

Responsibility to protect? Ecocide, interventionism and saving biodiversity

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This paper poses a question: what are the implications of extending the principles of interventionism to the non-human world? In theoretical terms, Eckersley (2007) asks whether the international community should be concerned about the massacres perpetrated against critically endangered species? Should the international community stand by and allow the deliberate massacre of the last populations of mountain gorillas for example? (Eckersley, 2007: 293). This paper critically assesses these arguments, it takes up and further develops the debate. It does so through an analysis of the rising discursive and material 'war for biodiversity' that is rapidly reconfiguring the practice of conservation on the ground. current calls for a war to save certain high profile species draw on debates around Just War Theory, humanitarian intervention, R2P and doctrine of pre-emption (see Duffield, 2007; MacFarlane, Thielking and Weiss, 2004; Fassin and Pandolfi, 2010; Barnett and Weiss, 2011; Barnett, 2011; Wheeler, 200; Bellamy, 2010; Ignatieff, 2004; Elshain, 2001, 2004). These principles have proved very complex to operationalise in defence of human communities; yet they seem to be more readily adopted in defence of certain species of wildlife (notably elephants and rhinos). There is very little research on the wider theoretical implications of these shifts. This paper seeks to understand these dynamics by debating the concept of ecocide in relation to interventionism.

Introduction

This paper offers a critical analysis of the growing war for biodiversity across sub-Saharan Africa. Political ecologists have already produced an interesting and substantial analysis of the relationships between conservation, violence and conflict (Peluso, 1992; Peluso and Watts (eds) 2001; Peluso and Vandergeest, 2011; Lunstrum, 2014; Neumann, 1998, 2004; Fairhead, 2001; Ybarra, 2012; Pearson, 2012, amongst others). However, current shifts in conservation mean these important debates need further development, and there is much we can learn by engaging more fully with conceptual debates from the discipline of international relations. This allows us to strengthen the 'political' dimensions of a political ecology of the growing war for biodiversity. This paper examines the ways that the rising discursive and material war for biodiversity draws on contemporary understandings of global scale military intervention in conflict regions. It explores a new phase of conservation that is combining with concerns about with global security, such that there has been a shift from fortress conservation to 'war by conservation' in discursive and material terms. This is not just a 'back to the barriers' or fortress conservation movement, which implies a retreat behind the fences of heavily defended protected areas. This is an 'offensive position' in certain locations whereby conservation is the aggressor, not simply the defender. I offer an analysis of war by conservation: a proactive, interventionist militarized response that is spatially amorphous extends well beyond protected areas and into the land and communities surrounding them.

This shift in conservation strategies is characterised by invocation of core themes that are more commonly found in debates about global security. This means that the arguments for military intervention which have become so difficult and controversial to deploy in conflicts around the world, have become routinized and normalised in arguments and practices around the defence of the 'non-human' nature.¹ It is difficult to pinpoint the moment when the war for biodiversity began, but it is clear that the framing of discussions about poachers has become increasingly militarized and violent in the last 3-5 years due to the rises in poaching— promoting a definition of poachers as terrorists. As a result, it has become more possible to consider and implement more interventionist, forceful and violent responses to any perceived or actual threat to certain iconic species. This is a step change from the arguments elegantly proposed by Neumann (2004), who analyzed the ways that poorer communities in Sub-Saharan Africa were discursively dehumanised, using racial and colonial

¹ There is a substantial debate around the use of the term 'non-human nature'; it would be useful to debate the approaches of Whatmore, Braun, Lorimer and others in relation to this case but it is beyond the scope of this article. Therefore I use non-human nature throughout while recognising that it is an imperfect and contested term.

stereotypes. This new phase differs because it relies and promotes the idea of *poacher-as-terrorist*, to justify the use of covert surveillance, use of remote controlled drones, shoot-to-kill, and a range of other counter-insurgency techniques; this then pushes forward the agenda of the global war on terror in conceptual and material ways, such that national security strategies are reconfigured via conservation activity to intersect with, deepen and extend global security agendas. This is evident in recent high profile, but poorly evidenced, claims from conservation NGOs that ivory trafficking is funding and supporting Al Shabaab in Somalia via poaching in Kenya. Such claims have caught the attention of the Governments of the UK and USA, philanthropic foundations, as well as the private sector. These shifts deserve greater critical analysis, therefore this paper firstly examines the relevant debates from international relations, especially those related to military intervention and Just War Theory; secondly, I sketch out the recent redefinition of poachers as terrorists; and finally I offer an analysis of how this is shifting practice from fortress conservation to war by conservation. The purpose is to explore the theoretical and evidential bases of the ways narratives around poaching are being reconfigured to combine with, deepen and extend global security concerns. The paper also demonstrates how those narratives have material effects in terms of the changing conduct of anti-poaching as part of a wider anti-terrorism strategy.

