

【Japan funds new anti-poaching operations centre】

Japan has funded a new anti-poaching operations centre located in Chewore Safari Area, which is part of the Mana Pools, Sapi and Chewore World Heritage Site, an area of outstanding universal value.

The new Centre was handed over to ZimParks by Ambassador Iwado at a ceremony in Chewore Safari Area on 16 May. It was funded through the CITES MIKE Programme, which seeks to address the poaching of elephants, and will allow the ZimParks rangers to step up their anti-poaching activities in the area.

Accepting the new Centre on behalf of ZimParks was the Director of Conservation, Mr Arthur Musakwa. Also in attendance was Ms Lynne Taylor of Tashinga Initiative, who implemented the project, as well as a CITES MIKE Programme Officer, Mr Dave Henson, and ZimParks rangers. A local company, Rooney's, kindly assisted by providing the facilities for the event.

Ambassador Iwado called for increased awareness by the local and international community on the tremendous work that the rangers were doing, and increased commitment towards conserving this area.

In recent years, elephants in this area have become increasingly threatened from poachers. Japan shares the increasing concern of the international community about elephant poaching and the illegal ivory trade. Through providing support to elephant range states, such as Zimbabwe, as well as enforcing stricter laws to prevent any trade in illegal ivory under the CITES, Japan will continue to work with the international community to stamp out this global problem.

Please refer to the Press Release for more details.



new centre



handover ceremony



Speech by Ambassador Iwado



with rangers



with Tashinga Initiative and MIKE Programme Officer

Embassy of Japan

Press Release

16 May, 2018



Ambassador of Japan hands over new Anti-Poaching Operations Centre in Chewore to ZimParks

On 16 May, 2018, the Ambassador of Japan, H.E. Mr Toshiyuki Iwado, officially handed over the Strategic Anti-Poaching Operations Centre at Mkanga, Chewore Safari Area, Lower Zambezi Valley to the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Authority. Mr Arthur Musakwa, Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (ZimParks) Director of Conservation, received the new Centre on behalf of ZimParks. The Centre was funded by Japan through the CITES*¹ MIKE*² Programme, and was implemented by Tashinga Initiative. Also in attendance at the handover ceremony was Ms Lynne Taylor, Founder and Executive Director of Tashinga Initiative, Mr Dave Henson, CITES MIKE Programme Officer, representatives of the local community, and ZimParks Rangers in the area.

Japan contributed USD 60,000 for the project to establish the new Mkanga Operations Centre, which is a post for field rangers conducting anti-poaching operations. Located in the Chewore Safari Area which is part of the Mana Pools, Sapi and Chewore World Heritage Site, it has been operational since October 2017. In recent years, elephants here have come under increasing pressure from poachers. In 2016, seven elephants were poached in this area between January and July alone. The new Centre will allow improved and more secure planning and management of patrol activities by the ZimParks Rangers, and thus enhance their capability in monitoring and preventing elephant poaching in the area.

In his speech, Ambassador Iwado emphasised that: “The illegal wildlife trade is an urgent global issue. Japan is deeply committed to the cause of protecting elephants from atrocious acts by international criminal organizations and others. Thus, Japan attaches great importance to supporting range states, such as Zimbabwe, in the fight against elephant poaching, including through the assistance of the CITES MIKE Programme. Japan continues to make utmost efforts in implementing the trade control

of ivory under the CITES, and to work together with international partners to tackle the problem of elephant poaching”.

Ambassador Iwado further stated that through conserving the the Mana Pools, Sapi and Chewore World Heritage Site, it would become an important tourism resource for Zimbabwe in the future. However, for it to achieve this, it is important for the development of tourism not to be harmful to the environment, but rather low-impact and sustainable. He congratulated the ZimParks Rangers on their new Centre and hoped that it would motivate them to step up their anti-poaching activities. He also called for increased awareness on the vital work that they are doing to conserve this precious resource.

*1: Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

*2: Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants

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