

IVORY DEBATE ROLE CARDS

Name: _____ Date: _____

Role: Panel Member

Your job is to become familiar with all the viewpoints and issues regarding the ivory-ban debate. You will need to gather and read a wide range of information and to review each of the roles involved with this issue. During the research and presentation stages of this debate, you must keep an “open mind” to this issue in order to make an objective and well-supported decision at the end of the debate.

Role: Chairperson

You will need to set up the room for the debate and create an agenda (e.g., presentation of positions, questions from the panel, recess, cross-examination, concluding statements by presenters, panel’s decision, and your closing remarks). Before the debate begins you should become familiar with all the roles involved and review a variety of information about this issue. During the debate you will need to set time limits for presentations and maintain order. Your job is to moderate and control the debate proceedings—not to pass judgement. Close the debate by thanking everyone for participating, thanking the panel for their decision, and ending with an appropriate, non-partial statement about the issue.

Role: Minister of Wildlife, Kenya

Your position on this issue is very clear: no elephant should be killed for its ivory. Therefore, you do not want the ivory ban to be lifted, regardless of how much money it would generate. Poaching is already difficult to control on the vast expanses of the savannah, but if the ivory trade is made legal, more poachers will kill the already low elephant populations in parts of East Africa. Furthermore, if the poachers start killing more elephants, what will stop them from killing other wildlife, such as the rhinoceros, which is near extinction!

Role: Scientific Advisor to Kenya Wildlife Service

You strongly oppose lifting the ban on the sale of ivory because you know this will inevitably lead to 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. Lifting the ban would increase the demand for ivory and lead to the killing of large numbers of elephants. This development would threaten the survival of this species and upset the balance in the savannah ecosystem.

Role: Minister of Environment and Tourism, South Africa

You support lifting the ban on the sale of ivory. South Africa’s program of fencing in many of its national parks has allowed the number of elephants to increase. Unlike East African countries, such as Kenya, which are facing declining numbers of elephants, South Africa has a surplus. Therefore, why not sell the stockpiled ivory that is currently in some of South Africa’s National Parks, such as the famous Kruger National Park? The profit earned will be reinvested into the parks to further protect the wildlife and provide a growing safari tourism industry with an amazing opportunity to view such spectacular animals.