Interventionism and the War for Biodiversity

Agarwal and Redford argue that there is no easy way for conservation professionals and organizations to defend conservation, morally or politically, when it leads to forcible displacement of humans from areas that are to be protected, even if it is to stave off extinction of several species (Agarwal and Redford, 2009:8). But current policies pose something even more forceful than displacement or fortress conservation, they are constitutive of a more proactive and extensive approach of *war by conservation*. This shift has been facilitated by clear rises in poaching and trafficking of animal products, especially of elephants and rhinos in Sub-Saharan Africa. Data from the Monitoring Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE)² database indicates that rates of illegal killing of elephants across Africa rose from 0.6 - 2.1 % of the total population in 2005, to 3.5 -11.7% in 2011; such continent-wide figures hide important regional differences, with the largest increases in poaching in Central and West Africa, where forest elephant populations are estimated to be relatively small when compared with savannah populations in Eastern and Southern Africa (CITES, 2012: 5). Rhinos are facing a similar problem, 262 were poached in 2008, but this increased to 745 in 2012 (Standley and Emslie, 2013: 6). The IUCN AfRSG report to the CITES Conference of Parties (CoP) 15, indicated that during 2005-2009, the number of rhino deaths due to snaring had declined, while deaths as a result of gunshot increased, with greater use of AK47 assault rifles, 303 calibre rifles, and heavier calibre arms such as 375s and 458s (Milliken, Emslie and Talukdar, 2009: 4; for a broader discussion see Ayling, 2013). Large scale ivory seizures increased from 4,742kgs in 2005 to 24,300kgs in 2011 (CITES, 2012: 17; also see Wittemyer et al. 2014). The drivers behind such rises in poaching and trafficking are complex and wide ranging, but a key factor has been the rise in wealth in existing consumer states (such as China in the case of ivory) and a mix of rising wealth and shifting cultural norms in new markets (as in the case of rhino horn consumption in Vietnam) (for further discussion see TRAFFIC, 2008; Shaw and Milliken, 2012). While such increases may reflect better detection rates, conservation professionals also point to seizures as evidence of increased rates of poaching. The rise in actual and perceived poaching by armed groups in Sub-Saharan Africa has led to calls from states and conservation NGOs for a more aggressive approach to anti-poaching by state conservation agencies, private sector wildlife managers and conservation NGOs alike. It is worth examining the theoretical foundations of such arguments in more detail.

In theoretical terms, Eckersley (2007) engages with the questions that confront conservation organizations, she asks whether the international community should also be concerned about the massacres perpetrated against critically endangered species? Should the international community stand by and allow the deliberate massacre of the last populations of mountain gorillas for example? Eckersley, 2007: 293). She debates the idea of ecological intervention and the need for an international environmental court to deal with crimes of ecocide. This paper takes up that debate, while Eckersley opens her paper with a set of philosophical questions, it does not engage with conservation practices on the ground. As Humphreys and Smith put it, invoking notions of force to protect the environment, especially wildlife, is intuitively unacceptable for many (Humphreys and Smith, 2012: 121). If we accept that prohibitions against ecocide constitute legal duties then intervention to prevent these crimes by a UN backed force can be defended as a just cause (Eckersley, 2007: 311) and there is a moral case to be made. With the end of the Cold War and the

² MIKE Database <http://www.cites.org/eng/prog/mike/index.php>. (accessed 13.09.14)

onset of globalisation, the post-1989 environment earned the tag of 'New World Order', characterised by the increasing, but uneven, use of global scale humanitarian and military intervention on conflicts and to bring about 'regime change' in states, most notably in Iraq, Somalia, Afghanistan and former Yugoslavia. It was also (somewhat paradoxically) marked by lack of global intervention during the Rwandan genocide, and later in Darfur, thereby eroding confidence in the UN system and producing clear criticism of the New World Order (de Waal, 2007). In more general terms, the shift towards new forms of global interventionism was facilitated by the erosion of principles of national sovereignty and territoriality in the wake of a seemingly more connected and globalised world (Duffield, 2007; Eckersley, 2007: 312; MacFarlane, Thielking and Weiss, 2004; De Waal, 2007). Fassin and Pandolfi (2010) argue that the new era of interventionism has blurred the boundaries between military action, moral and political imperatives, and between ideas of legitimacy and legality (Barnett and Weiss, 2011; Weiss, 2005; Barnett, 2011). Duffield (2007) refers to this as the 'security-development' nexus which sees underdevelopment as inherently dangerous. In order to explore these themes further, it is important first to analyze the broader debates on the changing nature of war in the global system, which are used to normalise the use of force, paving the way for war by conservation.

Intervention, Just War and Responsibility to Protect

The war for biodiversity draws heavily on notions of a Just War, that protection of wildlife is an important, ethical and 'right' thing to do. It is not possible here to offer a full critical analysis of the very large body of literature on Just War Theory, however, it is useful to offer some brief indicators of the ways that war by conservation echoes concepts that are more usually deployed in justifications for global scale military intervention. This enhances our current understandings, of the relationships between conflict and conservation, because here I aim to draw out the ways that the war for biodiversity normalises contemporary thinking around interventionism and use of 'force' in defence of non-human nature.

In brief, proponents of Just War Theory argue that a war is just if it satisfies the conditions of the *jus ad bellum*: just cause, last resort, right intention, reasonable prospect of success leading to a just peace and right authority. However, states that go to war whether for just or unjust reasons must also meet the requirement of the *jus in bello*. This establishes the absolute and overriding constraint that states are not permitted to deliberately harm the innocent (we might also add *jus post bello*, the notion of 'justice after war', linked to the idea of post conflict reconstruction and addressing the issues of violent abuses, although conservation organizations have yet to engage with this argument (Wheeler, 2002: 206-209; also see Bellamy, 2010; Bellamy and Williams, 2012; Ignatieff, 2004; Barnett, 2011; Barnett and Weiss, 2011; Cochrane, 2008). Elshtain argues that Just War Theory appeals to notions of compassion and of doing the right thing, while acknowledging the tragedy of certain situations in which there is a right thing to do, but no prudent or decent way to do it (Elshtain, 2001; Elshtain, 2004; Zehfuss, 2012); in essence there is no clear cut moral picture and deaths of innocents are foreseeable (Wheeler, 2002: 218). This draws on an Augustinian tradition that there will never be a perfect standard of justice of fairness by which to adjudicate questions of war, violence and intervention (Elshtain, 2001; Wheeler, 2002). As this paper shows, it is possible to trace these arguments in justifications of the use of force, and the possibility (and actuality) of deaths in the war by conservation. They resonate with and even magnify the idea that deciding not to take up arms *must* be weighed against the moral consequences of not doing so. The dilemma is framed as doing nothing and allowing innocents to die or taking actions that will knowingly kill others in the name of achieving a greater good. Furthermore, the claims around 'humanitarian' wars and 'just' wars waged since end of Cold War revolve around justified, and justifiable, violence by legitimate actors (states) against groups redefined as 'illegitimate' and as 'threats': terrorists, rebel groups, dictatorial regimes and criminal networks. This is reflected in the ways that security, military action and humanitarian intervention have become closely inter-twined in the post-Cold War world.

