

ELEPHANT ECHOES

Updates from the International Elephant Foundation (IEF)

INTERNATIONAL
ELEPHANT
FOUNDATION.ORG

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The International Elephant Foundation is the catalyst for creating a sustainable future where elephants thrive by linking people and elephants for their mutual long-term benefit.

Founded in 1998, IEF is a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation of individuals and institutions dedicated to the conservation of African and Asian elephants worldwide. IEF creates a sustainable future for elephants by generating and effectively investing resources to support elephant conservation, education, research, and management programs worldwide. Through our passion, expertise, knowledge, and partnerships, we inspire and engage people to ensure a vibrant future with elephants everywhere.



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2022 Conservation Projects

In 2022, your support is enabling a broad spectrum of conservation actions for all elephants—African Savanna, African Forest, and Asian—and includes anti-poaching patrols, training community conservationists, educating people and seeking solutions for human-elephant conflict. **Check out this year's African Savanna elephant projects:**

▶ **Big Tusker Project:** Providing aerial surveillance and on the ground support to Kenya's last remaining population of Big Tuskers protects these iconic elephants carrying exceptionally large ivory at over 100 pounds per tusk.

▶ **Conservation of elephants in key areas of Murchison Falls Conservation Area (MFCA) and Kadepo National Park:** Building on previous work to take back Uganda's protected areas from poachers, this project supports the construction of an additional ranger station in the heart of poaching country.

▶ **Habitat Fragmentation Monitoring and Community Capacity Building for Elephant Conservation in Kafta-Sheraro National Park, Tigray Ethiopia:** This important study provides scientific evidence to policymakers regarding habitat fragmentation, elephant populations, and environmental problems to inform the country's comprehensive elephant management plan.

▶ **Human-Elephant Conflict Mitigation in the Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA), Zambia:** Studying one of the world's largest conservation areas, this project studies wildlife movement corridors, landscape utilization, and connectivity between cross-border elephant populations. It also teaches communities about low-cost conflict deterrents like poliwire fencing.

▶ **Mount Kenya Horse Patrol Team:** The Mount Kenya Horse Patrol Team protects this UNESCO World Heritage Site expanding the reach of local law enforcement to reduce poaching and other illegal activities.

▶ **PEACE (People and Elephants Amicably Co-Existing) Eastern Area Conflict Mitigation Program:** Focusing on areas where people are frightened and frustrated by elephants, this project teaches these communities, villages, and farmers how to peacefully live alongside elephants and uses education to replace fear with understanding.

▶ **Support of the Anti-Poaching Teams 9-1 & 9-2 of Northern Rangelands Trust Conservancies, Kenya:** The joint anti-poaching teams are composed of armed rangers that protect wildlife and the communities of NRT, the gold standard of conservancy programs, leading to significant declines in elephant poaching and crime in the region since 2010.

▶ **Support to DNPW/CLZ K9 Unit Operations in Lower Zambezi, Zambia:** Trained for tracking and detection of illegal wildlife products like ivory, bushmeat, pangolin, rhino horn, rifles, and more, the K9 Unit works to help law enforcement during patrols, vehicle searches, and security checkpoints.

▶ **Using Social Network Analysis to Achieve Faster Conservation Education Outcomes, Uganda:** Using the concept of a key person who inspires or guides the action of others this project teaches elephant conservation ethics to key student influencers with the intention of more quickly creating an understanding throughout the community of wild elephants and their behavior.



