



**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Statement on China's Ivory Crush
May 29, 2015**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service commends the Government of the People's Republic of China for its destruction today of more than 1400 pounds of illegal ivory in Beijing and for committing to the eventual phase-out of the processing and sale of ivory and ivory products. In February, China announced a one-year ban on imports of some ivory, a public proclamation of their commitment to halt the illegal ivory trade. Today's destruction of confiscated ivory builds on that commitment and raises awareness within China and around the globe about a wildlife trafficking crisis that threatens the future of African elephants, rhinoceros, tigers, and other iconic species.

As two of the world's largest markets for wildlife products, the United States and China must play a leadership role in reducing illegal demand, cracking down on trafficking networks, and otherwise ensuring wildlife trade is legal and sustainable. Since the U.S. Ivory Crush took place in November 2013, nine other governments –Belgium, Chad, China, France, Hong Kong, Ethiopia, Kenya, the Republic of Congo, and the United Arab Emirates – have followed suit.

Now, we -- as a global community -- must make good on our commitments to combat wildlife trafficking. The destruction of confiscated ivory stockpiles is just the beginning. Unless the illegal and inhumane slaughter of elephants, rhinos and other irreplaceable species is halted, we will likely see them disappear from the wild in the next several decades. We look forward to continuing our work with counterparts in China and around the globe to bring an end to this illegal trade.