

Everyday News for Everyday People

# NEWS DAY

BREAKING

[Home](#) [Local News](#) Zimbabwe join forces with other southern Africa countries in combating wildlife crime

- [Local News](#)

## Zimbabwe join forces with other southern Africa countries in combating wildlife crime

By

**Newsday News** -

February 15, 2022



## **BY OBERT SIAMILANDU**

ZIMBABWE has partnered four other states in the Kavango Zambezi (KAZA) Transfrontier Conservation Area (TFCA) in an agreement which will see them joining forces to combat wildlife crime.

The four states that will work with Zimbabwe to defend their borders against wildlife threats are Angola, Botswana, Namibia and Zambia.

Working with the KAZA Secretariat, and supported by Peace Parks Foundation and the Southern Africa Wildlife College (SAWC), and funded through a grant from the United States State Department's Bureau for International Narcotic and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), the KAZA Partner States have embarked on an initiative to improve the capacity, synergy and effectiveness of customs and law enforcement agencies responsible for controlling movement of goods through all of the TFCA's 33 ports of entry.



Herd\_of\_elefants

The project will also assist the Southern Africa Development Community's (Sadc) Law Enforcement and Anti-poaching Strategy (LEAP), which focuses on

reducing poaching and illegal trade in fauna and flora species, as well as enhancing law enforcement capacity in the SADC region by 2021.

Doug Gillings, a wildlife expert and a combating wildlife crime manager for Peace Parks commended the collaborative approach of the KAZA Partner States saying it will effectively deal with illegal trafficking of the continent's natural treasures.

Patrick Sibanda A senior wildlife officer with the Parks and Wildlife Management

"The capacitation and resourcing of customs officials is key to the disruption of trafficking. It is a significant achievement for five countries to come together to strengthen this important link in the law enforcement chain – collectively understanding their shared trafficking landscape, and initiating a process to crack down on illegal natural resource trafficking," he said.

"The new collaboration in Combating Natural Resource Trafficking, works to address wildlife threats by creating and implementing a Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) – common to all five countries, developing an accredited training curriculum for customs and other law enforcement officials, as well training such officials in the five partner states."

Trade in environmental contraband decimates key species and devastates biodiversity, destabilizing ecosystems and depleting natural resources.

Illegal trade in targeted fauna and flora species, mostly endangered and/or threatened, also impacts on the economic viability and attractiveness of conservation areas as tourist destinations. In turn, livelihoods for local communities who depend on tourism are significantly affected.

The KAZA TFCA spans an area of approximately 520 000 km<sup>2</sup> and includes 36 proclaimed protected areas. With an abundance of biodiversity that includes Africa's largest contiguous elephant population and the largest connected lion population in Southern Africa, and with a multitude of transit routes, KAZA is a prime target of organized wildlife crime groups.

Traffickers exploit vulnerabilities in transportation and customs capability to move illegally sourced natural resources. Africa remains one of the major global source regions for illegal wildlife activities.

***Follow Obert on twitter@osiamilandu***