

Project Update: December 2012

As our team suspected, we have detected quite a lot of elephant ivory in Japan. It has been quite interesting doing this investigation in Japan as we have found out many interesting and unusual items made of elephant ivory for sale. We have learned a lot about the different cuts of elephant ivory used for different type of specimens, which we didn't know about it until we starting doing this investigation. Even our Japanese colleagues have been quite surprised at what they have been finding in their own country.

In India, we have been searching for classified ads in Bengali, Hindi, Punjabi and English websites. We have found quite large amounts of ivory there but not too many ads. Because of this reason, we started to research South Africa which has provided us with hundreds of advertisements and ivory specimens so far.

As we mentioned before, the Animal Conservation and Welfare Foundation of Poland (ACWF) joined efforts for this research, allowing us to investigate more countries.

While researching for internet ads of elephant ivory in Morocco in Arabic (but also in Spanish and English), we got some links to ads of elephant ivory in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, which our colleagues from the ACWF have been researching.

Unfortunately, for investigating the e-trade of ivory in China, the people that were ready to help with the investigation, they all encountered a major problem and that is that they could not read the Simplified Chinese version of the classified ads, as they are Chinese people living abroad that speak and read in the traditional Cantonese or Mandarin languages. We even looked for help in Hong Kong with some animal conservation colleagues without success.

In all the countries that we have been researching we have found elephant ivory from different origins and with diverse uses according to the traditions of each country.

Because we started some months later than the original timeline, we are currently completing our last monitoring of the e-trade on all the researched countries and we will start to analyse all the data very soon.

The results of this investigation will be for sure quite interesting and varied, and our teams are really looking forward for us to start to analyse all the data to get the outcomes that we will use to write the Report.

