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COMBATING ILLEGAL TRADE IN WILDLIFE

The illegal wildlife trade, on the verge of extinction, a multi—
billion dollar business. The growing demand for products made from

animals, which is a kind of national symbols in the countries of Africa and South Asia (elephants, rhinos and tigers), constitutes a threat to peace and security in these regions.

Loss of biodiversity affects freshwater supplies and food production, as well as depriving locals of economic resources. In developing countries the rural population is often economically dependent on the local wild flora and fauna. For example, if in a particular developing country will be no more unique species that attract tourists, it can lead to the cessation of revenue from tourism.

The high level of demand combined with difficulties of law enforcement attracts transnational organized crime groups that, inter alia, engaged in "laundering" of money and trade in arms and drugs. The high price of the wild life resources breed corruption, which jeopardizes the rule of law and hampers economic development in countries rich in such resources.

Because to accurately track populations of these animals is impossible, illegal mining reaches crisis proportions. In the world there are only 25 000 rhinos, compared with 600,000 in the midtwentieth century. In South Africa, where dwells a large part of the world population of rhinos, every 13 hours to kill this rare animal to his horn. In Africa there are about 600 000 elephants — only a third of the population, which inhabited the continent until a few decades ago. According to experts, 25,000 African elephants were killed in 2011 because of the ivory. (Reliable statistics on the number of elephants in South Asia is not available). Tigers are dying in somewhat smaller numbers, but they are very difficult to defend. Today in the wild there are about 3200 tigers 3 per cent of the number of tigers that existed a hundred years ago. These animals no longer found in 11 of the 24 Asian countries where they had lived in abundance. [1]

Local hunting service and law enforcement often just can't resist the poachers, armed with Kalashnikovs and grenade launchers, as well as criminal gangs who bribe officials to facilitate the transportation of dead animal parts across borders. Authorities warn that in some countries, the revenues extracted by poachers wildlife resources probably are used to purchase weapons and ammunition, leading to the escalation of regional conflicts.

The illegal trade in wildlife can also pose a risk to public health. Up to 75 per cent of human diseases such as SARS, avian flu or the Ebola virus, can cause infections transmitted from animals to people. Illegal trade in animals or parts of their bodies not controlled by the competent health authorities, so it can create the threat of mass disease, according to the staff of the Bureau of the U.S. Department of State for oceans and environmental and scientific issues.

Many governments, intergovernmental organizations and law enforcement agencies and non-governmental groups for the conservation of nature are working to end the illegal wildlife trade. More than 170 States had acceded to the "Convention on international trade in endangered species of wild fauna and flora threatened with destruction" (CITES), which sets standards aimed at guaranteed threats to the survival of any species of wild animal or plant as a result of illegal international trade. In 1973, the United States was among the 21 States of the first signatories to the Convention. [1]

In 2005, the U.S. Department of State established the "Coalition against illegal wildlife trade", which aims to coordinate joint efforts with us and foreign government agencies, international and non-governmental organizations and the private sector. The strategy defines four main objectives:

- capacity building of law enforcement agencies;
- reduced consumer demand;
- strengthening of responsibility for crimes against wildlife;
- take on the role of a catalyst for the political will in the relations between the two countries that supply and countries that generate the demand. [1]

Focused on building a global system of regional environmental networks, including the network of the Association for the protection of wildlife in South-East Asia (Thailand) and the network for the protection of wildlife in South Asian countries (Nepal). In April 2012, several Central African countries agreed on the establishment of an enforcement network for the protection of wildlife.

These networks work closely with law enforcement, using the possibilities of the International consortium on combating wildlife crime (ICCWC) and leading environmental organizations, including the International Union for conservation of nature (UCN), the society for the protection of wildlife (WCS), world wildlife Fund (WWF), the International programme for the CITES Convention to control the illegal trade in objects of wild flora and fauna (TRAFFIC International), the International Fund for animal welfare (IFAW), The international society of nature conservation (Conservation International), the African wildlife Foundation (AWF), WildAid and FREELAND funds. [1]

Non-governmental organizations leading the fight for political and economic issues, and environmental issues, recognize that the most effective method of reducing the volume of illegal trade in wildlife and its devastating consequences is the suppression of consumer demand for products made from rare plants and animals living in natural conditions.

Список використаних джерел:

Combating Wildlife Trafficking: Respect and Protect [Electronic Resource] : - Mode of access:URL:<http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/pamphlet/2012/10/20121024137888.html#axzz4Pydg2Dxa>.- Title from the screen