

Elephant Ivory Trade-Related Timeline with Relevance to the United States

- **1973:** The **Endangered Species Act (ESA)** is passed in the U.S.
 - This act provides a legal framework for protecting threatened and endangered species both domestically and internationally.
- **1975:** The **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)** goes into effect. The Asian elephant is listed on Appendix I, banning its international commercial trade.
- **1976:** The Asian elephant is listed as endangered under the ESA in the U.S.
- **1978:** The African elephant is listed as "threatened" under the ESA, but with a special rule that allows some trade under a permitting system.
- **1989:** The **African Elephant Conservation Act (AECA)** is passed in the U.S., banning the import of African elephant ivory for commercial purposes.
 - Later that year, CITES lists the African elephant on **Appendix I**, effectively banning international commercial trade in African elephant ivory. This CITES ban became effective on January 20, 1990.
- **2013:** The Obama Administration issues an **Executive Order on Combating Wildlife Trafficking**, creating a task force and a national strategy to address the issue.
- **2014:** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) begins the process of implementing new regulations to tighten the ban on commercial ivory trade.

- **2016:** The USFWS completes a rulemaking process to institute a **near-total ban on the domestic commercial trade of African elephant ivory.**

- This new federal rule, which went into effect on July 6, 2016, severely restricted the import, export, and interstate sales of African elephant ivory. It provided limited exceptions for bona fide antiques and items with very small amounts of ivory.
- Several U.S. states, including New York and New Jersey, had already implemented their own, often stricter, statewide bans on ivory trade.

- **2017:** China, a major global ivory market, closes its legal domestic ivory market at the end of the year, a move encouraged by the U.S. and conservation groups.

- **2024:** The USFWS amends the 4(d) rule for the African elephant under the ESA to further ensure that any imports of live elephants contribute to the conservation of the species in the wild.