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ELA

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Mrs. Daily

Illegal wildlife trading is a problem I would like to bring to your attention. Illegal wildlife trade can cause can diminish species populations and cause local or even global extinction.

Illegal wildlife trade is a perilous global phenomenon that poses a serious threat to biodiversity and ecosystems. Primarily driven by the demand for exotic pets, traditional medicine, and luxury goods, this illicit commerce has profound ecological implications. "The value of illegal trade has been estimated at between \$7 and \$23 billion per year, making wildlife crime one of the most lucrative illegal businesses, often run by sophisticated, international, and well-organized criminal networks seeking to exploit the high rewards and low risks of the trade."

(www.thegef.org) Targeting already endangered or vulnerable species, the removal of these animals from their natural habitats disrupts ecosystems and jeopardizes the delicate balance of flora and fauna. Furthermore, the trade's collateral damage extends to the potential spread of diseases, posing risks to both wildlife and human populations as zoonotic diseases find opportunities to cross species barriers. "The global movement and trafficking of animals and plants also expose actors along shipment routes to novel zoonotic diseases, which are transmitted from animals to humans." **(www.cbp.gov)**

Economically, illegal wildlife trade undermines conservation efforts and sustainable development. Wildlife crime is a big business. “Run by dangerous international networks, wildlife and animal parts are trafficked much like illegal drugs and arms.” (**www.worldwildlife.org**) The revenue generated from legal wildlife tourism and conservation initiatives pales in comparison to the lucrative returns of the black market. This not only diminishes resources available for conservation but also perpetuates a cycle of poverty in communities that depend on sustainable wildlife management. Beyond economic ramifications, the loss of biodiversity resulting from illegal trade diminishes the potential for scientific discoveries and innovations that could benefit society as a whole.

Ethically, the illegal wildlife trade raises significant concerns about animal welfare and cruelty. Many trafficked animals endure inhumane conditions during capture, transportation, and captivity. The suffering of these creatures, coupled with high mortality rates, reflects a blatant disregard for the well-being of individual animals. Moreover, the trade fosters a cycle of demand that perpetuates the exploitation of wildlife, pushing numerous species to the brink of extinction. Addressing the illegal wildlife trade necessitates a comprehensive, international approach that combines strengthened law enforcement, community

engagement, and public awareness to tackle the root causes and consequences of this pervasive issue.

A solution to this problem is to have more land for wildlife set out for animals and have protective walling around the land. Also strengthening Legislation and Law enforcement. Have stricter laws and have security around the land to ensure the safety of the animals.

Sources:

<https://www.worldwildlife.org>

<https://www.cbp.gov>

<https://www.thegef.org>