

# Kenya burns ivory to stop poaching



**The Kenyan President, Mwai Kibaki has ordered to set tons of ivory on fire in an attempt to stop poaching and fight "criminal networks."**

Kibaki light the tall pyre of five tons of ivory worth USD16m during a ceremony held in Kenya's eastern region of Munyani, burning 335 tusks and more than 40,000 ivory carvings, the state-funded BBC reported.

"We cannot afford to sit back and allow criminal networks to destroy our common future," said Mr. Kibaki.

"Through the burning of contraband ivory, therefore, we are sending a clear message to poachers and illegal traders in wildlife about our collective resolve to fight this crime in our region and beyond."

The ivory was seized in Singapore and sent to Kenya where DNA tests showed it came from Malawi and Tanzania.

The ivory-burning ceremony comes after an agreement in May by Malawi, Tanzania and Kenya who decided to end wildlife smuggling through strengthening law enforcement efforts.

The ivory set ablaze was only 10% of Kenya's stockpile and the burning was the first

among the three countries.

Kenya burnt its own stockpile of seized ivory in 1989 and Zambia followed by burning tusks three years later.

Africa has nearly 500,000 elephants, but the World Wildlife Federation (WWF) has warned that their lives are in danger.

"We share the view of most experts that illegal or poorly regulated domestic ivory markets in some countries - Thailand, Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of Congo, in particular - are the main drivers of this increased elephant poaching," the WWF says. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (Cites) banned commercial ivory trade in 1989.