Better Lives for
Dogs and Cats

Protecting Wildlife
from Trade

A Publication of the International Fund for Animal Welfare
2015 Issue no. 21
Your support is having an enormous impact improving conditions for cats and dogs. I hope you enjoy reading about our recent efforts for the animals we hold closest to our hearts.

In addition, our investigation of illegal online wildlife trade and our efforts to change people’s perceptions about wildlife products are making a difference for animals all around the world.

IFAW is working with governments, enforcement agencies and decision makers at the highest levels to bring positive change for animals. The articles and updates in this issue show just how much we can accomplish with your support.

Thank you,

Azzedine Downes
Chief Executive Officer

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A Better World for Dogs and Cats

Every culture and community IFAW works in views animals a little differently. Yet, in every community, we see love and caring for dogs and cats. Through our Companion Animals programme we foster that concern while improving conditions for the animals.

Warmth in the Cold

During winter in Northern Canada, dogs are exposed to freezing temperatures, lots of snow and harsh winds. The region is remote and there’s little access to vet services. Many people are unaware of proper pet care and are accustomed to letting their dogs live outdoors.

From Canada to Mexico, France to Bali, IFAW’s wonderful supporters are making the world kinder for dogs and cats.
Companion Animals

IFAW has been working with communities in Northern Canada since 2002, conducting spay/neuter and vet care clinics along with educational campaigns. Last winter, thanks to generous IFAW supporters, we were able to build 70 dog houses to protect dogs from the frigid winter weather.

Better Lives for Bali Dogs

Far away, on the tropical island of Bali, Indonesia, our partner the Bali Animal Welfare Association is making great strides promoting welfare for community dogs.

Dogs have always lived with and among the Balinese people and are an important part of their unique culture. Most dogs on this idyllic island are owned, yet are free to wander the streets and can give the appearance of being strays.

A Model for Communities

In early November, we held a pilot Humane Community Development (HCD) workshop with members of Sagamok Anishinabe First Nations in Canada.

IFAW has developed these workshops to help communities take ownership of their dog problems, come to agreement on what their issues are, and develop their own community-based solutions. This alleviates the suffering of dogs, and helps the community permanently solve their problems.

Typically, we invite people across the community – from local officials, to teachers, to animal control officers, police and neighbourhood leaders. Together they explore their concerns about dogs in the community, listen to and learn from each other. Then we help them design the most humane solutions for their community.

IFAW has been working with Sagamok for three years assisting them with their dogs by re homing unwanted animals, and helping to provide veterinary care as well as other ongoing support. But the community recognised something more was needed and we thought HCD had potential to help. We just weren’t sure if this workshop would be the right fit for the unique culture of the people in Sagamok First Nation.

Last autumn, we held two events to educate people on dog behaviour, disease and treatment, and the need for spay/neuter surgeries. Fourteen puppies were adopted into loving families, showing a growing acceptance of dogs into the lives of the Balinese people and a willingness to take responsibility for them.

Hope in Hard Times

In Germany and more recently in France, IFAW has been working with people who have fallen on hard times to provide care and food for their pets. Even when people have very little, a pet can buoy their spirits with unconditional love, and provide companionship and sometimes even the inspiration to succeed.

Last year, IFAW began working with homeless people in Reims, France, to provide information on basic vet care and training for their pets. We’ve also supplied pet food to tide people over until they can get back on their feet.

From the poorest areas of South Africa to the working-class neighbourhoods of Berlin ... the beaches of Bali and Playa del Carmen to the streets of Reims ... IFAW offers assistance to meet the basic needs of pets and improve their well-being. This improves the well-being of their human companions, too.

“So we know today the dog never left us. Some of us actually left the dog,” the storyteller said. The powerful legend really grounded everyone in a deep respect for the dog in Anishinawbe culture, and helped set a tone of commitment and compassion for the workshop.

The Dog’s Story

According to Anishinawbe myth, the dog first came to a village as a powerful wolf. When a chief tied a strand of wampum beads around the wolf, it became their domestic friend. Over the years, people have forgotten the dog’s place as a helpful companion.