Criticisms of this interventionist approach, especially following the failure to intervene in the Rwandan genocide (1994), led some to call for a shift from 'right to intervene' to 'responsibility to protect'; this focused on the idea that if the state is unwilling or unable to protect its citizens, then the international community should intervene (Evans and Sahnoun, 2002; MacFarlane, Thielking and Weiss, 2004; Evans, 2008: 284; O'Connell, 2010; Boutros-Ghali, 1992; Brahimi, 2000). This marked a discursive and material shift in approach from *intervention* to *protection*, although its implementation remained (and remains) patchy (Evans, 2008: 285). By the mid-2000s this had become a stated global policy via the United Nations system. Responsibility To Protect (RtoP/R2P) was developed in 2001 by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty. It was adopted at the 2005 UN World Summit, and UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon (International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, 2001; Evans, 2008: 286). It has been the subject of some

controversy, with critics suggesting it is a dangerous and neo-imperialist doctrine; despite a failure to agree on its operationalization it has remained an important prism for framing debates around international intervention (Bellamy, 2010; Bellamy and Williams, 2011; MacFarlane, Thielking and Weiss, 2004: 977-979; Evans, 2008: 290-293; Pattison, 2008, 2010; O'Connell, 2010; Tharkur, 2006a, 2006b). Feinstein and Slaughter argue that the international community has a 'Duty to Prevent', that is the use of force in response to the development of Weapons of Mass Destruction (Feinstein and Slaughter, 2004: 83; MacFarlane, Thielking and Weiss, 2004: 988; De Waal, 2007; Weiss, 2005; O'Connell, 2010). There is a clear link here to the politics of pre-emption – a central pillar of US security strategy since the 1990s. As De Goede argues the appropriation of uncertainty as a basis for action in security policy closely resembles the 'precautionary principle' in environmental politics which aims to grapple with the (scientific) uncertainty and the risk of irreversible damage (De Goede, 2008; Freedman, 2003; Doyle, 2008).

The proponents of R2P have faced significant challenges in terms of turning a policy idea into practical actions in reaction to crises (such as Darfur); in contrast, the principle of protection via the use of deadly force has become normalised in relation to certain species of wildlife in theoretical, discursive and material ways. The principles that are so difficult to operationalise in the case of protecting people, have been easier to implement in relation to non-human nature (in this case wildlife) but this holds significant and serious implications for those people defined as the enemy of certain wildlife populations.

Taking Just War, interventionism and R2P seriously means we have to raise questions about the use and abuse of justifications for intervention; noble aims can too easily become a cover for troubling and often ineffective means (Elshtain, 2001: 25). Drawing on Elstain's analysis, war by conservation is presented as a Just War, waged with good intention, in line with doctrine of pre-emption and with the aim of securing a just cause: saving threatened species that are a central part of the world's natural heritage. An important part of the development of the idea of a Just War around wildlife protection is the ways that animals are elevated to the status of threatened global natural heritage which must be defended for the greater good. This is discussed further below.

Political Ecology, violence and conservation

In this paper I aim to demonstrate how the growing war for biodiversity resonates with wider global debates around intervention in a post-Cold War era. As a result of this certain ideas about a more forceful response have become accepted and acceptable, deemed as a common sense approach. In short, they constitute a hegemonic discourse. To date a small number of political ecologists have provided important critical analyzes of the linkages between violence and conservation. As Neumann notes, war is a common model for biodiversity protection in Africa, where protected areas become spaces of violence in which human rights abuses and use of deadly violence against humans in defence of wildlife have become normalised (Neumann, 2004: 813; Peluso and Vandergeest, 2011; White, 2014). For Neumann this is explained via a deep seated fear of the poor and their claims on resources, tapping in to the Malthusian interpretations of environmental security which encourage conservation agencies to view poor people as combatants (Neumann, 2004: 816-822).

