



DEDICATED TO THE WORLD'S CUSTODIANS OF WILD SPACES & WILDLIFE



Frontlines Dispatches From Around The World

North & South America.....	2
Europe	6
Africa	7
Asia.....	11

North & South America



An op-ed piece in the [Washington Post](#) by a political ‘odd couple’ on maintaining protections against the illegal wildlife trade is getting lots of attention in the United States. Democrat Hillary Clinton, former presidential candidate and secretary of state, and sepublican John Kasich, former governor of Ohio and a Trump critic despite sharing his political party affiliation, decried Trump funding cuts for conservation, and his administration’s threat to key legislation on wildlife priorities.

The International Conservation Caucus Foundation (ICCF) welcomed Representative Dave Joyce (R-OH) to the leadership of the ICC and looks forward to working with him towards advancing U.S. leadership in international conservation. Representative Joyce is a member of the House Appropriations Committee and the Ranking Member on the House Subcommittee on Interior, Environment. Dave Joyce joins Henry Cuellar (D-TX), Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE), and Betty McCollum (D-MN) as co-chair of the House International Conservation Caucus. Co-chairs of the Senate International Conservation Caucus include Richard Burr (R-NC), Rob Portman (R-OH), Tom Udall (D-NM), and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) ([Source](#)).

The U.S. Senate approved the Natural Resources Management Act (S. 47), which contains many longstanding priorities advocated by the Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation (CSF). The act passed with a bipartisan vote of 92 - 8. Introduced by senators Lisa Murkowski (AK)

and Maria Cantwell (WA), the comprehensive legislation includes numerous provisions that will improve access for sportsmen and women, and will provide resources for habitat conservation programs. Nearly 50 organizations submitted a support letter urging Senate Leadership to consider S. 47. Some of the priority sporting provisions in this bill include: Authorizing the transportation of archery equipment through National Park Service (NPS) Units; directing Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and U.S. Forest Service (USFS) lands to be open for hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting unless specifically closed; directing the NPS, BLM, USFS, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to annually identify lands where sporting related activities are permitted, but where access is currently unavailable or restricted; permanent reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund with 3% or \$15 million annually for the purpose of securing additional access for hunting, fishing, recreational shooting, and other outdoor related activities. CSC Vice-Chair Senator Joe Manchin said, *"This package enjoys the support of numerous stakeholder organizations across the political spectrum. For example, the National Wildlife Federation and the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation are two of its strongest and most dedicated advocates; and I thank them for their support ... as a hunter myself, and as Vice-Chair of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, I know how frustrated sportsmen's groups have been trying to get their bills passed the last few years."* ([Source](#)).

The Constitutional Court of Colombia ruled that sport hunting is incompatible with the Constitution's mandate to protect the environment. Magistrate Antonio Jose Lizarazo ruled on February 6th in favor of a suit filed by activist-lawyer Laura Santacoloma. She sought to have sport hunting outlawed as environmentally negative. The country's environment minister celebrated the ruling on Twitter. The Court's ruling will take effect one year from the ruling, so *that the authorities and individuals who currently have some kind of relationship with this practice can take the necessary measures to adapt to the ban*, judge Lizarazo said. ([Source](#))

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA), and Borderlands Research Institute at Sul Ross State University will host the WAFWA 13th Biennial Deer and Elk Workshop. The workshop will be held in Marfa, TX at Hotel Saint George from May 28–31, 2019. Information about the workshop, registration, travel plans, important contacts, and sponsorships can be found [here](#).

Rob Shaul of [Mountain Pursuit](#) urges the Mule Deer Foundation to reconsider its title sponsorship of The Western Hunting & Conservation Expo because of seminar presenter

Robby Denning. Denning owns www.Wescout4u.com which offers *Public Land Scouting Packages* for Wyoming, Idaho and Montana. These packages include specific animal locations, detailed mapping, camping locations, water, trailhead information, etc. Mr. Denning charges \$1 195 for his *Full Scouting Package* mostly marketed to non-resident hunters. In Western States, these packages are controversial, especially with resident hunters and professional, licensed outfitters. It is said that the information provided undercuts local professional outfitters and guides. Until recently (January 2019) Denning admitted on the *WeScout4u* website to aerial scouting to complete these packages. This reference has since been deleted. Aerial scouting activity is legal. Shaul argues using aircraft to scout for and locate big game animals significantly tips the scale of fairness far in favor of the hunter and is clearly unethical. The Boone & Crocket Club's [Hunt Fair Chase](#) initiative addresses the issue of legality and Fair Chase ethics head-on in the essay *Is Legal Always Ethical*. ([read Rob Shaul's full article](#)).