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In Germany

We’ve also supported monitoring of the wolf population in western Poland and eastern Germany to give them a better chance of survival. Now we’re advising shepherds on how best to protect their herds from possible wolf attacks – with high electric fencing and herd protection dogs. We recommend shepherds enlist at least two dogs of a special breed for each herd. These dogs are trained to live in the sheep herds all year round and to protect them as if they were their pack. These astonishing dogs also protect the sheep against other predators and unknown humans.

The breed IFAW recommends is not aggressive but will circle strangers while accompanying them through the herd and thus keep the humans away from the sheep.

When IFAW rescuers found Lily, the puppy was wandering alone across an immense field in Johannesburg, South Africa, with a badly injured eye. The land was next to a busy trucking site so you can imagine how terrified she was hearing all that noise and not being able to see very well. She was fortunate to be found. Our vet performed surgery to remove the eye and determined she was nearly blind in her remaining eye.

IFAW’s Lisa Cant-Haylett fell in love with Lily and adopted her into her family. Despite her blindness she’s a happy, lively dog who loves going for walks and playing with her best friend, Gracie, another rescued dog.

A tiny tiger-striped kitten we named Cesarin was found cowering in the middle of a bridge between Cancun and Tulum, Mexico. Rescue was risky because of all the cars speeding by so we decided to leave a humane trap for the hungry kitten. After a few hours we successfully captured her. It’s a miracle she wasn’t injured in the traffic.

When she first arrived at Coco’s Animal Welfare, our partner in Mexico, she was still extremely scared, but soon began to relax. We spayed the kitten and a kind neighbour named Manuel, whose friends first reported the kitten in distress, adopted her.

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However, keeping these dogs is an additional financial burden for shepherds who do not earn a lot of money. Costs for feeding one dog can easily amount to R6554 per year. So this year, IFAW partnered with a big dog food company called AlmoNature, that kindly donated 20,000 kilograms of high quality dog food.

We distributed the food to an association of shepherds who use herd protection dogs. The shepherds were very grateful for this help.

“For us shepherds it is a great joy that at last someone is doing something, supporting us, not only with words but with deeds, with dog food. We have these dogs not because we are against wolves, but we are for our sheep,” said Knut Kucznik, head of the association of shepherds in Brandenburg.

This is an important step to increase and guarantee acceptance of wolves in Germany and a milestone for humans and wolves living side by side in Germany.
Illegal wildlife trade ranks among the most serious, dangerous and damaging of international crimes – along with human trafficking, drug running and illegal arms sales – and is worth billions of dollars a year.

IFAW has been investigating wildlife trade over the Internet since 2004. Our earlier investigations led to a ban of wildlife items on eBay and Taobao, China's number one shopping site. Still some products – notably ivory and suspected ivory items – slip through global shopping nets so we continue to investigate illegal trade on the Web, and share our evidence with authorities.

Last year, our report “Wanted – Dead or Alive: Exposing Online Wildlife Trade” examined online trade in 16 countries, and included findings from investigations carried out in Australia, New Zealand and the US as well. IFAW’s report identified 33,006 endangered wildlife and wildlife parts and products for sale via 280 online market places over only six weeks. As a result of our research, we provided investigators with more than 1,100 intelligence files to support their efforts.

Teaching Consumers

IFAW is campaigning to make the consumption of wildlife parts and products socially unacceptable in China, where the growing demand is threatening the survival of many wild animals. Evaluation of our efforts shows that IFAW has reduced consumers’ inclinations to purchase ivory from 54% to 26%.

An IFAW tip-off also triggered a ban of tiger bone, rhino horn and elephant ivory from auctions in China. This reduced ivory auctions by 90% in 2012 and brought a decrease in elephant poaching at the same time.

This followed our campaign to get major Chinese shopping websites to take a zero tolerance policy against wildlife trade. The prohibition of wildlife listings combined with enforcement is helping to stigmatise consumption of wildlife parts and reduce online wildlife trade. See our related article on page 12 on how we’re changing the views of Chinese consumers.

Surprisingly, the United States is also one of the top ivory consuming nations. Our investigation of online auction sites unearthed 4,186 ivory and suspected ivory items offered for sale in the US. IFAW is working with prominent auction houses in the US to ensure that they have the resources to educate consumers and fellow auction houses about elephant protection.

