

Faculti Summary

<https://faculti.net/international-organizations-and-the-ivory-sales-ban-debate/>

This video discusses the significant decline in elephant populations from approximately 10 million in the 1920s-1930s to around 600,000 by the 1970s, prompting international action. In 1973, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) was established to regulate the trade of endangered species, including elephants. While CITES is not primarily a conservation tool, it aims to ensure that trade does not threaten species.

By 2019, Southern African nations like Zimbabwe, Namibia, and Botswana advocated for the right to sell their stockpiled ivory legally, arguing that their elephant populations had successfully recovered. Zimbabwe's elephants increased from about 6,000 at their lowest point to approximately 83,000 by 2019, yet many areas could not support such a large population, leading to increased human-wildlife conflict.

Despite their significant recovery efforts, Zimbabwe faced pushback from both African neighbors and Western countries that opposed lifting the ivory ban, emphasizing the economic and conservation value of maintaining elephant populations. The call for opening ivory trade faces ongoing resistance, both internally and externally, and previous attempts to change this policy have not succeeded, with no current appetite for lifting the ban.