



Oasis International School Model United Nations

The Environment Commission

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Guiding Package

Topic 1 : Animal Poaching and it's effects on the ecosystem:

8th Annual OISMUN Conference

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Abstract:

Animal poaching is a widely spread practice. In which, poachers kill animals and collect their body parts for value, traditional medicine that is mainly being used in Asia, clothing, hunting merits and head collecting. This practice is not limited to hunting mammals, but also illegal fishing and bird hunting. Poaching is considered illegal since the poacher violates the state law of :

- Trespassing,
- Killing an animal out of season.
- Not having a license to hunt.
- Killing with a prohibited weapon.
- Killing a protected endangered species.
- Illegal trading.

Poachers do not realize that their actions are harmful to the ecosystem. The ecosystem is considered to be a chain, where everything is in cohesiveness. With the extinction and endangerment of multiple species, the ecosystem became unbalanced and non cohesive, which impacts humans and nature daily. This is where the Environment Commission strives to control the act of animal poaching viewing that in its current state it's getting worse and worse even though it's illegal. In addition, governments have a very important role in trying to solve and limit this issue. In which some countries provide military protection around the animals, such as Kenya. Also, some countries are intensifying their security on the borders in order to block the illegal trafficking of animal body parts that are going to be sold in black markets, such as Thailand.

The guiding package discusses the different reasons of which animals are being poached and why does it affect the ecosystem. It gives some brief examples and possible solutions, as well as some guiding links and questions that are going to help with the topic.

Introduction:

Human characteristics develop from time to time. During the stone ages, humans had to co-exist in one location in order to stay safe from the dangers surrounding them. However, as time passed by, human nature changed. Humans only hunted animals with the intention of finding food and clothe to survive. Now, the intentions have changed, humans poach animals for many other reasons that will rarely help them survive. In the past, hunting animals was not considered an international offense or a crime in anyway. By consequence, the exceeding number of animals hunted and killed for various reasons posed a threat on the ecosystem. Law and regulations had to be created to conserve:

- The animals.
- The birds.
- The reptiles.
- The marine life.

Thus, the action of violating these rules became knows as “Animal Poaching”, and those who committed these crimes were called “Poachers”. After the poachers poach and get the body part of the animal they needed, they have to smuggle it out of the country to the trading market where buyers are anticipating it. The buyer might be wealthy, wishing to expand his collection or because of the value of the part, since ivory¹ is more valuable than gold. On the other hand, it might be another person trying to imitate a old Asian potion which is considered a cure for certain diseases, even though there is no scientific evidence that that it heals any. Also, some buy illegal animal fur to create and sell clothe, such as baby seal fur. The poacher and the buyer violate many regulations, which are :

1. Unauthorized hunting of an endangered animal or hunting without a license.
2. Illegal trading and selling.
3. Smuggling.
4. Owning an item illegally sold and bought.

Animal poaching is illegal in most countries, as governments are trying to protect their wildlife. However, some governments can not establish a strong system that insures that these

¹ The material which the tusks are created from.

rules and regulations are being applied and followed. For those reasons, the Environment Commission must create resolutions in which delegates must provide valid solutions to help stop animal poaching and it's illegal trading and trafficking. In order to help sustain the ecosystem, since the animals are considered to be a very important link in the chain known as the ecosystem.

Definition of key terms:

- **Animal Poaching:** “Poaching is the illegal taking of wildlife, in violation of local, state, federal or international law. Activities that are considered poaching include killing an animal out of season, without a license, with a prohibited weapon, or in a prohibited manner such as jacklighting. Killing a protected species, exceeding one's bag limit or killing an animal while trespassing are also considered to be poaching.”² This is the definition of the most important key term, which is also the name of the topic. Understanding the name will help in visualizing solutions.
- **Illegal trafficking:** “The transportation of illegally obtained goods for the purpose of trading.”³ This is an important key term. It is the second step that poachers take after achieving the first step, which is killing the animal.
- **Black market:** “The illegal business of buying or selling currency or goods banned by a government or subject to governmental control, such as price controls or rationing.”⁴ This key term is used, as it is the place where all the goods are usually being sold.
- **Tusks:** “Long pointed tooth that protrudes from the closed mouth, as in the elephant.”⁵ The tusks are one of the most hunted body parts. It is made out of ivory, which is more valuable than gold.
- **Ecosystem:** “A system, or a group of interconnected elements, formed by the interaction of a community of organisms with their environment.”⁶ Solutions must be found to stop the animal poaching and it’s strong impacts on the ecosystem.
- **License:** “Formal permission from a governmental or other constituted authority to do something, as to carry on some business or profession.”⁷ An important term, since hunting animals is legal in some places if a license has been provided to hunt.

² LIN, Doris. *What is poaching?*. Source : <http://animalrights.about.com/od/wildlife/g/What-Is-Poaching.htm>. Consulted the 2nd of September 2015.

³ © 2015 Dictionary.com, LLC

⁴ <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/black+market>

⁵ © 2015 Dictionary.com, LLC

⁶ © 2015 Dictionary.com, LLC

⁷ © 2015 Dictionary.com, LLC

- **Game preserves:** “A large area of land where wild animals are either allowed to live safely or to be hunted in a controlled way for sport”⁸ A very important key term, since in some locations it is legal to hunt animals as a sport if a license has been presented.
- **Trespassing:** “An unlawful act causing injury to the person, property, or rights of another, committed with force or violence, actual or implied.”⁹ An important key term to furthermore explain animal poaching.
- **Hunting season:** “The season during which it is legal to kill a particular species”. This key term differentiates animal poaching from legal hunting.