2022 Conservation Projects *continued*

Forest elephants are the newest recognized species of elephant, living primarily in central and west Africa. Their population has severely declined in recent decades due to poaching and armed conflict. Though regional populations are small and difficult to monitor, IEF is making their protection a funding priority. **Here are our 2022 Forest Elephant Projects:**

- ▶ **Collaring Forest Elephants-Ziama:** Using satellite collars to track movements of two established elephant herds in the Ziama Biosphere Reserve, this project allows researchers to learn vital information to establish an early warning system for farmers to mitigate conflict and to inform conservation decisions by the government.
- ▶ **Safeguarding the Populations of Forest Elephant (*Loxodonta cyclotis*) in the Port-Gauthier and Dassioko Forest Reserves in Côte d'Ivoire:** This project is conducting regular patrols to stop poaching and find and remove snares in two of the remaining intact habitats for forest elephants while also teaching coexistence techniques to local farmers and community members.
- ▶ **Conserving African Forest Elephants Mpem and Djim National Park, Cameroon:** Studying the transition zone between forest and savannah habitats, this important project is using elephant surveys to monitor population numbers of the African Savannah elephant and the African forest elephant as well as hybrids of the two, determine key threats, identify conflict areas, support 10 park rangers to conduct patrols, and work with communities to introduce sustainable alternative livelihoods and conservation education.



All elephants need our help. With population numbers of Asian elephants at 50,000—about 10% as many as both species of African elephants—we must address those issues impacting their long-term sustainability. Due to the increasing human population, the majority of Asian elephants live in fragmented habitats competing for land and resources with humans. That's why you will see so many of our projects addressing things like law enforcement, and helping people protect their homes and crops from elephants while working toward peaceful coexistence through education programs as it is the people and communities who live alongside elephants who will be the ones to determine their fate. **Here are the projects we hope will help secure the future for Asian elephants:**

- ▶ **Community Based Elephant Conservation, Nepal:** Building on previous conservation efforts in the region, Rapid Response Teams are mobilized to prevent and respond to incidents of wildlife damage, maintain barrier fences, and educate communities.
- ▶ **Conservation Response Units (CRUs) in the Northern Sumatra Landscape:** Conservation Response Units composed of wildlife officers, trained elephants, and their mahouts work together to patrol and protect the fragmented habitat of the critically endangered Sumatran elephant in this critical region.
- ▶ **Tongis and Conservation Education for Fringe Villages of Kaziranga National Park, India:** To help reduce damage and improve crop yields, tongis or lookout points are being built in villages to help farmers protect their crops from raiding wild elephants. Interactive conservation education is also being provided to those communities to encourage their partnership in protecting Asian elephants.
- ▶ **Elephant Conservation in Koshi Tappu and Surrounding Landscape in Eastern Nepal:** Dedicated elephant response teams are responding to incidents of human-elephant conflict, and helping increase community tolerance towards elephants while strengthening peaceful co-existence.
- ▶ **Elephant Protection through Strengthened Capacity and Community Engagement in Cambodia:** Teachers and youth are delivering wildlife protection lessons and activities, engaging with rural communities on how to be good environmental stewards including reducing and ultimately eliminating the supply and demand for illegal wildlife products including ivory.
- ▶ **Elephant Response Units (ERUs) (aka CRUs) in Way Kambas National Park in Sumatra:** ERU teams will patrol hot spots and vital border areas to herd wild elephants away from crop fields and homes, protecting what may be the largest remaining connected breeding herd of Sumatran elephants.
- ▶ **Emergency Elephant Response Units (EERUs) in Myanmar:** Based on the successful CRU/ERU programs in Sumatra, the EERUs are working to prevent negative interactions between people and elephants, protect wild elephants from poachers, and stop wildlife crime.



2022 Conservation Projects *continued*

- ▶ **Enhancing Elephant Connectivity and Safety in Tea Estates:** Community engagement with the many tea estates around the elephant habitat of Kaziranga will help minimize conflict by protecting elephant migration routes and teaching people safe coexistence practices.
- ▶ **Promoting Human Elephant Coexistence among Communities in Odisha, India:** Elephant Coexistence and Conservation Educators are trained to teach communities with high incidents of elephant caused damage how to live with elephants safely in order to promote peaceful coexistence and good harvests.

We know that Elephant Endotheliotropic Herpesvirus or EEHV affects all elephants, regardless of species and whether in human care or in the wild. Two of our three ex-situ projects are on the leading edge of EEHV research that will lead to the development of a vaccine protocol to lessen the impact of EEHV when contracted by young elephants.