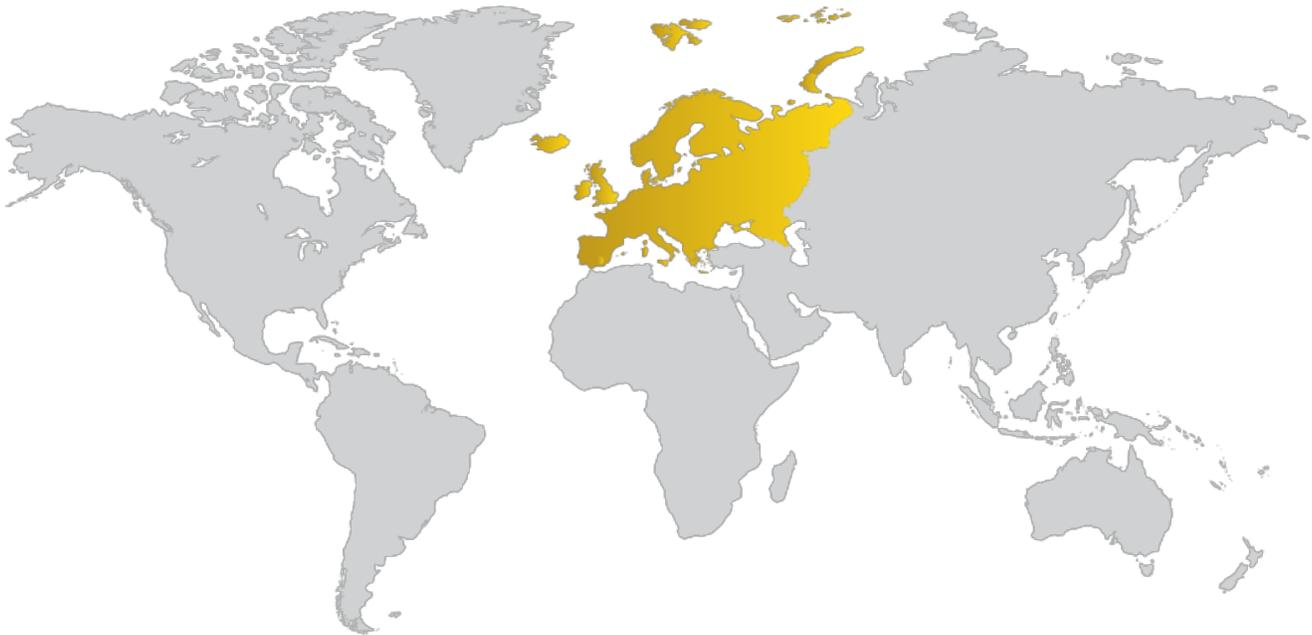
A bear poaching incident in April 2018 on Esther Island in Prince William Sound found its conclusion in court. Andrew Renner and his son Owen were convicted in a plea deal on multiple charges. Prosecutors said the men illegally shot the sleeping bear and its two cubs. They attempted a cover up, not realizing their actions had been captured on video by a game camera nearby. The men faced charges including unlawful take of a female bear with cubs, unlawful take of bear cubs, and the possession and transportation of illegally taken game. Assistant Attorney General Aaron Peterson told the court it was the *most egregious bear cub poaching case his office has ever seen*. Andrew Renner was convicted of eight counts and faces three months in prison, \$9,000 fine. Renner has forfeited property that was used in the crime and confiscated: a 22-foot Sea Sport ocean boat and trailer, a 2012 GMC Sierra pickup, two rifles, two handguns, two iPhones and two sets of backcountry skis. His hunting license has been revoked for 10 years. Owen Renner was convicted of four counts and sentenced to 30 days of suspended jail time. He will also be required to perform community service and take a hunter safety course; his hunting license has been suspended for two years. Each was ordered to pay \$1,800 in restitution ([Source](#)).

Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation (CSF) President Jeff Crane was recognized by Canada's Parliamentary Outdoor Caucus Co-Chair Bob Zimmer as an Honorary Member of the Canadian Caucus on February 12. Modeled after the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus (CSC) – the largest caucus in the U.S. Congress – the Parliamentary Outdoor Caucus shares the CSC's mission of protecting and advancing hunting, fishing, and conservation through policy.

