

Sent: Thursday, September 17, 2020 10:29 PM
Subject: [External] Importation of Wildlife body parts

September 17, 2020

Dear Legislators,

I want to respond to the absurd remark, made by a lobbyist, that prohibiting the importation and sale of African rhino and elephant body parts is somehow akin to White Colonialism.

I had the extreme good fortune to visit Kenya and Tanzania for extended periods of time in the last 7 years. My hosts and guides were all native Africans who shared with me their love and pride of their country, their different tribes, and most of all their wildlife. I was blessed to spend time in the bush, and in National Parks, where my guides shared their knowledge of their animals and how hard they work to protect them from trophy hunters and poachers. Before Colonialism Africans only killed animals for consumption. It was the arrival of non-Africans who decided that killing for fun, export, and trophies, was the new sport and way of life.

Now saving their wildlife is an all consuming effort for Africans since they depend on eco-tourism to feed their families and keep their societies strong. The only Africans who are killing wildlife to export body parts abroad are called **poachers**. There are African game wardens who do nothing but hunt down these killers since they are endangering the very animals that keep Africa strong and prosperous. Poachers are hunted, arrested, put in jail, and sometimes killed. So let's not toss around the word "Colonialism" as an excuse to not stop the inhumane, needless killing of wildlife. Africans are risking their lives to stop poaching and protect their animals; the least we can do is support their efforts by banning the sale and importation of dead wildlife into our country. That would be a way to really put the word "colonialism" to rest.

Respectfully,

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