Appeals to protect and save natural or national heritage are also frequently overlain with the argument that states have a moral obligation to protect key wildlife populations. While appeals to natural heritage and iconic species can be traced to the colonial period (especially in the British Empire, see MacKenzie, 1988), this current phase differs; it relies on the idea that securing natural heritage will simultaneously achieve national security objectives, and more critically global security. In their review of the political ecologies of war and forests, Peluso and Vandergeest strongly argue that from the 1950s to the 1970s nature was remade in relation to nation-states, particularly via counter insurgency operations; the purpose of the drawing in forests as sites of counter-insurgency activity and nation-building was to extend and deepen state power at a time when the reach of centrally focused states was limited (Peluso and Vandergeest, 2011: 587; also see Dunn, 2009; and for a wider discussion of territorialization see Brenner and Elden, 2009; and Elden, 2009). We could make the same argument about war by conservation, that nature (wildlife) is remade to extend and deepen the powers of those engaged in the war against terror in areas where they currently have limited reach. Such initiatives can also neatly intersect with state objectives to quell, control or displace 'unruly' populations, or groups operating across international borders via counter insurgency operations, in which biodiversity conservation can play a central and legitimating role, thus deepening and extending state power (Ybarra, 2012: 497-498; also see Peluso, 1992; Neumann, 1998; Le Billon, 2001, 2008; Bocarejo and Ojeda, in this issue). A further iteration of this argument is that provision of adequate wildlife protection can contribute to wider regional security, because access to wildlife products can be used to fund and perpetuate conflicts; and that greater efforts at wildlife protection

can protect an important asset for post conflict reconstruction via the development of a viable tourism industry (Rotshuizen and Smith, 2013).

Poacher as Terrorist

Here it is useful to examine in detail how poachers are being redefined not just national or regional security threats but as a critical global security threat, providing a legitimating base for arguments around a more forceful approach to conservation. In particular the arguments around Just War, Responsibility To Protect and pre-emption that are used as part of a discursive legitimating context for the war on terror are reflected in and extended by the current discursive re-coding of poachers as terrorists for certain areas of global geo-strategic interest. Here I indicate how one very small 'snippet' of evidence provided by Elephant Action League in 2012 has been taken up, repeated and extended by a range of global actors, such that it has been used to shape global level policy shifts by the US and UK Governments since 2013, precisely because it mirrors and supports their existing fears about the impact of Al-Shabaab on wider security in the region and globally. The date of 2013 is significant, because the narrative of *poachers as terrorists* gained traction following the Westgate Mall attack in Nairobi on 21-24 September 2013. It is rare that we are able to trace the inception, evolution and extension of a narrative, but it is possible in this case.

Poachers are being discursively reconfigured as a global security threat by a complex network of NGOs, national governments, international organizations and private companies, as discussed below. The claims have been amplified and extended by various news media. However, these debates do not reflect the complex definitions of different kinds of poachers, including key differences between commercial and subsistence poachers (for more discussion see Duffy, 2014; Jacoby, 2003; Duffy and St. John, 2013). Nor do they reflect the historical production of poaching as a crime by the criminalisation of African hunting methods by successive colonial administrations (MacKenzie, 1988; Neumann, 2003), and the well documented involvement of armies in poaching in the 1970s and 1980s in Southern Africa by the South African Defence Force, which traded in ivory, rhino horn, hardwoods and drugs to fund its campaigns in South West Africa (now Namibia), Angola and Mozambique as documented by the 1995 Kumleben Commission (Reeve and Ellis, 1995; Ellis, 1994; Kumleben, 1996).

From approximately 2007 onwards there has been a growing concern about the relationships between poaching, wildlife trafficking and regional or global security. For example, the International Consortium for Combatting Wildlife Crime (ICWC) was established in 2010 in recognition of the need to tackle the growing influence on transnational organized crime in trafficking of endangered species. It was an initiative of Interpol, CITES, the World Bank, The World Customs Union and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, and the purpose was to provide co-ordinated support to national wildlife law enforcement agencies, as well as regional networks; so for example ICWC provided specialised training for national agencies in 2013.³ It is clear that major donors are taking this issue seriously and funding has been made available for anti-poaching and anti-trafficking initiatives in areas of geo-strategic interest (see Lawson and Vines, 2014). Linking poaching to global terrorism has also shaped arguments about appropriate responses. The coding of poachers as terrorists creates the context in which conservation NGOs, states and the private sector can call for more forceful approaches, using the same security oriented arguments deployed in justifications for interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq. Indeed this theme was evident at the conference 'International Wildlife Trafficking: Solutions to a Global Crisis' held by United for Wildlife at Zoological Society of London (ZSL) in February 2013 in advance of the high level London Conference on combatting trafficking (also February 2013); Will Travers of Born Free Foundation stood up to state that conservation NGOs needed to talk the language of global poverty and global security to remain relevant.⁴

Below I set out the range of organizations that are talking the language of global security, by making the link between poaching, terrorism and organized crime and show how poachers are being redefined and coded as terrorists. Further, mirroring the language of global interventionism, endangered wildlife, especially iconic species such as elephants and rhinos are elevated to the status of animals that must be defended by international action because they are unable to defend themselves against an aggressor. I have used a number of direct quotes – it is important to present

³ See <http://www.cites.org/eng/prog/iccwc.php>; <http://www.interpol.int/Crime-areas/Environmental-crime/International-Consortium-on-Combating-Wildlife-Crime>; also see Sellar, 2014.

⁴ United for Wildlife Symposium on international wildlife trafficking, 11-12 February 2014, a full recording is available at <http://www.zsl.org/science/previous-scientific-events/symposium-international-wildlife-trafficking> (accessed 15.08.14); the author was also present at the conference.

the detail of the language being used to establish poaching as linked to terrorism. This allows for a detailed account which reveals how a global discourse has germinated and grown, how it is reinforced from several angles by a range of very powerful global organizations. These discourses are powerful and have a far reaching effect as they deepen and extend the agenda of the war on terror precisely because they intersect so well with the pre-existing agendas of major powers in the global system. There is much to be concerned with here since the claims appear to be based on a small piece of evidence. Further, it demonstrates how poachers are defined in ways that fit with and provide the foundation for calls for a more forceful approach to conservation that can deliver a win-win of saving species as well as contributing to global security.

