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KEEPING WILDLIFE WILD

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WILDLIFE GUIDE



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Wildlife Crime is Big Business

Run by dangerous international networks, wildlife and animal parts trafficking is the third-largest form of illicit commerce after illegal drugs and arms trafficking. It is also the largest direct threat to the future of many of the world's most threatened species. Illegal and/or unsustainable wildlife trade can cause a species to reach a point where its survival hangs in the balance. In fact, illegal wildlife trade is one of the main reasons that many species are endangered. The decline of a species population also has a big impact on its habitat, as it can shift the delicate balance of living organisms in an ecosystem.

To help protect wildlife from threats like poaching for the illegal wildlife trade, TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network, was launched in 1976 as a joint program of WWF and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). TRAFFIC works to ensure that trade in wild plants and animals is not a threat to the conservation of nature. TRAFFIC leverages its resources, expertise, and voice to galvanize action for urgent issues in the species trade such as tiger parts, elephant ivory, and rhino horn.

To combat the illegal wildlife trade crisis, WWF is working with government, law enforcement, and other stakeholders like TRAFFIC to prevent poaching, support local communities, improve wildlife regulations, and reduce demand for illegal wildlife products. One example is a campaign that galvanized millions in support of an illegal ivory trade ban in Thailand which was enacted in 2013.

THE POWER OF THE CONSUMER

There are many wildlife products for sale around the world. As a traveler you can support conservation worldwide by asking questions and learning the facts before buying a product. By making informed decisions you can avoid having your souvenirs confiscated and paying a fine. Most countries, including the United States, protect their native animals and plants under national laws and through the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). This treaty supports sustainable trade, while protecting endangered species.

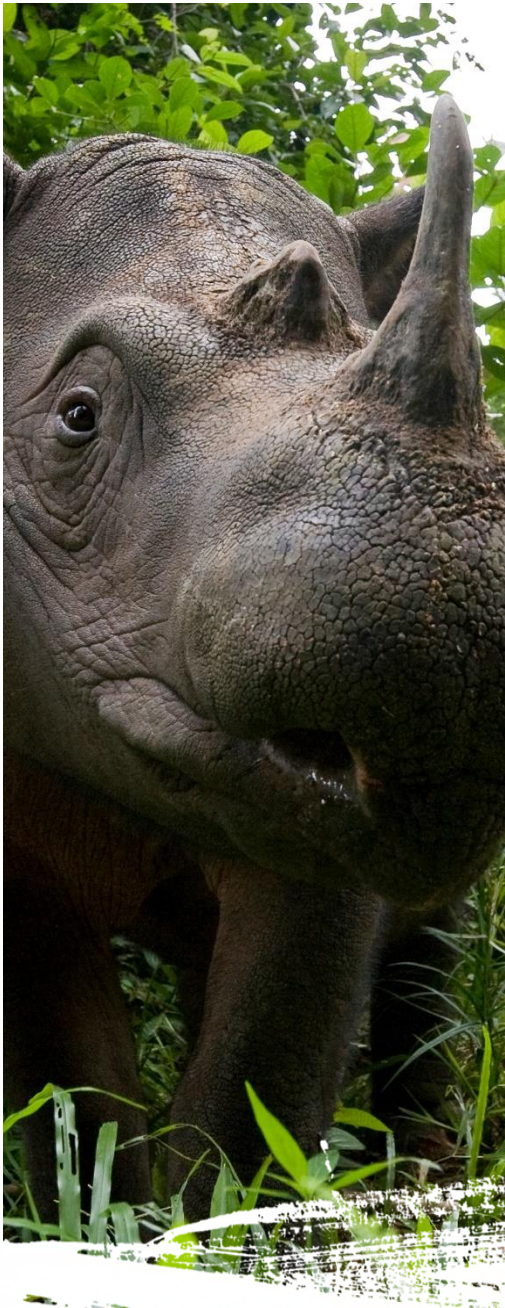
Just because an item is for sale does not mean it is necessarily legal. Even if it is in fact legal to buy and bring home, it still may not be a sustainable or responsible purchase. Products to keep a look out for include ivory, tiger fur or other parts, products made of or containing rhino horn, sea turtle shell products, coral, and keratin products made from pangolin.

When shopping in a foreign country, it can be hard to tell the difference between what is legal and sustainable, and what is not. By asking the following questions, you can avoid making a purchase with harmful impacts on wildlife and habitats.