Check out this year's Ex-Situ Projects:

- ▶ **EEHV Genomics and Pathogenesis:** Continuing our many years of support to this project, researchers are analyzing the multiple strains of Elephant Endotheliotropic Herpesvirus and sequencing their genomes which serves as the foundation for most other EEHV research worldwide.
- ▶ **Realization of an Effective Vaccine Against Elephant Endotheliotropic Herpesvirus:** Using tools previously developed by this research team, a vaccine to induce protective immunity for elephants against EEHV is being developed.
- ▶ **Musth Variation Among Asian Elephants (*Elephas maximus*), Applications for Conservation:** Studying musth in elephants in Sri Lanka and those in human care, this project will be used with social environmental data to help understand how male Asian elephants respond to changing environments.



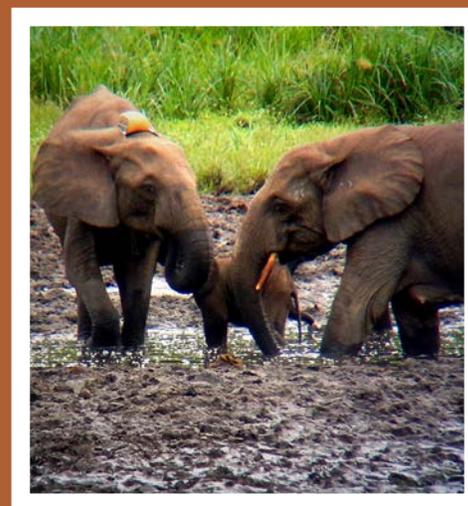
WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT FOREST ELEPHANTS

Elephants have commonly been referred to as either Asian or African, but in reality there are two distinct African elephant species: African savanna elephants (*Loxodonta africana*) and African forest elephants (*Loxodonta cyclotis*). When these two species are considered separately, they are both classified as endangered with forest elephants as critically endangered. This means every species of elephant is endangered or worse. Learning about what you want to save is the first step towards making a positive difference.

While African forest and savanna elephants may look the same at first glance, they are actually very different. Savanna elephants are likely what you've come to think of as African elephants; they are very big, with large tusks, and roam the open plains of sub-Saharan Africa. Forest elephants range from Guinea in West Africa to the Democratic Republic of Congo in Central Africa, living predominately in humid equatorial tropical forests. Adapted to moving through dense forests, they are the smallest of the three elephant species and have straighter tusks. Forest elephants also have smaller, more rounded ears and longer eyelashes.

Being recognized as a unique species is an important step in helping protect and preserve forest elephants. The dense forests they inhabit, and the relatively little time they spend in clearings, make in-depth study and regular observations for research extremely difficult. Yet it is estimated that over the past three generations their global population has declined by more than 80%, with population estimates ranging from 50,000 to 95,000. Threatened by poaching for ivory and habitat loss and fragmentation, it is clear that there is no single solution for saving this species.

IEF has had a long history of supporting projects focusing on forest elephants from equipping rangers to behavioral and habitat use studies. We recognize that all elephants need our help and are proud to be supporting projects benefitting forest elephants in Côte d'Ivoire, the Republic of Guinea, and Cameroon this year.



Lower Zambezi's K-9 Unit

Dogs can be an elephant's best friend too.

Founded in 2016, the Detection and Tracking K-9 Unit in the Lower Zambezi, Zambia is composed of trained dogs and their handlers to patrol wildlife trafficking hotspots with the mission of cutting off trafficking channels and deterring poachers. It is run by the Zambian Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW) and Conservation Lower Zambezi, a longtime IEF partner. These specialized teams utilize the dogs' keen sense of smell to detect ivory, rhino horn, skins, wildlife products, firearms, ammunition, and more.

