and ONP were selected as priority sites with urgent action required to strengthen field law enforcement on the basis of the upswing of illegal elephant killings in those parks and because no additional support is available from external sources.

First, a range of efforts are required to strengthen site-level patrolling as a deterrent to elephant poaching and to increase the probability of detection of illegal incidents and the recovery of poached ivory. Basic patrolling is not being carried out frequently enough in ONP and MNP primarily because scouts lack field rations for patrols and basic equipment.

Second, scouts and experts at park level have not been trained in wildlife crime scene investigation or risk management. Adopting correct procedures that do not contaminate evidence at crime scenes is critical to gain prosecutions in court. Moreover, 2 scouts were killed very recently in such situations and thus maximising the security of staff should be paramount. Thus appropriate training is required to augment increased patrolling effort.

Third, engagement with the local community is essential in order to generate support to combat poaching and ivory trafficking and is again identified as a priority in the EEAP. Key groups, such as community elders and women may have significant input into setting social norms at community level and be advocates for elephant conservation in the area, but the level of knowledge and understanding around elephant conservation and the ivory trade is very low. Discussions with these key groups around elephant conservation, illegal killing and ivory trafficking are essential to increase understanding of the consequences and impact of poaching and also help cooperation between communities and park management when investigating illegal incidents. More formalised park-community coordination committees have proved successful elsewhere in Ethiopia to generate support and improve park management. However few meetings between ONP and MNP park authorities and communities have taken place, due to lack of funding.

Fourth, EWCA has made progress in training police, customs and judiciary officers at federal level at Bole International Airport in Addis Ababa: its impact is evidenced by the significant number of seizures. However the EEAP has identified that additional

effort must be made at regional level, particularly around key elephant sites where illegal killing is occurring and also along trafficking routes. Moreover there is a need to improve coordination between regional and federal authorities and ensure that information is fed upwards and downwards when incidents occur. This project will strengthen cooperation between the EWCA Wildlife Trafficking Directorate and key SNNPRS law enforcement, customs and judiciary groups focussing on the zones and districts around MNP and ONP in SW Ethiopia. This will strengthen the capacity for detecting and seizing Ivory trafficked from these parks and along suspected routes from Sudan to Ethiopia.

EWCA and SNNPRS have very limited budgets for these priority actions compared to the sophisticated nature of the illegal trade. A grant from the African Elephant Fund would play a crucial role in providing a deterrent and increasing protection from illegal killing and trading ivory from two of the most threatened elephant populations in Ethiopia, by providing operational funds to field scouts and other enforcement officers in Southern NNPRS, providing field officers with skills to detect and apprehend ivory traffickers and to strengthen community support for elephant conservation and the prevention of illegal killing and ivory trafficking as a basis for setting up intelligence networks. The project will also improve federal and regional linkages for apprehending ivory traffickers.

## **5.0 Detailed Proposal –**

**Project location:** The target areas for this project are Omo and Mago National Parks in Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples National Regional State of south-western Ethiopia and along trafficking routes from the southwest of Ethiopia to Addis Ababa.

This project will be divided into the following stages:

### **Planning:**

- a. Finalising equipment needs and sources
- b. Developing agendas and designing additional materials for community meetings
- c. Developing TOR and list of members of site coordinating committees
- d. Prepare training materials for police, customs, judiciary. Liaison with key agencies and agreement on methods and dates

### **Procurement:**

- Scouts field equipment: 40 units (tents, rucksacks, boots, water bottles, GPS, binoculars etc)
- 2 laptop computers for data collection in Omo and Mago National Parks, EWCA.
- Cameras to support evidence gathering

### **Implementation:**

Effective implementation of this project will require collaboration between EWCA and other key stakeholders particularly the Bureau of Culture Tourism and Wildlife of Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Regional State, as well as SNNPRS law enforcement, security, customs and judiciary agencies.

**Activity 1: Wildlife crime scene investigation and risk management training for ONP and MNP staff**

Field training will be provided for 15 staff from ONP and MNP in how to handle wildlife crime scenes, collect evidence and minimise personal and institutional risk when at poaching and other crime scenes. EWCA HQ staff will deliver training in the field situation in two courses, one at each park over 3 days.

**Activity 2: Strengthening of field patrolling in MNP and ONP**

Scout field equipment (rucksacks, water bottles, jackets (40 each), 6 GPS units 6 Binoculars) will be issued to 40 ONP and MNP scouts to allow effective and safe anti-poaching patrols to be deployed. Operational costs in the form of rations will be provided for 1500 mandays of patrol, spread over 9 months of the project period. Thus as estimated 6 additional patrols per month will be carried out in each park during the project period. In some areas, transport will be provided by park management vehicles to drop off or pick up scouts at the beginning or end of patrols.

**Activity 3. Community liaison and awareness-raising in MNP and ONP.**

Small community meetings will be held with key personnel, identified as key hubs in the social networks of different groups (elders, women, youth) to raise awareness of elephant conservation, the illegal ivory trade and discuss the consequences of this trade, its illegality and how communities could assist law enforcement efforts and how to take advantage and gain the support of indigenous governance systems. Park staff will explore whether it might be possible to include elephants in traditional groups within a tribe, an approach that has proved successful elsewhere. In addition 2 zone/district level park-community-local stakeholder coordination committees/task forces will be set up, 1 around each park and a meeting supported.

**Activity 4. Training of regional customs and law enforcement officials at SNNRPS key sites and trade routes.**

EWCA experts will travel to the key sites around ONP and MNP in SNNPRS and BCTW headquarters in Hawassa , and regional police and customs training schools to deliver 3-day tailor-made courses for police, customs and judiciary. Training materials will include fliers, booklets that outline wildlife and anti-trafficking legislation. EWCA experts will link up with counterparts in these agencies and ensure that good federal-regional communication channels are set up, including hotlines to report incidents, seizures or gain advice on procedures.

