

IVORY DEBATE ROLE CARDS (Continued)

REPRODUCIBLE WORKSHEET 6.12

Name: _____ Date: _____

Role: Vice-President of the World Wildlife Fund

You strongly oppose lifting the ban on the sale of ivory because this will result in the killing of more elephants and possibly other endangered wildlife such as the rhinoceros. Elephant numbers in East Africa are already low, even though poaching is outlawed. Even lifting the ban for a "one-time" sell-off will increase the demand for ivory, leading to the killing of large numbers of elephants and threatening the survival of this animal. You will not allow years of hard work protecting species like the elephant to go "down the drain" and will fight to ensure that countries that want the ban lifted for profit will not succeed!

Role: An Envoy from India

You are opposed to lifting the ban on the sale of ivory, but you need to be sensitive to this issue. Indian wildlife experts fear that even a partial lift of the ban on African ivory would lead to a dramatic increase in the poaching of Asian elephants because their ivory is of higher quality and makes better carving material. This could devastate the elephant herds because the poachers kill the males, who have the tusks. Even though the Asian elephants are protected by CITES, poachers may stockpile their ivory in hopes that they could sell it to an open market or at least sell it as "African ivory" (since the two are hard to tell apart) to countries like Japan, that prefer Asian ivory. Thousands of families in the ivory-carving business have lost their livelihoods, however, and a long tradition of ivory carving is in jeopardy as a result of the ban on ivory.

Role: Representative from Ivory Retailers Association of Southeast Asia

You would like to see the ban on ivory lifted because the demand for ivory still exists. The sale of ivory, especially from countries with a surplus of elephants, would be a "money-making" situation for these African countries, individual poachers, traders, carvers, and retailers. A supply of ivory would please customers looking for ivory-made products such as jewellery, sculptures, and "hanko" used by Japanese businesspeople. For example, in 1999, a one-time sell-off of ivory from Zimbabwe, Namibia, and Botswana resulted in over 50 tonnes sold to Japan! If there is extra ivory, then let it be sold!

Role: Wildlife Management Consultant, Kruger National Park in South Africa

You are in support of lifting the ban on the sale of ivory. With an overpopulation of elephants in South Africa, lifting the ivory ban will allow South Africa to sell its stockpiles of ivory from the Kruger National Park. The money earned from this sale will be reinvested in the park and spent on local development programs. If the ban is lifted, however, you still want to ensure a balance remains within the park's ecosystem and that the conservation strategy of sustainable use is followed. You do not want to see the elephant population severely reduced to numbers similar to those in East Africa.

Role: Rural Development Consultant, Zimbabwe

You would support the lifting of the ivory ban so that under your country's CAMPFIRE program, rural communities will continue to earn money from the killing of a certain number of elephants. The communities can use this money for community projects. These much-needed projects include schools, roads, and freshwater wells. Fees collected from trophy hunters can bring almost \$50 000 into the local community. Furthermore, why should Zimbabwe be denied the opportunity to sell the stockpiles of ivory in rural communities with an estimated value of \$2.5 million!