The Parliamentary Outdoor Caucus is also one of the largest caucuses on Parliament Hill ([Source](#)). Congratulations from the Conservation Frontlines Team, well done!

The Montana Senate Fish and Game Committee held a hearing on HB 94. The bill, sponsored by Montana Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus Member Representative Zach Brown, would authorize the use of various incentives for landowners who participate in the state's *Block Management Program* to allow hunting access on their private property. Among the types of incentives that would be offered are direct payments for ...*general ranch maintenance, conservation efforts, weed control, fire protection, liability insurance, roads, fences, and parking area maintenance*. Factors used in determining the benefits available to landowners include: the number/type of species that can be hunted on the land in question, habitat quality, number of public hunting days that the landowner elects to provide, and the available access to adjacent public lands. The bill passed 90-7 in the Montana House of Representatives on January 24 ([Source](#)).

Europe



Parties of the German Bundestag asked the government to assist Tanzania in finding alternative ways of generating electricity without harming the Selous Game Reserve ecosystem. Members of the Bundestag noted during the debate that the 2,100 Megawatt hydropower project at Stiegler’s Gorge within the Reserve will put at risk the entire ecosystem of the Rufiji River ([Source](#)).

The European Federation for Hunting and Conservation (FACE), and the European Commission held a conference on *Preparing European Hunters to Eradicate African Swine Fever*. FACE President Mr. Torbjörn Larsson opened the conference and European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, Mr. Vytenis Andriukaitis acknowledged the extreme challenges linked to ASF. The meeting was attended by experts from the hunting community, scientists, the European Commission, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), national authorities as well as key stakeholders from EU farming and pig meat sectors ([Source](#)).

Wolf attacks on livestock in Germany increased by 66% in 2017 according to government statistics released in February. The number of killed or injured livestock – mostly sheep and goats – rose 55%, to 1,667. Official statistics say 73 wolf packs, 30 wolf pairs and three individuals have been sighted. Agriculture minister Julia Klöckner stated that these figures

support that Germany should legalize the removal of individual wolves. Some political parties, including Klöckner's center-right Christian Democrats, agree and have called for downgrading the protected status to allow wolves being hunted in certain situations ([Source](#)).

Africa



The Guassa area in the Central Highlands of Ethiopia is an excellent example of a dynamic Indigenous Community-Conserved Area (ICCA). IUCN's Global Protected Areas Program participated in the first regional meeting of the ICCA Consortium on the shores of the Bishoftu Guda Lake. During the event, the governance aspects of the Guassa conservation model rooted in the local Qero system were presented, and a field trip to visit the site was organized. [Read more.](#)

In Madagascar, illegal gold mining has been recognized as a priority threat to Ranomafana National Park, and threatens the country's conservation agenda. Satellite images uncovered large forest cover changes in the core of the park. The Ranomena wetland is completely devastated over 50 ha. Source: [Gold is not green: artisanal gold mining threatens Ranomafana National Park's biodiversity.](#)

About two hundred reintroduced scimitar-horned oryx wander Chad's Ouadi Rimé-Ouadi Achim Wildlife Reserve in search of pasture and water. Many pastoralists witness their forests of horns on a regular basis and have always provided great help to the Sahara Conservation Fund's project. Their goodwill is the evidence that the local communities are very happy with their new neighbors, although there are ecological and social pressures on the pastoralists and their way of life. Livestock numbers are increasing rapidly, provoking the loss of productive habitats and increasing competition with wildlife. The Sahara Conservation Fund tries ensuring the growing population of scimitar-horned oryx thrives, and there are accompanying benefits for the remnant dama gazelle population. If this can be done, then the prospects of returning addax, releasing more dama and reintroducing ostriches is an increasingly attractive and feasible prospect. The Ouadi Rime / Ouadi Achim Wildlife Reserve can then become a model of effective resource-sharing between different interests in an arid environment ([Source](#) and check www.saharaconservation.org)

The desert lions within Namibia's Skeleton Coast region are the only ones known to target marine life. Among the creatures they have been recorded eating are fur seals, flamingos and cormorants. Desert lions became locally extinct in 1990 due to persecution from livestock farmers. However, by 1997, a pride returned to the area and numbers have been increasing ever since. The area now sustains approximately 130-150 lions. Flip Stander said in the [Namibian Journal of Environment](#), that he had observed lions foraging in intertidal areas; so it is possible their diet could expand to other marine life such as shellfish, crabs and sea turtles.

