

The poaching and eating of animals

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The Poaching and Eating of Animals Benjamin L. VanDyke GEO 150

6/22/2010 Tim G. Buchanan Poaching is the hunting or killing of animals that are not either in season to be hunted or are protected by animal rights laws.

There are many hunting laws and seasons that one has to comply with in their own country. Many countries have outlawed the hunting of animals that are close to extinction. Other countries; such as the United States use hunting to control the numbers of animals whose numbers are more than plentiful.

There are many reasons for poaching, mostly financially motivated. The costs or effects of Poaching can be deadly not only to the animals themselves but also to human beings. There are measures being taken to stop and regulate the act of poaching. There are many reasons why animals are poached, food, the Ivory of their tusks, Witchcraft and, Medicinal purposes, and just for their skins or furs. Some animals such as the Gorilla and other primates in Africa are being hunted for their meat, so that families and tribes can eat.

These same animals along with the wild cats, such as Lions and Leopards, Elephants, hyena, and buffalo are considered to be sources of what is called bush meat. These animals are killed, skinned and stripped of their meat to be smoked and shipped to restaurants in Africa, Asia and Europe. The Asian and African Elephants are hunted for the ivory of their tusks. More than 2, 500 tusks and 14, 600 pieces of ivory were seized worldwide between January 1, 2000 and May 21, 2002. That might not seem like a lot but that equals out to over 2, 000 dead elephants, in less than a year and a half.

In some African tribes animals are thought of as having magical and medicinal value. Many tribes in the Congo believe that the leopard is a highly magical creature and is killed so that the witch doctors can wear the skins to show just how magically powerful they are. Other animals are used as sacrifices to cleanse away bad omens or curses. If it is a dry year the gods might require an animal's blood in order to grant the rains to come. If you have skin disease you could digest a Lion's liver- be careful though hat same liver is used to poison rival tribe members. Snakes are beheaded so that the venom from their fangs could coat an arrow tip or two, by the Mbuti pygmies of the West Uganda and East Congo. The seals on the eastern coastline of North America are culled at a number of 180, 000 a year. These seals are clubbed to death for designer purse manufacturing companies. Fishermen in the area are frustrated by the vast number of seals eating or scaring the fish away. Extinction! This is the obvious effect of poaching, however there are other effects.

Diseases, and the disruption of the animal's social abilities; especially in the African elephant. The elephants that are most sought after are the ones with the longest tusks. Those elephants are typically the longest living female matriarchs. Elephants are very social creatures and weave a very tight bond with each other. Matriarch elephants are the glue of that social bond, they are the leaders, and are relied upon by the rest of the herd for keeping the family together. When a matriarch elephant is killed for her tusks, her youngest offspring typically died along with her.

The older sisters of the herd were left orphaned and either ended up roaming alone or eventually began bonding with another herd. The eating of the bush meat and of the primates in the African Congo is believed to have brought about the Ebola virus. The people who eat or have eaten from the monkeys, and gorilla contracted the virus and then passed it on to other human beings. An outbreak of Anthrax in 2000 is thought to be linked to the eating of infected animals that were being transported from Queen Elizabeth National Park

In Uganda alone the population of the elephant, Rhino, and Hippopotamus have dwindled down to either near extinction or extinction, over the past 40 years. The elephant in Uganda in the 1960's was over 30, 000. Today the elephants number at just above 2, 400; with a slow increase. The white and black Rhino went from around 350 each to extinct in the past 4 decades. Hippopotamus are the strongest of the three there numbers went from 26, 000 to 5, 300 again with a slow increase. These numbers are on the slow increase only due to recent legislation and organizations working together to stop the abuse of these animals.

There are many organizations who are working with numerous countries across the globe to stop or at least control the amount of poaching or trade of animal products. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, (CITES) is one organization that works closely with the World Wildlife Fund, (WWF) to bring awareness and legislation to the countries of the world in order to stop poaching. CITES is the biggest and most respected wildlife conservation agreement in the world. The primary purpose for CITES

is to combat the threat to animals and plants who are close to extinction from the international wildlife trade.

Every three years parties from countries across the world gather at what is called CoPs, a convention hosted by the WWF and CITES. At the CoPs the participating countries review the articles outlined in the CITES; and decisions are made determining what species should be placed on, or taken off of the Appendices. The animals and plants that are on these appendices are basically outlawed from being used in wildlife trade. In March of 2010 CoP15 was held and the discussion over elephants and ivory dominated the convention.

Countries who were home to the African elephant agreed on suspending the trading of ivory for nine years. Although stocks of ivory that were registered before January 31, 2007 were allowed to be sold to specified trading partner countries, such as Japan. The ivory being sold has to be from registered stocks that came from elephants that were dying or had died from natural causes. These stocks are also owned by the governments of the countries themselves. Proceeds from the selling of this ivory will be invested into the conservation and repopulation of the African elephant.

The act of poaching over the years has increased and decreased mostly depending on the demand for items that contain the skins, tusks or appeal to the appetite of consumers. As stated above the costs of the lives of these animals are a high price. Not only for the animals that are close to dying out completely; to our own health from ingesting the diseases that these animals carry. Thankfully there are organizations and people who care enough for

these animals to write laws and agreements to help stop this unnecessary and unregulated act. References Gobush, Kathleen. (?). The Effects of Poaching on African Elephants.

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