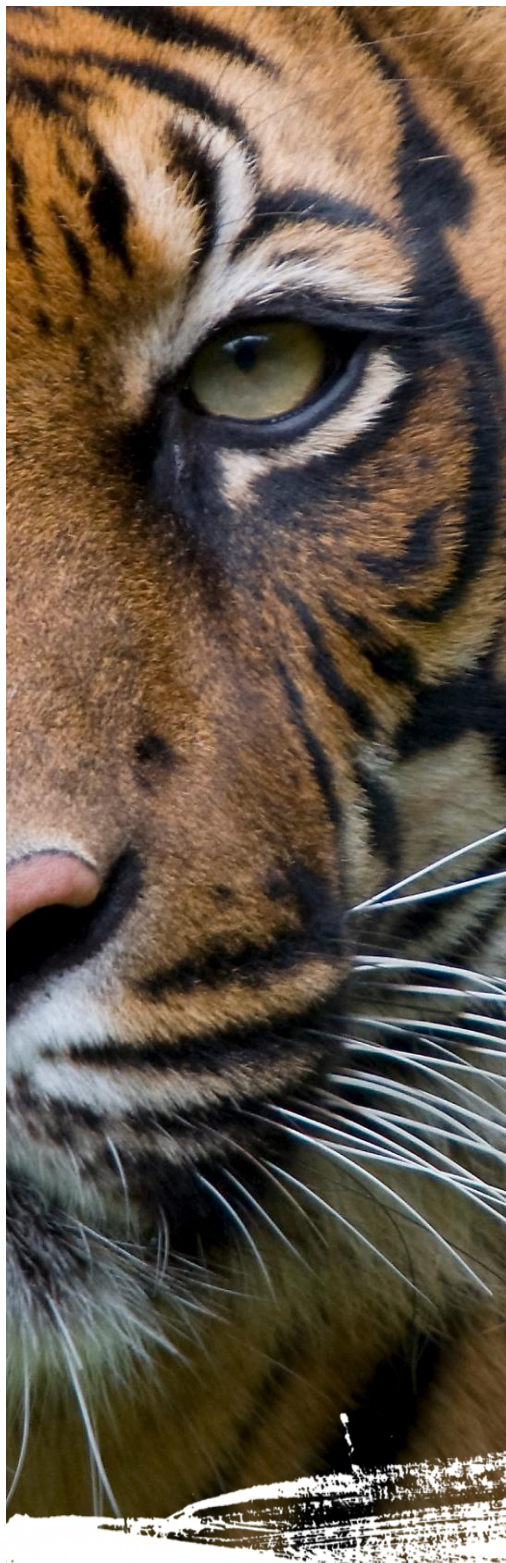
- **What is this product made of?**
- **Where did this product come from?**
- **Does your country allow the sale of this product?**
- **Do I need special permits or documents to bring this product home?**

POACHING

The practice of poaching is driven by a robust consumer market and ultimately benefits organized crime. When you purchase ivory jewelry or trinkets, you could be funding criminal syndicates and supporting corruption. Rhino poaching reached an all-time high in 2014, with 1,215 rhinos poached in South Africa alone.



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THREAT TO TIGERS

The greatest threat to tigers is illegal wildlife trade. As a result, today there are only around 3,900 tigers left in the wild. Every part of the tiger is traded in illegal wildlife markets. Their parts are used in traditional remedies and medicines, and illegally sold as luxury goods.

SEA TURTLES

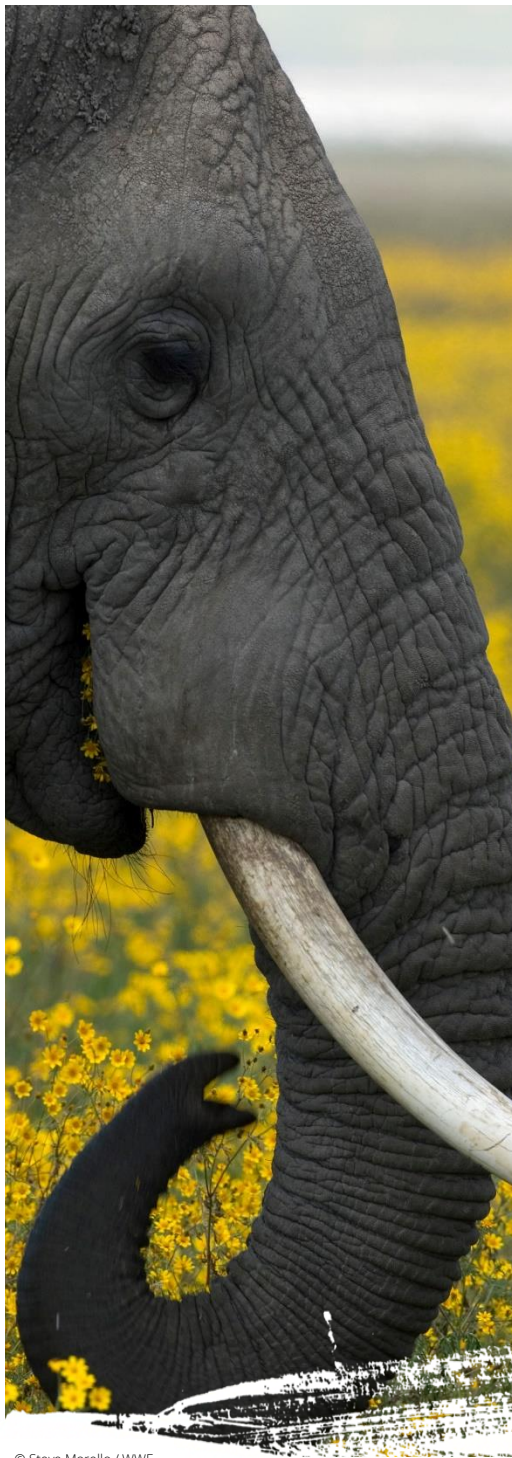
Today, nearly all species of sea turtle are classified as endangered, in large part due to poaching and overexploitation.



