

Include all populations of African Elephant *Loxodonta africana* in Appendix I through the transfer from Appendix II to Appendix I of the populations of Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe

Proponents: Benin, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sri Lanka and Uganda

Note: See *Background to the African Elephant proposals for a history of the African Elephant under CITES*.

Summary: This proposal applies only to the African Elephant population of four contiguous southern African countries: Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. The most comprehensive and reliable information on African Elephant distribution and population is contained in the African Elephant Database (AED), maintained by the IUCN/SSC African Elephant Specialist Group¹. This gives the combined area of distribution of the species in the four countries considered here as ca.350,000km²¹. The most recent population data available in the AED are from the end of 2013. These along with figures from 2002 and 2006 are presented here divided into 'definite', 'probable', 'possible' and 'speculative' (not all categories are used in all range States). The database is being updated with the most recent data available, and a full version will be available at CoP17. Permission has been granted to use in the IUCN/TRAFFIC Analyses of Proposals the most recent figures from Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe (more recent figures for Namibia and Zimbabwe are also presented in the Supporting Statements for Proposals 14 and 15 respectively). Because of differences in survey techniques and extent of coverage, figures for different years are not strictly comparable. The most recent data are presented in the form in which they have been submitted to the AED.

Botswana: 2002 – 100,629 definite; 21,237 probable and 21,237 possible;
2006 – 133,829 definite, 20,829 probable and 20,829 possible;
2013 – 133,453 definite, 20,818 probable and 20,818 possible (all provisional estimates);

Namibia: 2002 – 7769 definite, 1872 probable and 1872 possible;
2006 – 12,531 definite, 3276 probable and 3296 possible;
2013 – 13,684 definite, 2871 probable and 2891 possible (all provisional estimates);

South Africa: 2002 – 14,071 definite and 855 possible;
2006 – 17,847 definite, 638 possible and 22 speculative;
2013 – 20,260 definite and 4767 possible (provisional estimates);

Zimbabwe: 2002 – 81,555 definite, 7039 probable, 7373 possible and 291 speculative;
2006 – 84,416 definite, 7033 probable, 7367 possible and 291 speculative;
2013 – 67,954 definite, 6974 probable, 6974 possible and 14,730 speculative (all provisional estimates).

More recent information is as follows:

Survey Area	Year	Estimate	Source
Botswana			
Northern Botswana	2016	129,939 +/-12,514	Chase <i>et al.</i> , 2015
Greater Mapungubwe Trans- frontier Conservation Area	2014	890	Selier & Page, 2014
Namibia			
Etosha National Park	2015	2,911 +/- 697	Kilian, 2015
Khaudum National Park & Neighbouring Conservancies	2015	6,413 +/- 2,566	Gibson & Craig, 2015a
Kunene	2011	314 +/- 154	MET, 2012
Mangetti Game Reserve	2014	67	F. Weiss, pers. comm., 2014
Zambezi Region	2015	13,136 +/- 3435	Gibson & Craig, 2015b
South Africa			
Hluhluwe Imfolozi Game Reserve*	2015	700	EKZNW, 2016
Ithala Game Reserve*	2015	162	EKZNW, 2016
St. Lucia Reserves*	2015	110	EKZNW, 2016