**Anticipated Outputs and Benefits from the Project**

a. Outputs:

- 40 Scouts equipped and able to conduct patrols safely
- 800 mandays of scout patrols in Mago and Omo National Parks
- 15 Scouts and experts trained in crime season investigation and risk management
- 6 small community meetings around MNP and ONP, involving 50 people
- 2 zonal/ woreda security task forces set up around MNP and ONP
- 40 SNNRPS law enforcement, police, judiciary staff trained in detecting wildlife trafficking.
- 60 customs trained on the job for training over 25 days

b. Benefits

- Improved protection of elephants in the Omo and Mago National Parks and reduction in illegal killing
- Improved EWCA and SNNRPS capacity to implement resource protection systems

- ONP and MNP scouts equipped to conduct field patrols with concomitant increase in morale
- Improved safety of scouts when patrolling and at crime scenes
- Better quality evidence and increased rate of successful prosecutions
- Improved community support for elephant conservation and law enforcement in ONP and MNP
- Increased capacity to detect and prosecute illegal ivory traffickers and other wildlife products in SNNRPS by customs, police and judiciary
- Increased interagency cooperation and federal-regional coordination in detecting and prosecuting wildlife crime and combatting trafficking
- Once additional seizures are conducted, deterrent to ivory trafficking through Ethiopia will be increased.

**Evaluation:**

Interim outcomes and associated indicators are identified as follows

1. Scouts have equipment and operational funds to conduct patrols and the knowledge to collect evidence at crime scenes. This will be measured by number of mandays on patrol and km covered per month before and during project implementation

2. Increased awareness and cooperation with community members and other stakeholders at site level. Information on knowledge and attitudes will be conducted and compared through key informant interviews at baseline and at the end of the project. In addition, involvement of community members and local government staff in park coordinating committee meetings will occur and information of incidences where community or other stakeholders are involved in cooperation with park staff will be recorded, particularly through the provision of intelligence on poaching or trafficking incidents.

3. SNNRPS police, customs and judiciary staff.

Changes in these target groups' knowledge will be assessed by obtaining baseline information at the start of training courses and campaigns and re-evaluation post training, including training course feedback surveys. Effectiveness will be measured based on the number of successful operations to seize illegal ivory, apprehend and prosecute criminals, and identify and block illegal trade routes in subsequent months, controlling for effort, although it will be impossible to know if background rates of smuggling have changed.

Overall outcomes:

Improved conservation status of elephants Indicators: Elephant population size, # of elephants illegally killed . MOV: scout /park records on elephant mortality

**Reporting:**

- Final report will be prepared, and submitted to the African Elephant Fund upon completion of the project. Enforcement data concerning illegal killing, seizures and wildlife criminals will also be reported through the appropriate channels (e.g. to Interpol and CITES)

**6.0 Project Timeline –**

The total time line will be 12 months, beginning from fund transfer date. The first 2 months will be used for planning and preparing training materials and equipment procurement. Training and awareness raising campaigns will take place over the next 9 months. Site patrolling will continue throughout the project, as funds and field conditions arise. The last month will be used for finalizing activities, project evaluation and report writing.

**BUDGET**

7.0 Has this project received or been pledged any other sources of funding?  
 Some funding is being provided by USFWS for Omo NP for 2014/2015 to fund some patrols and 2 community meetings. Additional funds for intelligence network set up and funding additional patrols will be requested from USFWS in December 2015 (not included in this proposal). Further application will be prepared.  
 EWCA and SNNRPS will provide support in kind in terms of salary costs and provision of vehicles.

7.1 Please provide a detailed proposed budget for this project (in US\$). You may find it helpful to relate expenditure to the Phases you have set out in Section 5.0  
 Details should include: Staff Salaries, Equipment purchase or hire, Accommodation, Per Diems/Day Allowances, Travel, Evaluation, Report writing, Accountancy.

<b>Full Proposal Budget</b>				
<b>Budget line</b>		<b>Expected source of funds and amounts</b>		
		<b>Proponent(GOVT.)</b>	<b>AEF</b>	<b>Other (please specify)</b>
1.	Field Equipment: See table below		18,700	
2.	Wildlife crime scene investigation and risk management training for 15 senior scouts/experts	Salaries	1,000	
3.	Scout Patrolling (\$10/man/day), 800 mandays	Salaries; estimated at \$37,000	8,000	
	Patrol transport (\$150/month for 10 months)	Vehicle running costs	1,500	
4.	Community meetings: 2 (\$14/day x 50 people) Transport (\$30 pp x 50)	Salaries and vehicle running costs	700 1,500	
5.	Site level security task force meetings (\$45pp for transport and accommodation x 40 people x 1 meetings)	Salaries and vehicle running costs	1,800	
6.	Training judiciary/customs/police: 2 day workshop, \$ 45pp 40 people	Salaries and vehicle running costs	3,600	
7.	Anti-trafficking training: on the job 25	Salaries and vehicle	2,000	

	days, 60 people participating	running costs		
8.	Report writing and communications for all arrangements	Salaries	700	
		Total	\$39,500	

Additional funds are available to support 400 mandays of patrolling in ONP and community meetings from USFWS and \$3000 for additional community meetings

### 1. Scout Equipment list

Item	# Units	Unit cost (\$)	Total Cost (\$)
Binoculars	8	100	800
GPS Units	5	200	1000
Sleeping bags	40	25	1000
Tents	30	250	7500
Field/waterproof jackets	40	60	2400
Backpacks	40	40	1600
Water bottles	200	10	2000
Cameras for evidence collection	4	200	800
Laptops/software for site level RBM, reports etc	2	800	1600
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$18,700</b>