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UN agrees to ban on ivory trade

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16th June, 2007

THE ARTICLE

UN agrees to ban on ivory trade

The UN has agreed to approve a landmark nine-year ban on trading in ivory to stem a surge in poaching that is killing as many as 20,000 elephants annually. The agreement will go into effect after a one-off sale of stockpiles of ivory to Japan. Four southern African nations will sell their government-held stock of elephant tusks, although the exact amount is unknown. Willem Wijnstekers, the Secretary General of the 171-nation Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), reckoned as much as 200 tonnes of ivory might be heading to Japan. It will be made into personal stamps that are used in place of written signatures. However, CITES was positive about the new deal. It said: "This African solution to an African problem marks a great step forward for wildlife conservation....It is good news for the elephants and the people who live alongside them."

The agreement ends an 18-year deadlock on the ivory trade and elephant poaching. The future of the world's largest land mammal was at stake. There are only half a million of the majestic beasts left in the world and this number was falling due to sharp increases in hunting since the turn of the century. Conservationists say elephant numbers are decreasing every year to satisfy illicit markets in China and Japan. African governments hope the one-off sale to Japan will reduce demand and the money raised will go into conservation programmes. However, China is up in arms over the agreement as it is excluded from the sale. CITES refused a request by Beijing last week, saying: "We do not agree that they meet the criteria." Customs officials will now be watching carefully to see if the trafficking of ivory reaches China.

WARM-UPS

1. IVORY: Walk around the class and talk to other students about ivory. What do you know about it? Change partners often. After you finish, sit with your original partner(s) and share what you found out.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

landmarks / the ivory trade / elephants / tusks / stamps / signatures / solutions / agreements / deadlocks / things at stake / beasts / conservation / trafficking

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. PRODUCTS: In pairs / groups, talk about what you think of the following examples of trade in animals:

- a crocodile skin handbag
- an elephant foot stool
- a fox fur coat
- rhino horn medicine
- ivory bracelets
- panda bear rugs
- honey
- beef

4. ANIMAL TRADING: In pairs / groups, talk about how far you agree with these opinions on trading in animals and animal products:

- a. Trading in animals is no different from farming and killing animals.
- b. There is little difference between using leather from cows and snake skin.
- c. Traditional Chinese medicine should be exempt from international regulations.
- d. Big profits and the commercial demand for animals will ensure their survival.
- e. People caught selling endangered species should get 30 years in prison.
- f. People will never stop buying fur coats or ivory bracelets.
- g. The answer is to breed the animals and legalize the sale of their products.
- h. A polar bear rug looks absolutely beautiful.

5. I'M AN ELEPHANT: Imagine you are an African elephant. Hunters want to kill you and your friends to cut off your tusks and sell them to China and Japan. Walk around the class and talk to the other "elephants" about your life and the threat from poachers. Do you have any friends in captivity?

6. ELEPHANT: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "elephant". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

7. QUICK DEBATE: Students A think poachers and traders in exotic species should receive life in prison. Students B think poachers and traders in exotic species should receive heavy fines. Change partners often. Share your findings.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- a. The UN agreed on an ivory trading ban for the rest of this century. T / F
- b. Up to 20,000 elephants are illegally killed every year. T / F
- c. The UN OK' d the sale of stockpiled ivory to Japan. T / F
- d. CITES, a conservation group, is depressed about the UN's actions. T / F
- e. Talks over an ivory ban had gone nowhere for the past 18 years. T / F
- f. There are fewer than 250,000 elephants in the wild today. T / F
- g. China is angry that it cannot buy any of the stockpiled ivory. T / F
- h. Border patrols will watch to see if ivory is smuggled into China. T / F

