

News story: African leaders meet in Botswana for summit on wildlife crime

UK Minister for Africa Harriett Baldwin addressed African leaders and attendees at an illegal wildlife trade summit in Botswana last week (16-17 March).

The Giants Club Summit 2018 brought together countries in Africa with large elephant populations with the aim to find ways to improve cooperation on conservation and law enforcement to tackle the illegal wildlife trade. Representatives from Botswana, Gabon, Uganda and Kenya attended the two-day conference, along with delegations from the UK, China, the European Union and the UN.

The only minister to attend from a non-African country, Minister Baldwin met with Botswana's President Ian Khama to discuss the pressing need to end the illegal wildlife trade and tackle the corruption which enables it to operate.

The summit hosted a range of talks from African leaders and key conservationists alongside live demonstrations of ground breaking new technology which is being deployed in African countries to catch poachers.

Minister Baldwin said:

The UK is taking a leading role in ending the illegal wildlife trade globally and we will continue to push for action at every opportunity.

The illegal wildlife trade is taking a devastating toll on the populations of endangered animals across the world. We will only stamp out this terrible crime by taking global action and building consensus.

The Giants Club Summit is a vital opportunity for Africa-led initiatives and conservation techniques to be shared and discussed, bringing key African countries together to work for a shared approach to conserving their precious wildlife. Botswana is an excellent example of conservation bringing sustainable development to the people. Tourism is a thriving industry here and it pays dividends to the country and local communities.

Giants Club

In October 2018, the UK will host the fourth international conference on the illegal wildlife trade, bringing global leaders to London to tackle the strategic challenges of the crime.

The UK recently consulted on proposals to ban UK domestic ivory sales. The

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs received over 70,000 responses, and will publish its response to this consultation shortly.

Further information