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TURTLE SHELLS

Sea turtle shell products are not only unsustainable, but also illegal to transport back into the U.S. and most other countries. Their shells are used to make sunglasses, cups, jewelry, and combs.



© Steve Morello / WWF

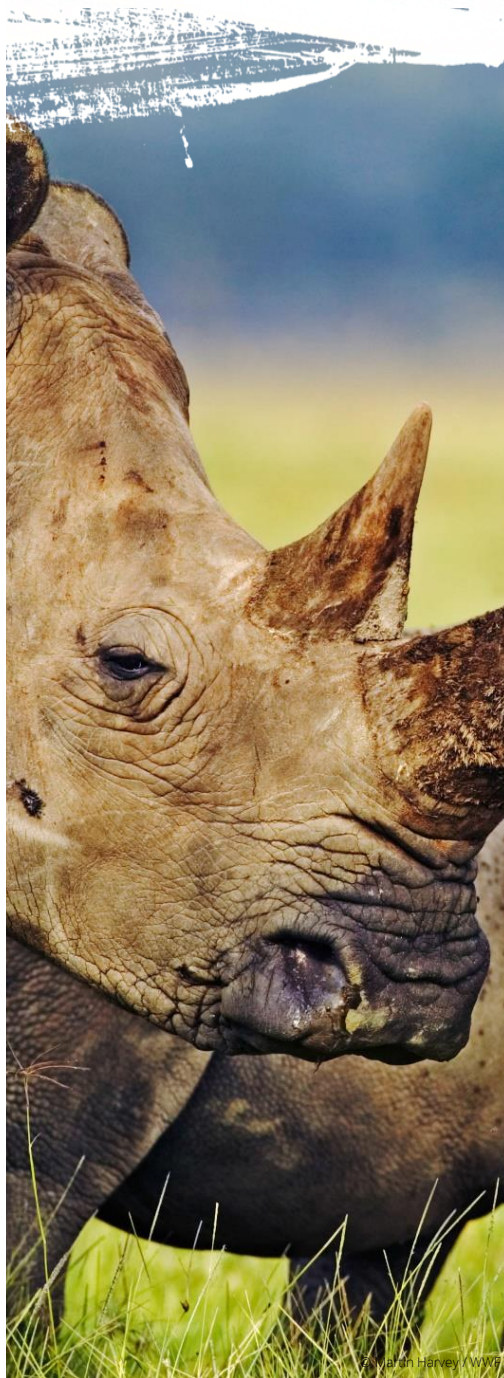
ELEPHANT POPULATION CRASHING

Africa's elephant population has crashed by an estimated over 111,000 in the past decade, primarily due to poaching.

HORNS AND TRADITIONAL MEDICINE

Urban myths in Asian nations, principally in China and Vietnam, have given rise to beliefs that rhino horn can cure cancer, relieve hangovers, or enhance male virility, broadening its appeal to everyday consumers. The purported benefits of these medicines have not been proven.

International trade in rhino horn is currently banned under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).



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LEADING WITH TECHNOLOGY

WWF and Teledyne Technologies Inc. have implemented innovative technology to combat poaching in protected parks in Kenya and Zambia. Thermal imaging cameras that detect body heat are installed along park boundaries, affixed to patrol vehicles, and can link to computer software. This software can distinguish human movement from that of wildlife. With enhanced monitoring 24 hours a day, the technology has contributed to more than 300 poacher arrests between 2016-2020.



