

《野生动植物群会议呼吁关闭象牙市场》

导读:象牙是一种昂贵的材料，它最大的经济价值，吸引了广大的非法狩猎市场。



Delegates at a UN wildlife conference have endorsed calls for the closure of all domestic ivory markets.

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The non-binding proposal was approved at a meeting of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (Cites) in South Africa.

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Conservationists hailed it as a significant step towards ending the current elephant poaching crisis.

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However Japan, which has a large domestic ivory trade, said the proposal did not apply there.

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While the international market in ivory has been closed since 1989, legal domestic markets have continued in many countries around the world.

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There has been growing concern that domestic trading has encouraged the poaching of elephants.

A surge in killing over the past seven years has seen populations across Africa shrink by a third, according to the recently published Great Elephant Census. What is driving the slaughter is the value of ivory, which can sell for around \$1,100 (850 pounds) per kilo in China.

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Countries including the US and China have announced plans to close their markets. The UK recently did the same, banning all trade in ivory dated from 1947 until the present day.

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Trade in materials from before 1947 will continue.

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While the nations attending this conference are divided on the best approach to protecting elephants, a compromise on the issue of closing domestic markets was arrived at after some heated discussions in a working group. However the measure then passed by consensus.

The agreed text calls is not legally binding and Cites can't compel countries to follow, but conservationists believe that it is a strong move as it is the first time that the 183 countries that have signed the Convention have taken a unified position on this question.

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"It's an important step on the road to closing worldwide ivory markets. It's the first time that Cites has agreed to intervene so directly in domestic ivory," said Robert Hepworth, a former chair of the Cites standing committee.

Robert Hepworth