While it’s difficult to monitor all wildlife trade over websites, online traders and social media, we’re putting the power of the Internet to use warning consumers of illegal products for sale and encouraging them not to buy products that harm and kill wildlife. We’re working with online marketers to remove banned items. And we’re advocating for pop-up warnings on websites when traders post items for sale or buyers shop, warning them they may be breaking the law.

We’re also working with INTERPOL and other ‘cyber-enforcers’ to clamp down on traders and arrest traffickers.

Last November, we hosted a workshop in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, with the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority, the Lusaka Agreement Task Force and INTERPOL. Thirty-seven officers from customs departments, management authorities and enforcement officials learned practical hands-on skills in identifying and handling species commonly trafficked in the region. We hope this training will lead to the establishment of regional and perhaps continent-wide wildlife enforcement networks.

Kelvin Alie, IFAW’s Director for Wildlife Trade, said, “Given the prevailing levels of wildlife crime and the ever-increasing sophistication of wildlife criminals, we need to improve the capacity and collaboration among law enforcement agencies through trainings like these and by sharing information and resources.”

Ivory makes up 32% of all wildlife products for sale.

Birds and reptiles were the most widely traded live animals.

IFAW’s report found 54 ads for live tigers in Russia alone.
Protecting Wildlife

To date, IFAW has trained more than 2,450 officers in Africa, the Middle East, Asia, Oceania and the Caribbean.

With our donors’ steadfast support, IFAW is combating illegal wildlife trade on many levels – protecting animals from poachers in their homelands, arresting traffickers at key checkpoints, and stopping wildlife sales. We need to fight this pervasive trade on every level if we hope to protect the world’s most precious animals.

A Unique Collaboration in France

Last December, in Paris, IFAW and OCLAESP (Central office for combating environment and public health infringement) – a judicial police service with national competence, which was celebrating ten years of action on that day – organised a conference dealing for the first time on the subject of trafficking of endangered species.

This conference brought together 40 participants, including not only representatives of the various agencies responsible for combating fraud, but also staff from the Directorate of Criminal Matters and Pardons, magistrates, representatives of the French Development Agency and of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and of international development.

The Ambassador responsible for fighting organised crime and the Ambassador for the environment stressed the dual mobilisation of France on the issue of wildlife-related crime, both at the state level with a national action plan dedicated to combating poaching and the trafficking of species, and at the international level to recognise the seriousness of this type of criminal activity.

The conference affirmed that the only way to eliminate the trafficking of wildlife, to significantly hamper the activities of the criminal groups that orchestrate it, and to make the world safer for human populations requires increased inter-agency collaboration to share information and resources.

Making an Impact

Iain Webb and Michael Rosenzweig spend their work days trying to help people.

The life partners work for pharmaceutical companies. Iain is a medical oncologist developing new cancer drugs, while Michael specialises in cancer immunotherapy.

Away from their jobs, they are equally dedicated to animals. Iain and Michael share their Boston home with “the boss of the house,” a 7-year-old, “self-assured” highland terrier named Sebastian. They also share a love for bigger animals, including whales and elephants.

“Ever since I was a kid I’ve had an affinity for whales,” said Iain. “They are incredibly large but also very vulnerable animals.”

His affection for whales led to an interest in other ocean animals, and Iain has been a longtime supporter of IFAW, at the beginning primarily supporting the Marine Mammal Rescue team. “When you read about mass strandings, you want to do something to help,” he said.

In recent years, Iain and Michael have grown increasingly concerned about the future of elephants. “Elephants are special creatures – intelligent and generally non-aggressive,” said Iain. They signed a multi-year pledge to support IFAW’s elephant programmes and fund the development of a marine mammal stranding manual.

Last summer they went to Zambia to visit the Elephant Orphanage to learn more about what’s being done to rescue and protect elephants.

“Elephants are naturally curious and several of the young orphans wanted to investigate us,” said Iain. “Although in theory this might have been fun, it would have been dangerous given our unfamiliarity with interacting closely with elephant calves. We still ended up as close as 10 feet from these fascinating animals, and we were able to observe their behaviour and photograph them.”