Survey Area	Year	Estimate	Source
Tembe Elephant Park*	2015	220-230	EKZNW, 2016
uMkhuze Game Reserve*	2015	90	EKZNW, 2016
Marakele National Park	2012	171	Ferreira <i>et al.</i> , 2012
Addo Elephant National Park	2012	595	Ferreira <i>et al.</i> , 2012
Kruger National Park	2015	17,086	Ferreira <i>et al.</i> , 2015
Great Fish River Provincial Reserve*	2015	2	J. Selier, pers. comm., 2016
Kariega Private Game Reserve*	2015	41	J. Selier, pers. comm., 2016
Knysna Forest*	2015	2	J. Selier, pers. comm., 2016
Kwandwe Private Game Reserve*	2015	57	J. Selier, pers. comm., 2016
Atherstone Provincial Nature Reserve*	2015	105	M. Garai, pers. comm., 2016
Madikwe Provincial Reserve*	2015	1006	M. Garai, pers. comm., 2016
Pilanesberg Provincial Reserve*	2015	240	M. Garai, pers. comm., 2016
Balule, Timbavati Umbabat and Klaserie*	2015	2772	M. Garai, pers. comm., 2016
Letaba Provincial Nature Reserve*	2015	621	M. Garai, pers. comm., 2016
Makuya National Park*	2015	9	M. Garai, pers. comm., 2016
Maremani*	2015	64	M. Garai, pers. comm., 2016
Mthetomusha Provincial Reserve*	2015	57	M. Garai, pers. comm., 2016
Songimvelo Game Reserve*	2015	105	M. Garai, pers. comm., 2016
Other Private Reserves*	2015	2482	M. Garai, pers. comm., 2016
Manyeleti Game Reserve	2009	222	SANParks, 2009
Mapungubwe Ecosystem	2014	347	Selier & Page, 2014
Zimbabwe			
Gonarezhou and SVC	2014	11,120 +/-2,753	Dunham & van der Westhuizen, 2015
Greater Mapungubwe Trans- frontier Conservation Area	2014	212	Selier & Page, 2014
Northwest Matabeleland	2014	53,991 +/-7,711	Dunham <i>et al.</i> , 2015a
Sebungwe	2014	3,407 +/- 1,215	Dunham <i>et al.</i> , 2015b
Various Areas	2014	2,143	Dunham, 2015
Zambezi Valley	2014	11,657 +/-2,259	Dunham <i>et al.</i> , 2015c

*Due to the absence of a detailed report (with methodology), these estimates have been entered as informed guesses, which carry less weight than data from systematic survey efforts

CoP17 Doc. 57.5 (Report on Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE)) contains the most up-to-date synthesised information on illegal killing of elephants, based on information from 2003 until the end of 2015. It reports on the proportion of illegally killed elephants (PIKE) at 58 sites in 30 countries in Africa and 27 sites in 13 countries in Asia. A PIKE level of 0.5 or lower is generally considered sustainable. In its analysis of sub-regional trends in Africa, the report observes (para 14) that the southern African sub-region (Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe) is the only one of the four African subregions where the estimated PIKE has not exceeded the 0.5 level in the period 2003 to 2015.

The Supporting Statement of the proposal deals extensively with the wider African Elephant population, which is not the subject of the amendment proposal. It draws attention to the high levels of illegal killing of elephants that have been recorded (chiefly through the MIKE programme) in many parts of the range since

2006 (see Doc. CoP17 57.5), associated with elevated levels of illegal trade in ivory recorded from 2008 onwards, as indicated by seizure data contained in the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS) (see CoP17 Doc. 57.6). The proponents argue that transferring the Appendix-II African Elephant population to Appendix I will indicate that the CITES Parties do not intend to allow commercial trade in ivory in the future, and that this will serve as a disincentive for the illegal killing of elephants, thereby enhancing the conservation status of this species in its range as a whole, and also benefitting the Appendix-I listed Asian Elephant *Elephas maximus*.

Analysis: Regarding the impact of this proposal on elephant populations elsewhere, there is no provision to address this question in any guidelines or criteria under the Convention and it will therefore not be considered further here.

The African Elephant population of Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe does not appear to meet the biological criteria for inclusion in Appendix I set out in *Res. Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP16)*. It does not have a restricted range, nor is its population small or undergoing a marked decline.

Annex 3 of *Res. Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP16)* states that listing of a species in more than one Appendix should be avoided in general in view of the enforcement problems it creates. It adds that if split-listing does occur, this should generally be on the basis of national or regional populations, rather than subspecies.

Sources for population estimates:

Botswana

Chase, M., Schlossberg, S., Landen, K., Sutcliffe, R., Seonyatseng, E., Keitsile, A., & Flyman, M. (2015). Dry season aerial survey of elephants and wildlife in northern Botswana: July – October 2014. Elephants Without Borders, the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (Botswana), Great Elephant Census.