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|----------------|-------------|
| a. landmark | threatened |
| b. stem | angry |
| c. surge | milestone |
| d. endangered | stalemate |
| e. marks | increase |
| f. deadlock | illegal |
| g. majestic | halt |
| h. illicit | smuggling |
| i. up in arms | signals |
| j. trafficking | magnificent |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| a. approve a landmark | of stockpiles of ivory |
| b. stem a | the century |
| c. a one-off sale | an 18-year deadlock |
| d. personal stamps that are used in place | nine-year ban |
| e. good news for the elephants and the | majestic beasts left |
| f. The agreement ends | surge in poaching |
| g. There are only half a million of the | arms over the agreement |
| h. increases in hunting since the turn of | people who live alongside them |
| i. China is up in | ivory reaches China |
| j. see if the trafficking of | of written signatures |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

UN agrees to ban on ivory trade

The UN has agreed to _____ a landmark nine-year ban on trading in ivory to stem a surge in poaching that is killing as many as 20,000 elephants annually. The agreement will go into _____ after a one-off sale of _____ of ivory to Japan. Four southern African nations will sell their government-held stock of elephant tusks, although the _____ amount is unknown. Willem Wijnstekers, the Secretary General of the 171-nation Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), _____ as much as 200 tonnes of ivory might be heading to Japan. It will be made into personal _____ that are used in place of written signatures. However, CITES was positive about the new _____. It said: "This African solution to an African problem _____ a great step forward for wildlife conservation....It is good news for the elephants and the people who live alongside them."

exact
marks
stockpiles
stamps
approve
deal
effect
reckoned

The agreement ends an 18-year _____ on the ivory trade and elephant poaching. The future of the world's largest land mammal was at _____. There are only half a million of the majestic _____ left in the world and this number was falling due to sharp increases in hunting since the _____ of the century. Conservationists say elephant numbers are decreasing every year to satisfy illicit markets in China and Japan. African governments hope the one-off sale to Japan will reduce demand and the money raised will go _____ conservation programmes. However, China is up in _____ over the agreement as it is excluded from the sale. CITES refused a request by Beijing last week, saying: "We do not agree that they meet the _____." Customs officials will now be watching carefully to see if the _____ of ivory reaches China.

criteria
beasts
into
trafficking
deadlock
arms
stake
turn

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

UN agrees to ban on ivory trade

The UN has _____ landmark nine-year ban on trading in ivory to _____ poaching that is killing as many as 20,000 elephants annually. The agreement will _____ one-off sale of stockpiles of ivory to Japan. Four southern African nations will sell their government-held stock of elephant tusks, _____ is unknown. Willem Wijnstekers, the Secretary General of the 171-nation Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), reckoned _____ ivory might be heading to Japan. It will be made into personal stamps that are used in place of written signatures. However, CITES was positive about the new deal. It said: "This African solution to an African problem _____ forward for wildlife conservation....It is good news for the elephants and the people who live alongside them."

The agreement _____ on the ivory trade and elephant poaching. The future of the world's _____ stake. There are only half a million of the majestic beasts left in the world and this number was falling due to sharp increases in _____. Conservationists say elephant numbers are decreasing every year to satisfy illicit markets in China and Japan. African governments _____ to Japan will reduce demand and the money raised will go into conservation programmes. However, China is up in arms over the agreement _____ the sale. CITES refused a request by Beijing last week, saying: "We do not agree that they meet the criteria." Customs officials will now be watching carefully to see if the _____ China.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'stem' and 'surge'.

stem	surge
-------------	--------------

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• approved• effect• stock• heading• written• news	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• deadlock• stake• turn• raised• arms• criteria
--	--

STUDENT POACHING SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about ELEPHANT POACHING in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1	STUDENT 2	STUDENT 3
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What do you think about elephant poaching?
- c) Do you think it's OK to kill animals to make products?
- d) Are there differences between killing an animal for food, leather or other goods?
- e) How concerned are you that poachers are killing elephants?
- f) How would you feel if the world's last elephant died?
- g) Do you think the UN should allow the sale of the stockpiled ivory to Japan?
- h) Do you think the Japanese should stop using ivory tusks for personal stamps and use an alternative material instead?
- i) Do you prefer the idea of signatures of personal stamps?
- j) Why do you think people like things made of ivory?



STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Why do you think it took 18 years to reach this agreement?
- c) Do you think the elephant is the most majestic land beast?
- d) Do you think Japan and China should change their traditions and stop using things that require the killing of endangered species?
- e) What punishment do you think is fitting for an elephant poacher?
- f) What would you say to a shopkeeper who had products made from endangered species in his/her shop?
- g) Do you think China has the right to be angry at not getting any of the stockpiled ivory?
- h) Would you like to have a job that is directly involved in protecting wildlife?
- i) What's the best thing you can do to help protect elephants?
- j) Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a) What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- b) Was there a question you didn't like?
- c) Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- d) What did you like talking about?
- e) Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

ROLE PLAY:

This role play is to discuss whether or not animals should be commercially farmed to cut out the black markets in animals and products and thus protect animals in the wild. Team up with classmates who have been assigned the same role as you. Develop your roles and discuss ideas and “strategies” before the role play begins. Introduce yourself to the other role players before you begin.

Role A – ELEPHANT FARMER

You can breed thousands of elephants. You know you can reduce the price of ivory and other elephant products. You believe China and Japan have a right to continue their traditions. You are a conservationist and want elephants to survive in the wild. You can clone elephants for commercial purposes.

THINK OF MORE REASONS WHY ELEPHANT FARMING IS GOOD.

Role B – CONSUMER

You think endangered animal farming is the best solution to animal conservation. You feel sorry for the millions of animals who die while being illegally smuggled across borders. You like animal products but have never bought any because of conservation concerns. Animal farming means you can now buy a tiger skin coat and a polar bear rug.

THINK OF MORE REASONS WHY ANIMAL FARMING IS GOOD.

Role C – CONSERVATIONIST

You think animal farming is a terrible idea. It sends people the wrong message that commercialism is more important than animals’ lives and conservation. Animals have rights. You think legalizing animal farming will increase poaching. You think cloning will destroy all wildlife.

THINK OF MORE REASONS WHY ANIMAL FARMING IS TERRIBLE.

Role D – ENDANGERED ELEPHANT

You have had enough of worrying about whether or not you or your family will be caught by poachers. You cannot sleep at night. Dozens of your relatives and friends have been killed. You have heard many bad things about animal farms. Animals should be left alone in the wild.

THINK OF MORE REASONS WHY ANY USE OF ANIMALS IS NOT FAIR.

Change roles and repeat the role play. Comment in groups about the differences between the two role plays.

In pairs / groups, discuss whether you really believe in what you said while you were in your roles.

LANGUAGE

CORRECT WORD: Put the correct words from a–d below in the article.

UN agrees to ban on ivory trade

The UN has agreed to (1) _____ a landmark nine-year ban on trading in ivory to (2) _____ a surge in poaching that is killing as many as 20,000 elephants annually. The agreement will go into effect after a (3) _____ sale of stockpiles of ivory to Japan. Four southern African nations will sell their government-held stock of elephant tusks, although the exact amount is unknown. Willem Wijnstekers, the Secretary General of the 171-nation Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), reckoned as much as 200 tonnes of ivory might be heading to Japan. It will be made into personal stamps that are used in (4) _____ of written signatures. However, CITES was positive about the new deal. It said: "This African solution to an African problem (5) _____ a great step forward for wildlife conservation....It is good news for the elephants and the people who live (6) _____ them."

The agreement ends an 18-year (7) _____ on the ivory trade and elephant poaching. The future of the world's largest land mammal was at (8) _____. There are only half a million of the majestic beasts left in the world and this number was falling due to sharp increases in hunting since the (9) _____ of the century. Conservationists say elephant numbers are decreasing every year to (10) _____ illicit markets in China and Japan. African governments hope the one-off sale to Japan will reduce demand and the money raised will go into conservation programmes. However, China is up in (11) _____ over the agreement as it is excluded from the sale. CITES refused a request by Beijing last week, saying: "We do not agree that they meet the (12) _____." Customs officials will now be watching carefully to see if the trafficking of ivory reaches China.