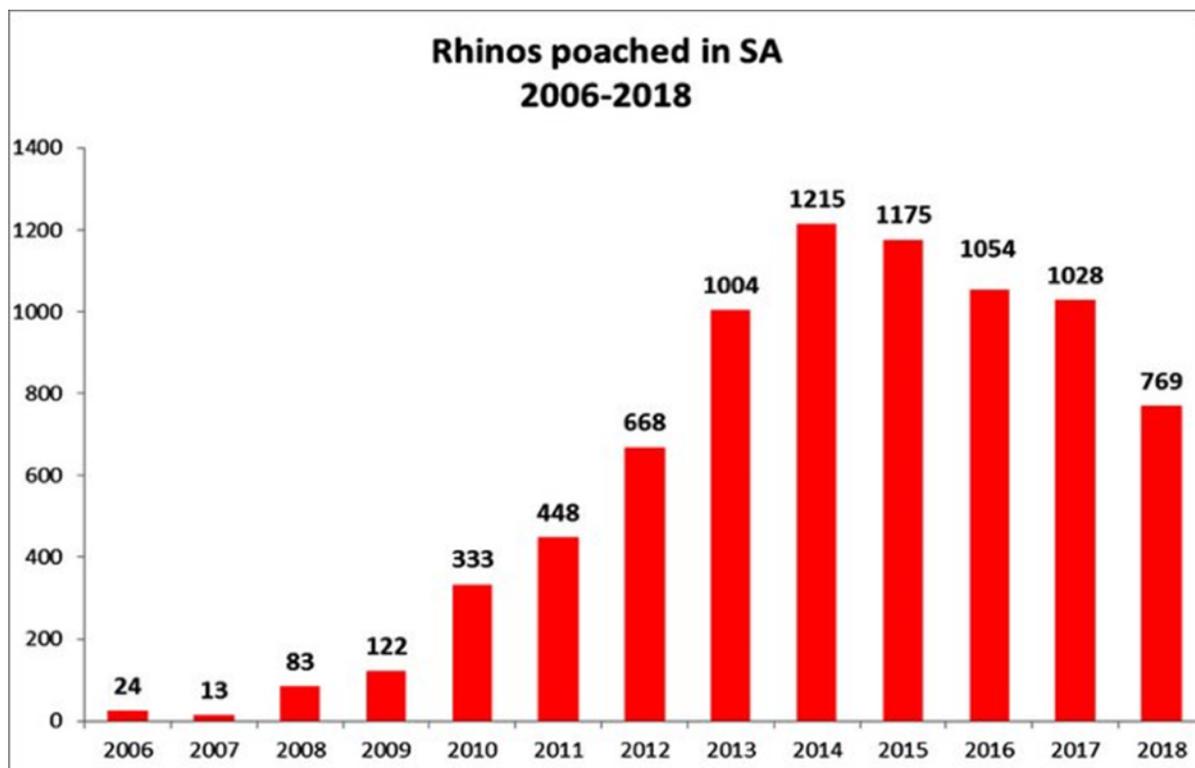
SCI Foundation is working with Namibia Professional Hunting Association (NAPHA) to conduct the first comprehensive leopard census since 2011. The Namibia Leopard Census Project will utilize 50 dual camera trap locations. 400 questionnaires filled in by farmers will help researchers gather information on carnivore presence and distribution, livestock and game losses, and actions taken. The project aims to provide non-partisan science to the Namibian Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET), NAPHA, and Namibians who all care about leopards. The goal is to share information with landowners and other stakeholders, and utilize the data to provide recommendations for leopard hunting ([SCIF](#)).

2018 was a great year for FZS Zambia's North Luangwa Conservation Program! For the first time in many years FZS recorded zero poached elephants inside the Park and over 50% reduction of elephant poaching in the adjoining game management areas (GMAs) over an area

of 22,000 km². Listen to Ed Sayer from FZS in the video *North Luangwa Conservation Program* – download it in the [Publications from our Friends section](#) on our website (Frankfurt Zoological Society).