The discursive production of poacher-as-terrorist

A number of conservation NGOs have been at the forefront of the discursive and material shift from fortress conservation to war by conservation. Here I focus on some of the leading NGOs since they have the capacity to enact a shift of this kind. The remarkable similarity in statements is interesting, and they lend weight and legitimacy to the claim that poaching is linked with terrorism, that more forceful approaches are not only necessary but they are fully justified. The discursive production of poachers as terrorists ensures that in the justificatory language of a Just War, poachers are legitimate targets of military style intervention, including the use of deadly force (Wheeler, 2002; Bellamy, 2010) Ignatieff, 2004; Elshtain 2001, 2004). The key issue is not whether we can establish beyond any doubt that ivory is used to fund Al-Shabaab or that poaching contributes to global instability; what is important is that a very wide range of organizations are all telling a remarkably similar story in very similar ways. Here I want to chart the rise of the notion of the *poacher as terrorist* and ivory as the *white gold of jihad*. In so doing I will indicate how a poorly evidenced claim has risen to prominence. The idea has been taken up because it taps into a pre-existing and deep-seated fear about the expansion of terrorism networks post 9/11 in the US in particular, but also in Europe, and for conservation organizations it might offer a potential offer a new and lucrative stream of funding. It further embeds and supports the idea that poaching is best tackled via military means displacing alternative approaches, notably important demand reduction strategies in end-user markets.

One of the world's largest and most prominent conservation NGOs, Conservation International, has clearly stated that it sees a link between the illegal ivory trade and global terrorism:

'Money from wildlife poaching and trafficking is directly linked to the funding of dangerous rebel organizations and terrorist networks. These include the Janjaweed militia in Darfur, the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda and Al Shabaab in Somalia — which is now linked to al Qaeda'.⁵

Further, the organization states that conservation has a direct link to US national interests, especially related to economy and security because competition over scarce resources leads to conflict, instability and failed states.⁶ This reflects, deepens and extends the notion of tackling legitimate targets of Just War Theory: since they pose a clear and present threat to global stability, forceful action against them is justifiable and sanction-able. It has produced a short film, entitled 'Direct Connection' using Harrison Ford (actor), Wes Busch of Northrop Grumman (Director of a global security company) and Rob Walden, Chairman of Walmart Stores (global corporation best known for its department stores), to underline the link between conservation and US national security and economic security. This is an interesting integration of security concerns with a more established neoliberal approach to conservation: the increasing use of celebrities and link up with corporate sponsors is now overlain with a new narrative of urgency around the links between biodiversity losses and global security (see Brockington, 2009; Büscher et al 2012). Peter Seligmann, CEO and Chairman of Conservation International, recently linked poverty, trafficking and threats to global stability as well. Commenting on the new Clinton Global Initiative support to end wildlife trafficking he stated:

'What we're seeing here is the perfect storm of extinction, poverty and radicalism. We're seeing the deterioration of societies and a massive threat to the stability of not only African nations but the entire world. A crucial step in changing this equation is to ensure that the ivory trade comes to an end'.⁷

⁵ 'Global Stability' <http://www.conservation.org/what/pages/global-stability.aspx> (accessed 14.08.14).

⁶ 'Promoting Economic, National and Global Security' <http://www.conservation.org/projects/Pages/Promoting-Economic-National-and-Global-Security-Direct-connection.aspx> (accessed 14.08.14).

⁷ Peter Seligmann, 'One Way to Fight Terrorism: End the Ivory Trade' <http://blog.conservation.org/2013/10/one-way-to-fight-terrorism-end-the-ivory-trade/> (accessed 25.03.14).

There is a danger that the discursive link between poaching and terrorism is nothing more than that – that it has no material base – and that it is achieving the status of ‘truth’ or ‘fact’ by repetition with little or no supporting evidence. The supporting evidence cited by Conservation International is rather narrow; it could be argued that the evidence base for links between poaching and terrorism is held by organizations such as Interpol or the CIA, and is therefore confidential, but this is not stated. The evidence that Peter Seligmann cited was a blog from Slate.com, which in turn referenced a single investigation by Elephant Action League (EAL) into ivory trafficking and the Westgate Mall attacks in Nairobi by Al Shabaab.⁸ The nature of this investigation is very important to the discursive production of poachers as terrorists and is discussed in greater detail at a later point.

Another leading NGO, Wildlife Conservation Society, has launched its ‘96 Elephants’ campaign, which has three central pillars ‘Humans and Elephants’ ‘Terror and Ivory’ and ‘Heroes and Hope’ which links poverty, regional instability, poaching, terrorism and the role of conservationists and rangers as heroes.⁹ Under the topic of *Terror and Ivory* the campaign makes a series of statements but does not provide any references to support the claims. It does quote the public statements by Hillary Clinton and by Congressman Ed Royce (co-chair of the International Conservation Caucus of the US Congress). The 96 Elephants campaign refers to ivory as the ‘white gold of Jihad’¹⁰ which is a reference to the terminology of the same EAL report cited by Conservation International.