“Michael and I give great thought about where we make donations because we want to know our gifts have an impact. That’s why we support IFAW.”
Celebrities Pitch in to Help Save Elephants

Much of the ivory from poached elephants ends up in China to be turned into trinkets for sale in markets and online. Since many Chinese consumers don’t realise that ivory comes from dead elephants, IFAW’s China office has been busy raising awareness about the cruelty of the ivory trade. And what better way to raise awareness than to have some of China’s best-known celebrities explain the issue.

As part of IFAW’s Ivory Demand Reduction campaign, new advertisements have been created to urge consumers all over China to stop buying ivory. Among the stars of the ads are one of the country’s top actresses, a famous pop music star, a TV anchor, a religious leader and a major business tycoon. Between them, they have tens of millions of followers on social media and command a great deal of attention and influence.

The advertisements appear on TV, online, and in train and bus stations across the country. The campaign is generating a lot of publicity and a wave of public support for ending the killing of elephants for ivory.

Another popular aspect of the campaign is an “augmented reality” presentation where people are able to interact with an elephant named “Laura” who is projected onto a screen.

Laura is travelling the country as an ambassador for elephants. When people interact with her, it helps make the issue of ivory much more real and personal, and creates compassion for elephants.

Spreading Compassion for Companion Animals

One of the iconic images of the devastating Sichuan earthquake of 2008 was IFAW vet Kati Loeffler rescuing a small dog from the rubble of a destroyed building. That dog survived and became a symbol for IFAW’s deep commitment to China’s companion animals.

One of our long-time partners is Lucky Cats, a network of volunteers who help rescue, foster and re-home abandoned companion animals. Each year, an average of 300 animals find loving new homes, and many more are spayed or neutered to help reduce overpopulation.

IFAW’s pet education programmes are particularly important in China as pet ownership is on the rise. Our work is making sure that humane and responsible pet ownership goes hand-in-hand with the popularity of pet ownership.

Promoting Harmony with Elephants

Yunnan Province is the last habitat for China’s remaining wild elephants – a population estimated at only 300 individuals. Unfortunately, the depletion of natural habitat caused by human activities means elephants sometimes raid farms and villages for food.

As a result, human-elephant conflict escalated. So IFAW stepped in to help map and design elephant “corridors” for elephants so they could travel through their habitat without coming into contact with humans. We also helped develop an elephant warning system so that the local people know when elephants are nearby.

In addition, we’re providing economic alternatives so that villagers don’t need to encroach into elephant habitat for their crops or wood for their fires and building. And finally, we’re educating rural communities about elephants and the rich biodiversity that surrounds them.

All of these efforts have greatly reduced human-elephant conflicts and improved local communities’ acceptance of elephants.

Spreading Compassion for Companion Animals
Around the World

We Never Rest for the Animals

With offices spanning the globe, IFAW is always working to protect, rescue and care for animals.

When our projects and offices in Europe, Africa and the Middle East are winding down for the day, our staff members and partners in the Americas are in full swing. And when their day is ending, our teams in Asia and Australia are getting ready to start working for the animals.

Brief news of IFAW’s recent activities and successes around the world

Here are some of the ways our teams in the Asia Pacific region are working to save animals:

1) Rescuing orphaned and endangered Amur (Siberian) tiger cubs, raising them, and releasing them back to the wild. Supporting snare removal teams in China to protect tigers when they cross the border.

2) Working to stop Japan’s commercial whaling.

3) Saving birds of prey through the Beijing Raptor Rescue Centre, and helping companion animals through supporting rescue organisations.

4) Working to protect elephants in Yunnan Province, and to encourage Chinese consumers to reject elephant ivory.

5) Rescuing orphaned elephants, bears and other wildlife in and around India’s Manas National Park.

6) IFAW’s Animal Rescue team has deployed to the Philippines and Indonesia several times after typhoons put animals in peril.

7) Working to protect whales off Australia’s coast and to rescue Australian wildlife from wildfires and floods.

8) Supporting whale disentanglement and stranding projects in Tonga.

9) Working to change Sri Lankan shipping routes to protect blue whales.