The Tanzanian Parliament approved the upgrading of five game reserves to national parks bringing to 22 the total number of national parks managed by the Tanzania National Parks Authority (TANAPA). The lawmakers unanimously approved the upgrading of Biharamuro, Burigi, Kimisi, Ibanda and Rumanyika game reserves to national parks. TANAPA manages the nation's 17 national parks, but does not have a mandate over the game reserves such as the Selous Game Reserve (managed by Tanzania Wildlife Management Authority) and the Ngorongoro Conservation Area (managed by the Ngorongoro Conservation Authority) ([Source](#)).

The number of rhinos killed by poachers plunged by 25 percent in 2018 said South Africa's Minister of Environmental Affairs Nomvula Mokonyane in a statement. Although 769 poached rhinos are still too many dead rhinos, last year was the third consecutive year of poaching decline and the first time since 2012 that less than 1,000 of the animals were killed illegally ([Source](#))



Researchers from Chester Zoo released rare footage of giant pangolin (*Smutsia gigantea*) captured by 70 motion-sensor trail cameras installed at Uganda's Ziwa sanctuary. Sam Mwandha, the executive director of the Uganda Wildlife Authority, hailed the rare glimpses of giant pangolin as *very exciting* and stressed the need to *protect and conserve this highly threatened species for future generations* ([Source](#)).

Pedro vaz Pinto reports from Angola's Luando Reserve that a poaching team had crossed the Luando River in a remote location, close to where the reserve's largest giant sable herd was located. Six rangers rushed to the area, intercepted the poaching team and detained three poachers; another three got away. One firearm, ammunition and three motor bikes were confiscated. The poachers had various animal parts and the skin of a giant sable female in their possession. They confessed killing the giant sable the previous weekend; the smoked meat had already been sold at local markets in Bié province. Pedro's team worked in close collaboration with provincial authorities, government, police and military to make sure the poachers would receive exemplary punishment. However, the presiding judge ruled that the poachers be released upon paying fine of AKZ 250,000 (less than US \$250) per person. The ruling blatantly ignored that the fine for killing Angola's national symbol had recently been set at AKZ 22 million. The poachers got away paying 1%, because the judge apparently took pity (Source – pers. comm P. vaz Pinto). Have a look at Pedro's amazing photographs from Luando and Cagandala at <https://photos.app.goo.gl/vFMgziEbUhWDZwoq7>

Asia



IUCN and the Saudi Wildlife Authority (SWA) have embarked on a partnership to sustain a transformative agenda for nature conservation in the Arabian country. A new 5-year program will see two-way collaboration on biodiversity protection and protected areas management that will bring Saudi experience to the international conservation community. [Read more](#)

Reporting on Kashmir and Astore markhor hunting during the 2018/2019 season in Pakistan is mostly sensationalist and geared towards raising indignation against “*foreigners paying huge sums to kill protected animals*” – another way to fostering social envy. [Fox News](#) and [The Washington Post](#) re-published an article from Pakistani [Dawn News](#) (... [The Hill](#), [The Salt Lake City Tribune](#), [SFGate](#) and many others repeated the WP article). Whilst the articles mention that the proceeds of the hunt are going towards the local village councils, the wording used by the authors brought anti-trophy hunting emotions to the boil. Phrases like ... *hunting down*, ... [the hunter] *smiling behind the slaughtered goat*, ... *the rarest wildlife species in the region, if not the whole world*, ... *the story drew immediate expressions of sorrow and indignation on social media* {in Pakistan}, *why is there no legal ban on hunting markhor* [the] *official national animal*, etc. don't contribute towards factual reporting, and the constant reference to ‘ultra-rich foreigners’ stoke social envy. [MarketWatch LA](#) showed more even-handedness and concluded with “*Green Global Travel hails the comeback of the markhor as one of the world's great but little known*

conservation success stories.” [Der Spiegel](#) showed *indignation* in Germany, and most likely other media around the world sang to the same song sheet. By far the most balanced report came from [NZZ](#) in Switzerland.

There is a factual side to the story of markhor conservation and hunting in Pakistan. Conservation Frontlines will bring you these facts in the April issue. We will also distribute this article to the media which ran the distorted *Dawn News* article. **Make sure that you are a [current subscriber to the Conservation Frontlines Newsroom](#) to receive the true story of markhor hunting and conservation in Pakistan in your inbox.**

Hong Kong customs seized a record 40 kg of rhino horn worth around US\$1 million. The consignment was *en route* from Johannesburg to Vietnam. This latest seizure came less than one month after HK Customs bust a massive smuggling operation from Africa, seizing a record quantity of pangolin scales, along with more than 1,000 ivory tusks ([Source](#)).



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