Here it is useful to analyze the evidence base for public statements about the link from WCS and Conservation International. The Elephant Action League report was based on undercover research in Somalia where EAL researchers were able to interview one individual who claimed that there was one trader on the coast who occasionally traded ivory and the ivory sometimes came from Al Shabaab operatives. The video and audio evidence remain confidential due to fears about reprisals against informants. However, the evidence was shown in confidence to a number of security agencies around the world.¹¹ The report on the investigation was placed on the EAL website in 2012 but was only reported by the international media after the attacks on Nairobi’s Westgate Mall in September 2013. Since then, the argument that Al Shabaab is using ivory poaching and trafficking to raise funds has begun to proliferate. The repetition of this claim by several organizations, and those claims have then been repeated in several published documents, allowing those documents to be cited additional supporting evidence. These include media reports in national newspapers such as the UK’s Independent,¹² and a recent report by the UK’s Chatham House (Lawson and Vines, 2014). They all cite the same EAL investigation and newsmedia reports as the core, or only, supporting evidence. It is possible that the reliance on this one report as the evidence base partly accounts for the remarkable similarity of the statements on ivory, terrorism and Al Shabaab. It can be argued that the current concerns around the links between ivory poaching and Al Shabaab reflect a more established and historical fear of Somalia as a source of instability and criminal activity. During the 1980s the KWS blamed Somali *shifita* (bandits) for crossing the border to wipe out the elephant population (Leakey, 2001: 102). Furthermore, Williams (2014) argues that following major offensives in Somalia Al Shabaab is becoming a less powerful and significant force which means that the Federal Government of Somalia and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) have turned their attention towards stabilisation rather than concentrating on offensives against the group.

However, the link is not just repeated as a part of NGO campaigns to draw attention to an important global issue, it is fast becoming the central legitimating argument of policy networks, especially in US and UK Government circles. For example, in 2012 the US Senate and US House of Representatives held a special congressional hearing on the ‘The Global Poaching Crisis’. Its conclusion was:

⁸ Joshua Keating, (2014) *Ivory Funds Terrorism?*
http://www.slate.com/blogs/the_world/2013/10/02/is_the_illegal_ivory_trade_funding_terrorist_groups_like_al_shabab.html (accessed 13.08.14).

⁹ Wildlife Conservation Society 96 Elephants campaign, available at <http://96elephants.org/> (accessed 25.03.14). Also see <http://www.wcs.org/press/press-releases/96-elephants.aspx> (accessed 14.08.14).

¹⁰ Wildlife Conservation Society 96 Elephants Campaign, <http://www.96elephants.org/chapter-2> (accessed 13.08.14).

¹¹ Personal communication from conservation professional via email to author (25.02.14); <http://elephantleague.org/project/africas-white-gold-of-jihad-al-shabaab-and-conflict-ivory/>

¹² The Independent, 04.02.14, *Elephant Campaign: How Africa’s ‘white gold’ funds the al-Shabaab militants*
<http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/campaigns/elephant-campaign/elephant-campaign-how-africas-white-gold-funds-the-alshabaab-militants-9102862.html> (accessed 25.06.14).

'Evidence is mounting that Al-Shabab, an al-Qaeda affiliate, and the Lord's Resistance Army are using these illegal animal products to fund their brutal campaigns of violence throughout the region',¹³

At the meeting the founder of the influential US International Conservation Caucus Foundation, David Barron, stated:

'Unless the United States takes strong action to combat the illegal poaching and trade of wildlife, terrorist groups will be increasingly fortified with funding and safe havens in Africa from which to launch attacks against the United States and our global interests.'¹⁴

The link has been reiterated at an International Conservation Caucus Foundation (ICCF) was established in 2006¹⁵ to support the work of the International Conservation Caucus, the second largest caucus in the US Congress (see Corson, 2010). At the meeting it convened on ivory expert witnesses carefully stated that ivory may fund Al Shabaab operations or that ivory is an *ideal commodity* for groups like Al Shabaab.¹⁶ Indeed, Menkhaus points out that if we regard Al-Shabaab as a criminal network, then their main 'criminal activities' centre on illegal charcoal trading, extortion and protection rackets (Menkhaus, cited in Williams, 2014: 909). Ivory is not a central pillar of their funding strategy. Nevertheless, the ICCF itself repeats the links between terrorism and ivory poaching in ways that intersect with Duffield's (2007) suggestion that a core idea of interventionism was that underdevelopment and poverty lead to radicalism and instability:

'Ivory and rhino horn are gaining popularity as a source of income for some of Africa's most notorious armed groups, including Somalia's al-Shabab, the Lord's Resistance Army (L.R.A.), and Darfur's janjaweed. Illegal wildlife products are a substantial lifeline to African-based terrorism.'¹⁷

However ICCF does not offer any supporting evidence, save the statements of expert witnesses and links to a 2012 article in *National Geographic* entitled 'Blood Ivory, Ivory Worship'¹⁸ and a 2012 *New York Times* article by Jeffrey Gettleman¹⁹ entitled 'Elephants Dying in an Epic Frenzy as Ivory Fuels Wars and Profits'.²⁰

It is important here to delve into the statements made by expert witnesses, all of whom are well known individuals in the international conservation community (with backgrounds in conservation and not in security and intelligence gathering); as experts their opinions carry 'weight' and can have a significant impact in shaping how we understand poaching and its relevance to wider social, political and economic concerns, or in this case to global security concerns (White, 2014; also see debates on the importance of epistemic communities, notably Haas, 1992 and Davis Cross, 2013). It is via such platforms that particular understandings of poaching, and the potential threats it might pose, come to international prominence. For that reason it is worthwhile describing aspects of the testimonials in greater detail in order to understand how certain approaches and ideas are planted, then germinate and grow. For example, the 2012 hearing on 'The Global Poaching Crisis' heard expert witness testimonials from Ian J. Saunders of the Tsavo Trust, who claimed that rangers were now engaged in low level counter insurgency against rebel groups. He stated:

'I believe that there is a credible, increasing security threat from Al Shabaab in East Africa and that this will be fuelled from the wider illegal trade in ivory as long as the consumer states in the Far East continue to allow a domestic trade in ivory. '²¹

¹³ http://iccfoundation.us/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=447&Itemid=369 (accessed 29.04.13).