Feeding Penguin Chicks

As last year came to a close, 600 penguin chicks near Cape Town were in dire need of lifesaving food.

While a number of chicks are often abandoned by their parents when they moult and leave their colonies, last year saw the largest influx of baby penguins at the Southern African Foundation for the Conservation of Coastal Birds (SANCCOB) since 2006.

African penguin chicks are voraciously hungry and require a steady supply of sardines hand-fed to them. This put an immense strain on SANCCOB. Thankfully, our generous supporters came to our aid and we were able to provide an emergency grant of US$15,000 to help SANCCOB buy fish for their diet.

IFAW has supported SANCCOB, headquartered in Cape Town, since a huge oil spill threatened to destroy two of the most important African penguin colonies in 2000.

Freeing a Water Buffalo

When Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) rangers found a water buffalo stuck in the mud in the wetlands in Amboseli Park, they enlisted IFAW’s help to free it. The female buffalo had been trapped for days, with only its head visible in the sticky soil.

Fortunately, the Toyota Land Cruiser we donated to the KWS came equipped with a winch. The team drove up close to the muddy patch and affixed a rope to the base of the buffalo’s horns. It took a bit of a struggle and some digging around the animal to free it, but finally the team pulled the weakened buffalo out of the mud. A KWS researcher kept watch until she regained her strength.

This was a rewarding example of how IFAW-supplied vehicles and equipment save animals’ lives.
Keeping an Eye on Beluga Whales

IFAW Beluga Whales project in the White Sea studies and protects the whales’ nursery where the adult, new-born and young belugas meet and socialise in summer months. Age, sex, social behaviour and communications have been studied. Thanks to IFAW, new methods – remotely controlled “flying cameras” – allow researchers to see and register the whales, even under the water, without disturbing them.

Our observations demonstrated scientifically how the whales react to excess of human presence, which led to recommendations for responsible whale watching.

Together with the Russian Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment IFAW is working on having the Solovetsky Islands and surrounding waters declared a protected area, further safeguarding the beluga whales.

Outstanding Supporters

We’re grateful to our wonderful supporters around the world for standing by the animals and IFAW in 2015.

By renewing your membership, you’re helping us save so many animals from suffering. Your support ensures we can provide medicine and emergency surgeries to domestic animals injured during natural disasters … protect more elephants, rhinos and tigers from poachers … and give more cats and dogs a chance for happy, healthy lives.

All of us at IFAW extend a huge Thank You for your continued dedication.

Rhinos in Peril

Poaching of rhinoceros in South Africa in 2014 reached another tragic record when Minister of Environmental Affairs, Edna Molewa, announced in January 1215 rhinos lost their lives to poachers last year. This figure was 21 per cent high than the previous record, set in 2013 when 1004 rhinos were poached for their horns. The numbers of rhinos poached in South Africa has grown year on year since 2006 when 10 rhinos were killed. By far the greatest number of rhinos are killed in South Africa’s flagship Kruger National Park, where 827 rhinos were killed last year.

One Year Later, Another Typhoon Strikes

Almost one year to the date of Super Typhoon Haiyan, another typhoon, locally named Ruby, hit the Eastern Samar province affecting 2.7 million people.

Once again, the communities IFAW had worked in during the previous year were devastated. And IFAW rescuers again deployed to help surviving cats, dogs and backyard farm animals.

Following Typhoon Haiyan, we established a network called Animal Relief and Rehabilitation in the Philippines so local rescue groups would be ready for the next disaster. Group members activated days prior to Ruby, to allocate resources and assign roles to help the typhoon victims.

Thanks to our donors’ generosity, we were able to provide food and vaccinations to suffering animals.

A Proposal for Lions

In October, the US Fish and Wildlife Service proposed federal protection for the African lion under the Endangered Species Act. This proposal was the direct result of a petition authored by IFAW and a coalition of animal protection groups that was submitted to the US government in March 2011.

With less than 35,000 left in the wild, scientists believe the African lion could become extinct over most of its range unless strong measures are taken to protect it. The population is shrinking due to habitat loss, lack of prey, conflict with humans, and unsustainable trophy hunting.

While the proposal required 90 days for public comment – during which thousands of IFAW supporters spoke up for lions – we hope it will be enacted by the time you read this.

