

Wildlife Protection Prioritized in Sino-African Cooperation

By [People's Daily](#)

Global Research, December 03, 2015

[People's Daily](#) 2 December 2015

Region: [Asia](#), [sub-Saharan Africa](#)

*During a brief state visit to Zimbabwe, Chinese President **Xi Jinping** visited “Wild Is Life,” a wildlife sanctuary that houses orphaned, rescued or specially protected animals on December 2.*

Considering Xi’s tight schedule, such a non-political activity indicates that China has paid a great deal of attention to the protection of African wildlife and is determined to enhance Sino-African cooperation without sacrificing the latter’s ecological richness and long-term interests.

Threatened by greedy poachers, the vast African continent is no longer a safe haven for wildlife such as rhinoceroses, elephants and vultures.

To remedy the situation, wildlife protection will be a key topic on the agenda of the upcoming Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in Johannesburg, South Africa, where talks will address the protection of wildlife habitats and curbing the illegal wildlife trade.



Chinese President Xi Jinping visited a wildlife sanctuary in Harare on December 2, 2015, before wrapping up a state visit to Zimbabwe.

China has been trying to do its part to protect African wildlife. During President Xi's US visit this September, he and his US counterpart Barack Obama promised to enact a ban on the ivory trade in both countries, drawing worldwide attention to the protection of African wildlife.

Both sides also pledged to cooperate in training, technical exchanges, information sharing and public education related to law enforcement and combating wildlife trafficking, a move the Los Angeles Times described as "heartening."

"This is nothing short of huge in the effort to save African elephants from being poached and killed into extinction," the US newspaper said.

At the 24th World Economic Forum on Africa in last May, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang promised to base Sino-African cooperation on environmental protection, pledged to crack down on rosewood and ivory smuggling and urged Chinese enterprises operating in Africa to protect the local environment and fulfill their social responsibilities.

Li promised that China will provide \$10 million in aid to African countries for wildlife protection and biological diversity.

China has also assisted Kenya, Botswana and other African countries' local wildlife and habitat protection projects by donating supplies including patrol vehicles, tents, GPS

equipment and telescopes.

As global warming poses a threat to the protection of African wildlife, China's commitment to environmental protection seems more important than ever. To help African countries cope with climate challenges, China has set up a 20-billion-yuan fund for South-South climate cooperation.

China's assistance in African countries' wildlife protection efforts will also boost the growth of the continent, which boasts an abundance of tourism resources.

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