¹⁴ http://iccfoundation.us/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=447&Itemid=369 (accessed 29.04.13).

¹⁵ For more information on the work on ICCF see

http://iccfoundation.us/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=48&Itemid=63 (accessed 01.09.14).

¹⁶ Transcript of expert witness evidence provided at a hearing of ICCF

http://iccfoundation.us/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=447&Itemid=369

¹⁷ http://iccfoundation.us/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=445&Itemid=367 (accessed 13.08.14)

¹⁸ Christy, Brian (2012) 'Blood Ivory, Ivory Worship', *National Geographic*

<http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2012/10/ivory/christy-text> (accessed 15.08.14)

¹⁹ Gettleman, Jeffrey (2012) 'Elephants Dying in an Epic Frenzy as Ivory Fuels Wars and Profits' *New York Times*,

http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/04/world/africa/africas-elephants-are-being-slaughtered-in-poaching-frenzy.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0

²⁰ http://iccfoundation.us/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=445&Itemid=367 (accessed 13.08.14)

²¹ http://iccfoundation.us/downloads/Hearing_Testimony_Saunders.pdf (accessed 29.04.14).p.6.

This statement also makes it clear that international action is required to save important species that are unable to defend themselves against an aggressor, in this case the poacher as terrorist, coded as a legitimate target for war by conservation. Further expert witness testimonial was provided by Michael Fay, Senior Conservationist for Wildlife Conservation Society, who made similar supporting statements:

'I would hold that bang for the buck, investments in the types of projects that I am involved in Gabon, Congo, Central African Republic, Tchad, Sudan, prove extremely productive not only for the cause of conservation, which I care deeply about, but to put out brush fires of illegal activity that degrade security in these nations, hurting US interests.'²²

The influence of the hearings, expert witness testimonials and NGO campaigns are discernible in recent policy commitments by the US Government. For example, in July 2013, President Barack Obama issued Executive Order 13648 on Combating Wildlife Trafficking. The Executive Order stated that poaching and trafficking constituted a threat to US interests; its states:

'Wildlife trafficking reduces those benefits while generating billions of dollars in illicit revenues each year, contributing to the illegal economy, fueling instability, and undermining security....., it is in the national interest of the United States to combat wildlife trafficking'.²³

Furthermore, Hillary Clinton has endorsed the link in public statements on the relationship between wildlife trafficking, poaching and global security, thereby lending the argument greater international weight. The casting of ivory as 'white gold of Jihad' (the phrasing used by the EAL report discussed earlier) has repeated several times in debates about the links between ivory and terrorism, including in an Op Ed piece for the *New York Times* (30.09.14) by Monica Medina, a former special assistant the Secretary for Defense in the US Department of Defense (see White, 2014). In the article she also refers to a panel in November 2012 sponsored by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and National Geographic on what the military could do to help, in the run up to Hillary Clinton's announcement of a major State Department initiative to combat illegal wildlife trafficking.²⁴

The Clinton Global Initiative has also put its support around increased response to poaching and trafficking. For example, in 2013 it announced a commitment to raise US\$80 million to combat trafficking and poaching as a security threat in Africa.²⁵ The funds will be used to tackle poaching and trafficking via three initiatives under the headlines of 'Stop the Killing, Stop the Trafficking and Stop the Demand' during 2013-2016. The partners, or in their own terms, 'Commitment Makers' include Wildlife Conservation Society, African Wildlife Foundation, Conservation International, International Fund for Animal Welfare, and World Wildlife Fund.²⁶

The presentation of poachers as criminals and terrorists is epitomised by the new United for Wildlife (UFW) #whosideareyouon campaign. It encourages supporters to choose sides between wildlife and the criminals who kill them for money. UFW is an initiative by the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and Prince Harry via the Royal Foundation. It brings together leading conservation organizations (ZSL, WCS, CI, FFI, WWF, IUCN and TNC) to cooperate to facilitate responses to the apparent rise in poaching and trafficking. It states:

'Alleged connections to armed groups such as Lord Resistance Army in Uganda has led to ivory being dubbed "Blood Ivory", bringing a human element to this already tragic story. By reducing demand, the funding that these groups gain from their criminal activities will be directly affected.'²⁷

²² http://iccfoundation.us/downloads/Hearing_Testimony_Fay.pdf (accessed 29.04.14).p.4.

²³ White House (Obama Administration), "*Combating Wildlife Trafficking*," Executive Order 13648 of July 1, 2013, Federal Register 78(129), July 5, 2013, pp. 40621-40623. Also see Wyler and Sheikh (2013: 2)

²⁴ Monica Medina, 'White Gold of Jihad', New York Times 30.09.14, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/01/opinion/the-white-gold-of-jihad.html?_r=0 (accessed 13.08.14).

²⁵ <http://www.awf.org/news/conservation-partners-announce-80m-clinton-global-initiative-commitment-action-partnership-save>

²⁶ 'Clinton Global Initiative Commitment to Action: Partnership to Save Africa's Elephants', <http://www.wcs.org/press/press-releases/african-elephants-get-major-boost.aspx> (accessed 30.04.14).