Protecting Whales in the Pacific

The Tongan island archipelago of Vava’u has become a leading whale watch destination. In order to help protect their valuable tourist attraction, IFAW recently helped fund a workshop on disentanglement and stranding techniques.

Specialist trainers from the International Whaling Commission and the Pacific University of Hawaii showed local rescuers how to safely remove life threatening fishing gear entanglements from whales, as well as how to manage a whale stranding. Participants practiced disentanglement on the water with custom designed gear. A disentanglement kit was left behind for rescuers to use and a newly established stranding network is standing by to assist whales in trouble in the Pacific Islands.

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Although chimps and humans are closely related, these endangered apes have suffered much at human hands. They face many threats. “Bush meat” has always been a primary food source in Central and West Africa, but urban prosperity and the exotic tastes of wealthy consumers have led to the commercialisation of the bush meat trade. More adult chimps are being killed and infant chimps are taken and sold as pets. Apes are also threatened by the destruction of their habitats.

IFAW helps chimps around the world. We provide care to chimpanzees orphaned by poachers and chimps retired from medical research laboratories. We provide emergency support to animal sanctuaries whenever conditions warrant our expertise and assistance.

In the past year alone, IFAW has provided food and medicines and other vital necessities to sanctuaries in crisis. The Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary and its chimps needed emergency aid as tourist monies vanished and the price of food skyrocketed as a result of the biggest Ebola outbreak in history. So IFAW stepped in to feed and care for the more than 100 chimpanzees that had been rescued from the bush meat trade or kept as illegal pets.

We also brought good news for the chimps at Chimp Haven in Louisiana. Last summer, Chimp Haven was the recipient of 100 chimpanzees retired from medical research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), nearly doubling its population. Until the sanctuary could catch up with its finances to meet the increased needs, IFAW helped with a grant to buy fruits, vegetables and primate chow for its residents who typically eat one ton of fruits and vegetables a month.

With the support of our donors, IFAW also provided food, vet care, medicine and vitamin supplements to assist the Ngamba Island Chimpanzee Sanctuary off the coast of Uganda. And when Jungle Friends Primate Sanctuary in Gainesville, Florida, took in seven capuchin monkeys who had been released from a research laboratory, we were able to help build a new habitat, including a monkey gym, sleeping cave and hammocks.

“IFAW aims to help animals in crisis situations where immediate intervention is necessary. Thanks to our supporters we are able to provide a helping hand, which will directly help animals—immediately.”

– Gail A’Brunzo, Wildlife Rescue Manager, IFAW Headquarters.

Chimpanzees are our closest living relatives, sharing more than 98 percent of our genes. They’re highly social animals, who care for their offspring for years and can live to be over 50 years of age.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Chimps and humans are believed to share a common ancestor who lived over four million years ago.
- Chimpanzees are great apes, not monkeys.
- They live in social communities.
- They are one of the few animals that use tools.
- Chimpanzees live in tropical rain forests, woodland savannas and grasslands across Africa and eat more than 250 different types of food.
- They are endangered in the wild.
Psssst... don’t be shy
We want to thank you

Every year, donations from IFAW supporters enable us to rescue and protect tens of thousands of animals. Some supporters show their deep commitment by leaving a gift to IFAW in their Will.

Many find these legacy gifts, or bequests, one of the easiest gifts to give as they don’t impact on their current financial situation. And all legacy gifts, whether large or small, enable us to do more to help the animals.

One in every six of the animals we save – cats, dogs, tigers, elephants, baby bears, koalas, whales and dolphins – is the direct result of legacy gifts.

We’re delighted to receive these gifts. We’re also saddened that so many of them come as a complete surprise to us and we don’t have the opportunity to express our thanks.

So, if you’re planning to include a gift to IFAW in your Will, please let us know. We’ll treat this with the respect and confidentiality you deserve, but we would like to thank you and let you know how important your gift is to our future plans.

To let us know you’ve included IFAW in your Will – or for more information – please contact Ronelle Petersen toll-free on (021) 701 8642, or by email at rpetersen@ifaw.org.

We’ll be delighted to hear from you.