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Non-detriment finding for African elephant (*Loxodonta africana*)

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Competing interests: The authors declare no competing interests in relation to this non-detriment finding (NDF).

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Scientific name: *Loxodonta africana* (Blumenbach, 1797)

Common names: African savannah elephant, African elephant.

Norwegian name: Savanneelefant

Type of permit: CITES Appendix I; Norwegian CITES Regulation Annex 1, list A

Country of export: Mozambique (MZ)

Country of import: Norway (NO)

Purpose and source: The proposal concerns the import (purpose-of-transaction code H) to Norway from Mozambique of hunting trophies (two tusks) from one African elephant individual from the wild (source code W). In the attached CITES export permit it is referred to 'Quota 01/28 (2024)'.

For Appendix I species (Norwegian CITES Regulation Annex 1, list A) it is required to establish that import will not be detrimental to the survival of that species, in compliance with CITES Article III. In the Norwegian CITES regulation (Lovdata, 2018) the criteria for import to Norway are described in Chapter 2, Section 4.

VKM has adopted the definition of detriment, cf. Conf. 16.7 (Rev. CoP17) suggested by the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service Division of Scientific Authority:

1. Harvest that is not sustainable.
2. Harvest that harms the status of the species in the wild.
3. Removal from the wild that results in habitat loss or destruction, or that interferes with recovery efforts for a species.

Conclusion: *Negative*

VKM concludes that the import to Norway from Mozambique of hunting trophies (two tusks) from one *Loxodonta africana* individual taken from the wild could have a harmful effect on the conservation status of the species.

Illegal hunting for ivory is the main cause of mortality in *Loxodonta africana*. Mozambique has a zero quota for export of tusks as part of elephant hunting trophies from the wild for the year of hunting, 2024. The population of *Loxodonta africana* Mozambique has been severely affected by illegal ivory trade.

1. Biological information

Distribution

Loxodonta africana is distributed in 37 range states in Africa, of which Mozambique is one (UNEP, 2025). The species occupies a wide range of habitats and can undertake seasonal migration over long distances for food and water (Gobush et al., 2022).

Life history

Loxodonta africana is a long-lived animal with a low reproductive rate. The generation length is 25 years, the expected life span in the wild is 60-70 years (Gobush et al., 2022; Macdonald, 2021).

Role in the ecosystem

As a large animal *L. africana* impacts its environment physically (e.g. by clearing paths through dense forest and exposing water) and by hosting numerous parasites and forming symbiotic relationships with parasite eating birds (Gobush et al., 2022 et al., and references therein; Macdonald, 2021).

2. Population trend

The global population trend is decreasing, the population goes through extreme fluctuations, and the habitat is increasingly fragmented (Gobush et al., 2022).

3. Conservation status

Loxodonta africana is listed as Endangered A2bd (population reduction of more than 50% over three generations related to the level of exploitation) on IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, it was last assessed in 2020 (Gobush et al., 2022).

4. Threats

Illegal hunting for ivory is the main cause of mortality to *Loxodonta africana* (Gobush et al., 2022) and has severely affected the population in Mozambique (Thouless et al., 2016).

5. Conservation and management measures:

International legislation

Loxodonta africana is listed in Annex A of the EU Wildlife Trade Regulations, except the populations of Botswana, Namibia, Zimbabwe, and South Africa listed in Annex B (UNEP, 2025). The EU Scientific Review Group on Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora has a negative decision from 2023 regarding wild trophies of *Loxodonta africana* from Mozambique (SRG 98). *Loxodonta africana* is listed on Appendix II by the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS).

Conservation measures

Several programs coordinating conservation across range states are in place, such as the African Elephant Action Plan (AEAP), facilitated by the IUCN SSC African Elephant Specialist Group and the CITES Secretariat and the CITES program for Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE), and the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS) managed by TRAFFIC for tracking illegal trade in ivory and other elephant products.

6. Trade/use

Legal

Mozambique has a zero quota for export of tusks as part of elephant hunting trophies for 2024 and 2025. The range state last had a quota for tusks from 33 animals in 2022 (UNEP, 2025).

Illegal

Illegal hunting for ivory is the main cause of mortality for *Loxodonta africana* (Gobush et al., 2022). A large seizure of 651 pieces of ivory was made in Mozambique in March 2024, and large amounts were also seized leaving the country in 2022 and 2023 (EIA, 2024).

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