The International Elephant Foundation has been supporting this important project for 3 years, helping them add two additional dogs to the team and expand the kennel in 2020. Currently the team includes nine full time human members and 3 dog members, with room to grow further. Last year they worked 1815 patrol man days, conducting vehicle searches at checkpoints to eliminate channels of movement for illegal wildlife products.

Truly responsive to their community, this team provides both increased security and employment. We are proud to support their continuing efforts this year and look forward to continued success in curbing wildlife crime.



Mighty Hammer Saves the Day!

Your support for the CLZ and DNPW's K-9 Unit apprehended three suspects in possession of a total of 78.8 kg of bushmeat this February! The meat, determined to be Greater Kudu, was found by detection dog Hammer and his handler during a routine checkpoint. At first, it was difficult to find the meat which had been put into a number of bags within two separate packages to hide the scent and then concealed behind several boxes and parcels.

Thanks to Hammer's diligent searching and insistent indications, the team knew there were illegal wildlife products present. This illustrates the benefit of using detection dogs whose powerful noses can see much more than the human eye.

Photo Credit: Michael Hensman & Conservation Lower Zambezi (CLZ)

An Elephant Food Garden for Sumatran Elephants

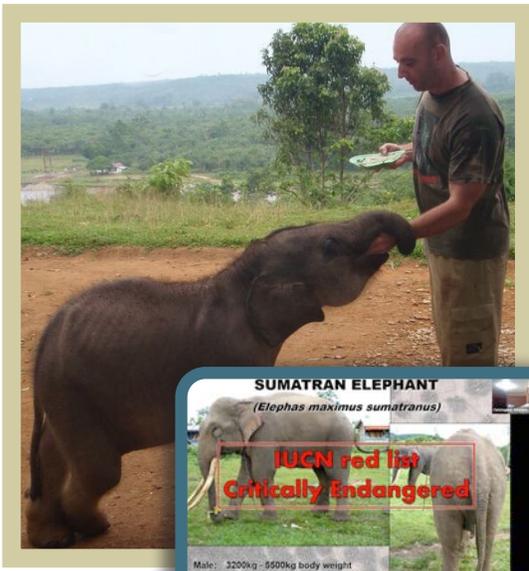


Located just north of Australia, Sumatra is one of the many islands of Indonesia and is home to the critically endangered Sumatran elephant. There are less than 1700 left in the world and they need our help.

When we asked you to help support the establishment of an elephant food garden for the elephants of the Conservation Response Units (CRUs) who help protect their wild cousins, you came through! The CRUs are made up of elephants and their mahouts working as a team to patrol and protect vital habitat from poachers and other wildlife criminals to keep it safe for the critically endangered Sumatran elephant, orangutan, Sumatran rhino, Sumatran tiger, Malayan Tapir, and more.

While the patrol elephants receive regular grain and fodder (as well as graze while on patrol) this food can be expensive to purchase and difficult to acquire in times of drought. Last year we asked for your help in building an elephant food garden for the patrol elephants and you answered the call, supporting plants and tools to make the garden a reality. Because of you this fresh, locally grown food will build on the excellent care they receive, enabling these important patrols to continue.

Each step the CRU teams take on patrol is one more step away from extinction for these incredible animals, and by building an elephant food garden, you are making that progress possible! *Thank you!*



Conservation Chats

It has been a difficult couple of years for us all. Lockdowns, facemasks, and social distancing seem to have us feeling more alone and isolated than ever, which makes connecting with the good work your donations support even more important. This is why IEF started our Conservation Chat series.

Envisioned as a way to bring the field to you, Conservation Chats feature a project leader from one of the many projects IEF is supporting across the globe. While most of us aren't going to travel to the rainforests of Sumatra, forests of Nepal, savannahs of Kenya, and tropical riverine forests of Uganda, we can hop on a video chat and be connected to all of them!

The format is simple. After introductions, our featured guest is given the floor to discuss their work, current challenges, and anything they think would be of interest to conservation-minded people like you. Then attendees are able to ask questions of the guest, making connections directly to the work they've supported.