Selier, J., & Page, B. (2014). Dry season fixed-wing aerial survey of large mammals in the Northern Tuli Game Reserve and Mapungubwe National Park and of elephants in the Greater Mapungubwe Transfrontier Conservation Area, Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe, August 2014. Central Limpopo River Valley Elephant Research Project and the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Namibia

Gibson, D. S. C., & Craig, G. C. (2015a). Aerial Survey of Elephants & Other Wildlife in Khaudum National Park & Neighboring Conservancies: October 2015. Ministry of Environment & Tourism, Namibia.

Gibson, D. S. C., & Craig, G. C. (2015b). Aerial Survey of Elephants and Other Wildlife in Zambezi Region September/October 2015. WWF.

Kilian, J.W. (2015). Aerial Survey of Etosha National Park. Internal Report to the Ministry of Environment and Tourism: September 2015.

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Weiss, F. (2014). Personal Communication: Information on the elephants of Mangetti. E-mail to C. Thouless, 11 August 2014.

South Africa

EKZNW. (2016). Personal communication from Pete Ruinard. E-mail to H. Dublin, 28 April 2016.

Ferreira, S., Greaver, C., & Simms, C. (2015). Elephant Management Update (02/2015): Elephant survey of the Kruger National Park. South African National Parks.

Ferreira, S., Pienaar, D., Freitag-Ronaldson, S. and Magome, H. (2012). An update on managing the effects of elephants in National Parks. Skukuza, South Africa: South African National Parks.

Garai, M. (2016). Personal Communication: ESAG DATABASE Update 2015/2016: Compiled by Marion E. Garai. E-mail to T. Daniel, 17 May 2016.

SANParks (2009). Elephant estimates in Addo Elephant, Kruger, Marakele, and Mapungubwe National Parks, 2005-2009. Pretoria, South Africa: SANParks.

Selier, J. (2016). Personal communication: Information on elephant populations in South Africa. Email to T. Daniel. 25 May 2016.

Selier, J., & Page, B. (2014). Dry season fixed-wing aerial survey of large mammals in the Northern Tuli Game Reserve and Mapungubwe National Park and of elephants in the Greater Mapungubwe Transfrontier Conservation Area, Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe, August 2014. Central Limpopo River Valley Elephant Research Project and the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Zimbabwe

Dunham, K. C. (2015). National Summary of Aerial Survey Results for Elephant in Zimbabwe: 2014. Harare, Zimbabwe: Parks and Wild Life Management Authority.

Dunham, K. M., Mackie, C. S., Nyaguse, G., & Zhuwau, C. (2015a). Aerial Survey of Elephants and other Large Herbivores in north-west Matabeleland (Zimbabwe): 2014. Harare, Zimbabwe: Parks and Wild Life Management Authority.

Dunham, K. C., Mackie, C. S., Nyaguse, G., & Zhuwau, C. (2015b). Aerial Survey of Elephants and other Large Herbivores in the Sebungwe (Zimbabwe): 2014. Harare, Zimbabwe: Parks and Wild Life Management Authority.

Dunham, K. M., Mackie, C. S., & Nyaguse, G. (2015c). Aerial Survey of Elephants and other Large Herbivores in the Zambezi Valley (Zimbabwe): 2014. Harare, Zimbabwe.

Dunham, K. M., & van der Westhuizen, H. F. (2015). Aerial Survey of Elephants and other Large Herbivores in Gonarezhou National Park and Save Valley Conservancy (Zimbabwe): 2014. Frankfurt Zoological Society.

Selier, J., & Page, B. (2014). Dry season fixed-wing aerial survey of large mammals in the Northern Tuli Game Reserve and Mapungubwe National Park and of elephants in the Greater Mapungubwe Transfrontier Conservation Area, Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe, August 2014. Central Limpopo River Valley Elephant Research Project and the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Reviewers: D. Skinner and T. Milliken.

References:

Information not referenced in the Summary section is from the Supporting Statement.

¹ IUCN/SSC African Elephant Specialist Group (2013) Continental Totals Provisional African Elephant Population Estimates: update to 31 Dec 2013. http://www.elephantdatabase.org/preview_report/2013_africa_final/2013/Africa. Viewed on 5th July 2016.