

[News story: UK to host global conference to crack down on wildlife crime](#)

Ministers have today (30 October 2017) officially launched the London 2018 Illegal Wildlife Trade Conference, with less than a year to go before the global conference begins.

Foreign Office, Defra and DFID ministers brought together NGOs, academics and key countries affected by the illegal wildlife trade (IWT) to call on them to work with the UK to help stamp out this crime. It is now the fourth most lucrative transnational crime in the world after drugs, weapons and human trafficking.

Building a strong, global consensus on tackling IWT is a priority for the government as this crime, which is destroying entire populations of endangered species and causing misery for local communities, can only truly be addressed through international collaboration.

From previous conferences in [London in 2014](#) through to [Kasane in 2015](#) and Hanoi in 2016, the UK has shown the leadership and ability to secure the political commitment needed to bring an end to IWT.

Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said:

The illegal trade in wildlife is a serious organised crime and an utter abomination which has no place in the twenty-first century.

The criminals who run this trade do more than damage wildlife – they use the same networks of corrupt officials and agencies to commit further crimes, such as drug smuggling and people trafficking, along with financial crimes by laundering their illicit money.

Only by building global consensus and working together will we be able to stop wildlife crime in its tracks, and I am determined that the UK will continue to drive forward this agenda. I am proud to say that London will once again host the next global IWT conference next year.

Watch the Foreign Secretary discuss the corruption and criminality at the heart of the illegal wildlife trade

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Earlier this month the government announced [new plans to ban ivory sales in](#)

[the UK](#).

Environment Minister Thérèse Coffey said:

The international community shares a common aim to end merciless poaching and criminal trading – but now is the time to step up decisive action.

Building on the success of past summits to protect critically endangered species, the London conference marks a collective intent to work together, share learnings and forge new partnerships to disrupt the criminality that is destroying flora and fauna on an unprecedented scale.

The UK government has committed £26 million between 2012 and 2020 to fund practical action around the world to help fight the illegal wildlife trade. This includes, to date, 47 projects funded through the Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund.

The UK will host the fourth consecutive conference on IWT on 10 to 11 October 2018.