⁸ © Macmillan Publishers Limited 2009–2015

⁹ © 2015 Dictionary.com, LLC

Background Information:

Information about animal poaching:

- Poachers usually poach an animal that has something valuable i.e. an elephant since it possesses 2 tusks.
- Rhinos are being poached at a rate of 2 per day.
- 946 rhinos were poached in South Africa from 2012 till January 2013.
- In the late 1800's, there were 100,000 Asian Elephants. Now, there are roughly 35,000 Elephants.
- In 2011, 23 tons of ivory have been confiscated, which is equivalent to 2,500 elephants.
- By mid 2020's, Gorillas might go extinct from the Central Congo basin.
- There are only 3,200 wild tigers left in this world, and to poacher they are the most wanted animals.
- Marine turtles are being poached thanks to their hard shells.
- There are 40,000 species on the "IUCN Red List of Threatened Species".
- Poachers are usually poor locals in search for money, since the buyers are willing to pay anything for animal parts.

Information about the reasons of animals poaching:

- Ivory and fur are the most valuable animal parts sold on the market, hence poachers kill them for money.
- Religion is a very strong reason for poaching. Since in some religions, some animals are considered to be pests and must be terminated immediately to keep "their land clean".
- Hunting and killing is considered to be a sport in some countries and in some competitions.
- Animal body parts are sold to make materials such as clothes and jewelry.
- Many countries, specifically in Asia, consider rhino horns, tigers, bear gall bladder and big-horned sheep antlers as important ingredients in eastern medicine, although there is no scientific evidence.
- In some Latin and African countries, animals are poached for food meat.

Some endangered animals wanted for poaching:

- Asian elephants
- Black and white rhinos
- Bengal tigers
- Blue whale
- Blue bird of paradise
- Amur leopard
- Western lowland gorilla

Major countries and organizations involved:

Major countries involved:

<u>Countries in which animal poaching occurs</u>	<u>Countries in which black markets exist</u>
Congo : Has the biggest population of gorillas.	Australia : Trades crocodile parts.
Ecuador : Wild animals are being poached in it's rain forest, as well as sharks are being illegally fished from it's coastline for their fins.	China : Biggest importer of animal parts as it is believed that it can be used as a remedy to cure diseases, even though there is no scientific proof.
India : Bengal tigers are being poached for their body parts.	Malaysia : Major routes of smuggling and selling animal body parts.
Kenya : Has a big population of elephants.	Mexico : Considered to be an illegal route to smuggle through the US border.
Norway : Wolf poaching is very common as well as seal clubbing.	South Korea : Sells body parts as ingredients to asian potions, that do not have any scientific proof.
South Africa : Has one of the biggest wildlife sanctuaries in the world, Kruger National Park.	Thailand : Has one of the biggest black markets in Southeast Asia.
Uganda : Home to the gorillas.	USA : Has one of the biggest black markets, worth 1.8 billion \$.
USA : Black bear poaching and shark finning.	Vietnam : Uses illegally obtained body parts to create old asian potions.

Major organizations involved:

- Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF)
- Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA)
- The Born Free Foundation (BFF)
- World Conservation Union (IUCN)
- The International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW)
- International Whaling Committee (IWC)

Guiding questions:

1. Has your country worked to try and prevent animal poaching and it's illegal trafficking?
How?
2. How can other countries apply rules and regulations to control animal poaching in a manner fit for their governments, state religions, and socio-economic status?
3. Which aspects of reducing animal poaching and conserving our ecosystem are the most important?
4. What is your country's history when it comes to animal poaching?
5. What organizations and programs is your country currently involved in?
6. What steps can the Environment Commission take to address the problems that the ecosystem is facing when it comes to animal poaching?

UN involvement:

The United Nations General Assembly called all countries to evolve their fight against animal poaching and illegal trafficking after the unmerciful killing of Cecil the lion in Zimbabwe. Amidst this chaos the 193-member General Assembly passed its first resolution on this issue following a campaign for a duration of 2 years, led by Germany and Gabon. Furthermore, the animals most threatened by poachers are the rhinos and the elephants, because of that the embargo on ivory took place when the population of elephants took a huge downfall from 1.2 million to 600,000. A clause from the UN resolution fighting animal poaching is “take decisive steps at the national level to prevent, combat and eradicate the illegal in wildlife, on both the supply and demand sides, including by strengthening the legislation necessary for the prevention, investigation and prosecution.”

Possible solutions:

1. Present a well structured and organized resolution that presents multiple solution that will enable the countries to limit animal poaching.
2. Suggest guidelines to solve this issue.
3. Raise awareness about animal poaching and it's effects on the ecosystem.
4. Try to find different ways to stop illegal trafficking of animal body parts.
5. Use modern technology in order to stop animal poaching and it's illegal trafficking.

Useful links:

1. <https://www.dosomething.org>.
2. <https://www.worldwildlife.org>.
3. <http://www.eoearth.org>.
4. <https://thetruthaboutpoaching.wordpress.com/>.
5. <http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/usg/statements/mr-wu/2014/03/world-wildlife-day.html>.
6. https://www.awf.org/sites/default/files/media/Resources/Facts%20%26amp%3B%20Brochures/Wildlife%20trafficking%20booklet_lower-res.pdf.
7. <http://www.awf.org/campaigns/poaching-infographic/>.
8. <http://factsanddetails.com/asian/cat68/sub435/item2508.html>.

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- <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/black+market>
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