- | | | | | |
|-----|------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1. | (a) approved | (b) approving | (c) approval | (d) approve |
| 2. | (a) stem | (b) stamp | (c) trunk | (d) storm |
| 3. | (a) on-off | (b) one-two | (c) one-off | (d) one-up |
| 4. | (a) plate | (b) place | (c) plaque | (d) places |
| 5. | (a) marks | (b) makes | (c) markets | (d) markers |
| 6. | (a) outside | (b) alongside | (c) onside | (d) offside |
| 7. | (a) dead duck | (b) deadweight | (c) dreadlock | (d) deadlock |
| 8. | (a) heart | (b) steak | (c) stake | (d) beef |
| 9. | (a) turn-ups | (b) turnover | (c) turn | (d) turn-on |
| 10. | (a) satisfy | (b) satisfaction | (c) satisfactory | (d) satisfying |
| 11. | (a) arm's-length | (b) armpits | (c) arm-twisting | (d) arms |
| 12. | (a) criticism | (b) criteria | (c) critters | (d) critiques |

UN agrees to ban on ivory trade – *16th June, 2007*

WRITING:

Write about elephants and ivory for 10 minutes. Correct your partner's paper.

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find more information about the new ban on ivory trade. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. ENDANGERED SPECIES: Make a poster on one of the world's endangered species. Include information on the animal's lifestyle and habitat, the dangers it faces and the products made from it. Show your posters to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all find out about similar animals or things?

4. MAGAZINE ARTICLE: Write a magazine article about the death of the world's last elephant. Discuss who is most to blame.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Which article was best and why?

5. LETTER: Write a letter to the head of CITES. Ask them three questions about the survival of the elephant. Give them three suggestions about what they should do to stop poachers. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

a. F b. T c. T d. F e. T f. T g. T h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

a. landmark	milestone
b. stem	halt
c. surge	increase
d. endangered	threatened
e. marks	signals
f. deadlock	stalemate
g. majestic	magnificent
h. illicit	illegal
i. up in arms	angry
j. trafficking	smuggling

PHRASE MATCH:

a. approve a landmark	nine-year ban
b. stem a	surge in poaching
c. a one-off sale	of stockpiles of ivory
d. personal stamps that are used in place	of written signatures
e. good news for the elephants and the	people who live alongside them
f. The agreement ends	an 18-year deadlock
g. There are only half a million of the	majestic beasts left
h. increases in hunting since the turn of	the century
i. China is up in	arms over the agreement
j. see if the trafficking of	ivory reaches China

GAP FILL:

UN agrees to ban on ivory trade

The UN has agreed to **approve** a landmark nine-year ban on trading in ivory to stem a surge in poaching that is killing as many as 20,000 elephants annually. The agreement will go into **effect** after a one-off sale of **stockpiles** of ivory to Japan. Four southern African nations will sell their government-held stock of elephant tusks, although the **exact** amount is unknown. Willem Wijnstekers, the Secretary General of the 171-nation Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), **reckoned** as much as 200 tonnes of ivory might be heading to Japan. It will be made into personal **stamps** that are used in place of written signatures. However, CITES was positive about the new **deal**. It said: "This African solution to an African problem **marks** a great step forward for wildlife conservation....It is good news for the elephants and the people who live alongside them."

The agreement ends an 18-year **deadlock** on the ivory trade and elephant poaching. The future of the world's largest land mammal was at **stake**. There are only half a million of the majestic **beasts** left in the world and this number was falling due to sharp increases in hunting since the **turn** of the century. Conservationists say elephant numbers are decreasing every year to satisfy illicit markets in China and Japan. African governments hope the one-off sale to Japan will reduce demand and the money raised will go **into** conservation programmes. However, China is up in **arms** over the agreement as it is excluded from the sale. CITES refused a request by Beijing last week, saying: "We do not agree that they meet the **criteria**." Customs officials will now be watching carefully to see if the **trafficking** of ivory reaches China.

LANGUAGE WORK

1 - d 2 - a 3 - c 4 - b 5 - a 6 - b 7 - d 8 - c 9 - c 10 - a 11 - d 12 - b