Conservation Chats are a unique and personal way to connect with fellow conservationists around the world from the comfort of your own home. Our most recent Conservation Chat featured Dr. Christopher Stremme, our longtime partner in Sumatra. [Click here](#) to watch a replay of the chat.

If you enjoy this chat, email Julie Bates, IEF's Donor Relations Manager, at jbates@elephantconservation.org to be put on the invitation list for the next one!

Join the EMA x IEF B.R.E.W. Off!

Last year IEF was privileged to get our own seasonal brew, a summer IPA, with Turning Point Brewery near Fort Worth, Texas. It was a rousing success, full of fun, friends, and great beer. This year, we want to take that idea and spread the fun!

Is there a brewery in your town that makes seasonal brews? Consider approaching them to develop a special one benefitting elephant conservation through the International Elephant Foundation. You can hold a special event in their tap room, fundraise for IEF and be merry, setting yourself up to compete for epic bragging rights with the EMA x IEF B.R.E.W. Off!

IEF is joining forces with the Elephant Manager's Association (EMA) to hold the EMA x IEF B.R.E.W. Off at this year's EMA conference in Milwaukee. We will hold the first ever Beer Representing Elephants Worldwide, or B.R.E.W. Off where EMA members and attendees will enter beers, ales, and brews that support elephant conservation from breweries around the country for the coveted title of Best In Show!

How do you get in on this action? It's easy. Work with a local brewery to develop a special, seasonal brew and hold a fundraiser for elephant conservation through the International Elephant Foundation. (If they don't do seasonal brews, you can ask them to designate the proceeds from an existing beer to elephants for a limited time). Make sure to save at least a 12-pack of your elephant-brew and bring it to the EMA Conference in October where we will hold an epic tasting competition. You and your brew will compete for Best Elephant Brew, Best Existing Brew, Best Label Design, and the grand prize of Best in Show. Winners will receive a trophy and the aforementioned epic bragging rights!

Find more information on how to put together your fundraiser and participate in the EMA x IEF B.R.E.W. Off by [clicking here](#).



What Do Tongis Have to Do with Elephant Conservation?

Imagine the blue jays, deer, and squirrels in your backyard were replaced with elephants. Now imagine those elephants also live alongside the fields where your corn, vegetables and other food is grown. If the elephants decide to venture into your farm for just one night looking for a snack, an entire year's worth of harvest and income can be lost. The elephants don't know they are doing anything wrong—they are just enjoying an easy meal outside of their regular habitat of the national park. But you, like other affected farmers, families, and communities are devastated, and left with strong negative feelings towards elephants. This is the kind of situation the communities living around Kaziranga National Park in India face.

With incidents of crop loss, safety concerns, and even injuries and death, the communities around Kaziranga National Park need help to safely and peacefully coexist with elephants. The first step is to prevent conflict caused by crop raiding. To help farmers protect their crops and deter raids, the “Tongis and Conservation Education for Fringe Villages of Kaziranga National Park” Project is building tongis or look-out points in villages and farms where community members can safely conduct night watches. These night watches enable them to safely intercede and deter potential crop raiding elephants from their fields.

Using tongis has proven success. When IEF first supported this work in 2020, 90 tongis were built and resulted in farmers achieving greater crop yields. Improved personal safety and financial circumstances of both individuals and communities helps to alleviate the adversarial relationship many of them feel towards elephants. You can see more about their work in [this video](#), which won First Place in our Conservation Video Awards* that year.

IEF is proud to support this great work again in 2022, building more tongis for at-risk communities and adding an additional education component. Communities will receive a series of interactive conservation education meetings designed to create greater awareness of elephants and wildlife, teach methods to peacefully co-exist, and disseminate best practices for conflict mitigation based on previous successes in the area.

If elephants are to be preserved for future generations, we know it will be due to those who live alongside them who believe in conservation and take action to ensure their protection. A project like this one helps turn a situation that threatens elephants into a community for conservation.

* [Click here](#) to see the other winners of our Conservation Video Awards