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Protecting Wildlife One Photo at a Time



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Due to advances in technology and connectivity, criminals can now sell illegally obtained wildlife products online to consumers across the globe. Fortunately, the world's biggest e-commerce, technology, and social media companies have teamed up with WWF to shut down online marketplaces for wildlife traffickers.

For example, WWF and TRAFFIC joined forces with Instagram on a new initiative that will alert users to illegal wildlife trade when they search for certain hashtags that may be associated with trafficking. WWF and TRAFFIC provide Facebook and Instagram with training materials to aid in the detection of endangered species content on the platforms.

MORE QUESTIONS?

Click on these links for additional resources!

- [Tips for Travelers](#)
- [Permits](#)
- [Coalition to End Wildlife Trafficking Online](#)
- [TRAFFIC](#)
- [Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species \(CITES\)](#)

OTHER WAYS TO HELP

Seek Alternative Souvenirs

Bringing home unique souvenirs from trips you've enjoyed is meaningful. While some wildlife products might be advertised as valuable or unique, there are many alternatives that are every bit as unique, support the local communities, and do not cause harm to the environment.

Symbolically Adopt a Species

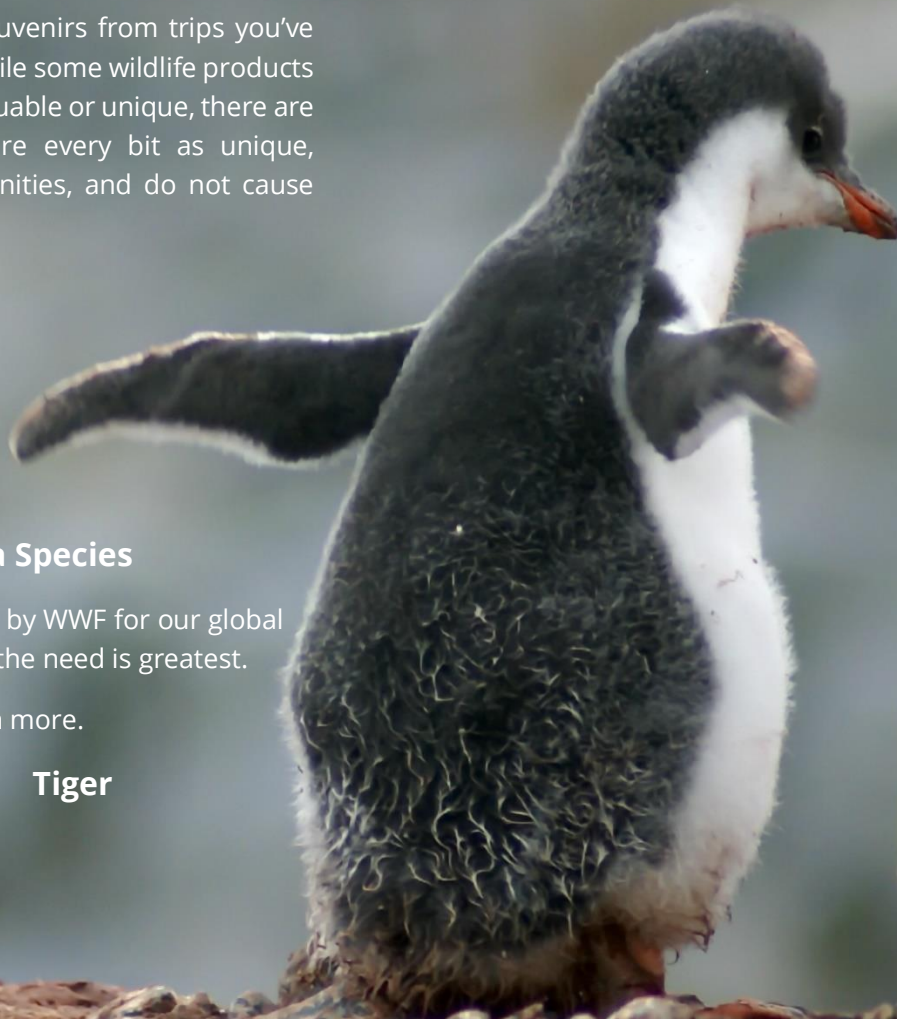
Contributions will be used by WWF for our global conservation work where the need is greatest.

Click on an animal to learn more.

[Elephant](#) [Rhino](#) [Tiger](#)

Shop Smart Online

Always be on the look-out for illegal wildlife products online. Learn more about species that shouldn't be traded through our Coalition Prohibited Wildlife Policy Framework to make sure you aren't unknowingly purchasing a protected species product. If you find suspected illegal wildlife products online, report them for review.



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