²⁷ 'Conflict' <http://www.unitedforwildlife.org/#!/the-facts/conflict> (accessed, 14.08.14).

Again this resonates with arguments about global-scale intervention and Just War, those on the side of wildlife are cast as on the side of right and justice, while poachers are reconfigured as those on the side of wrong and injustice. Such a dichotomous presentation eases the discursive (and material) production of poachers as legitimate targets of a Just War by conservation – making their deaths at the not only permissible but *necessary* to save threatened wildlife (linking in with Eckersley's (2007) argument that the international community has a moral duty to protect).

UFW also arose out of a confluence of different factors: Prince Charles convened a high level meeting at St James Palace in May 2013 to discuss how the UK should respond to the rises in poaching in Sub-Saharan Africa,²⁸ following that there were a series of Government level meetings to determine the policy response, and in December 2013 the UK Government announced a £10 million fund to combat trafficking (discussed in greater detail in the next section). The fund provides support for practical steps to combat trafficking and poaching.²⁹ Such high profile initiatives have an impact on UK Government policy, as well as NGO activities.

International organizations have also added weight to the idea that trafficking, poaching and global insecurity are interlinked. John Scanlon, the Secretary-General of CITES has made the link in public statements; in an interview with the Guardian newspaper in 2013 he stated:

'The UN security council recently linked the Lord's Resistance Army to ivory smuggling in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, while al-Qaida's al-Shabaab group has been linked to illegal ivory in Somalia.³⁰

And to the US Congressional hearing on ivory and insecurity, commenting on a high profile ivory poaching incident in Cameroon, he stated:

'It was reported that elephants had been slaughtered by groups from Chad and the Sudan over several weeks, taking advantage of the dry season. The poached ivory is believed to be exchanged against money, weapons and ammunition to support conflicts in neighbouring countries.'³¹

Such high profile statements have been endorsed by more thorough reports by international organizations. A key example is the report by UNEP, CITES, IUCN and TRAFFIC entitled *Elephants in the Dust* which states:

'Political instability, armed militias, criminals, and most importantly, the rise in market demand, have once again resulted in a rise in poaching.....Poaching operations range from the old-fashioned camel- and horse-based marauders to active intelligence units and helicopters, the use of which suggests substantial demand' (UNEP et al, 2013: 12).

The report does draw on a much fuller range of unpublished, confidential and published information – including data from MIKE, ETIS and CITES, as well as a number of academic studies on poaching rates. However, no source is provided for the statement quoted above, but the statement in the UNEP report is likely to be quoted as supporting evidence by other organizations and individuals.

The recent linkage of wildlife losses, poaching and global insecurity is very revealing. What is significant is not necessarily whether we can establish that poaching is funding instability and even global terrorism; the important issue is that a wide range of organizations are all communicating the same message in a very similar way; and that their arguments are based on a what appears to be a very narrow evidence base. Peluso argues that the ultimate drivers of poaching have been overlooked in NGO campaigns because, in the past, it was the fact that animals were being poached that was the deemed to be the important issue (Peluso 1993: 205-9). In this latest iteration of the poaching debate, it is clear that some NGOs continue to view poaching through the lens of wildlife losses. In making the link to global security, the underlying reasons for the appearance and activities of militia and rebel groups are left as a 'black box' and are not discussed. Further, it deliberately taps

²⁸ Prince Charles calls for a war on animal poachers, *The Guardian* (UK) 21.05.13, <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2013/may/21/prince-charles-war-animal-poachers>

²⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-illegal-wildlife-trade-challenge-fund> (accessed 01.09.14)

³⁰ Carrington, Daniel (2013) 'People and Animals at Immediate Risk from Wildlife Crime, CITES chief warns' *The Guardian* (UK) <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2013/mar/01/people-animals-wildlife-crime> (accessed 15.08.14).

³¹ John Scanlon, expert witness testimonial to the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee Hearing 'Ivory and Insecurity: The Global Implications of Poaching in Africa, 22.05. 12, http://www.foreign.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Scanlon_Testimony.pdf (accessed 15.08.14).

in to contemporary anxieties about global security threats, the identification of legitimate targets for military action, and the seemingly endless war on terror.

The material war by conservation

The redesignation and coding of poachers as terrorists and members of organized crime networks is not just semantics. There is a combined effect of so many organizations promoting the same message, based on a the same narrow evidence based of expert testimonial, the EAL investigation and a small number of high profile journalist accounts (especially in *National Geographic* and the *New Yorker*). It is having a material effect on the calls for renewed forceful approaches to tackle poaching, underpinned by a shift in funding that is being made available to support new initiatives around use of force, greater surveillance and use of new technologies to respond to the rising challenges of the illegal wildlife trade. This is allowing conservation to move from fortress conservation or a defensive position, to an offensive position that allows for the development of new initiatives that stretch well beyond the boundaries of protected areas. Below I set out examples to provide a differentiated analysis of the shifts in techniques and technologies that combine to produce organization within national parks, offensive positions which extend beyond protected areas, and approaches that are spatially extensive and rely on the production and cultivation of wide-ranging surveillance and intelligence gathering networks.

First, it is clear that there has been a policy shift within some national parks which has promoted a militarization of conservation, which is spatially confined within the protected areas boundaries (Duffy, 2014; Smith and Humphreys, 2014). However, these shifts are interesting because they are made possible by the 'neoliberal' phase or approach to conservation (see Büscher et al, 2012), since they rely on and normalise the use of the private sector to provide security within protected areas. A good example is the ways WWF has turned to private military companies to deliver security operations in protected areas that they manage on behalf of states. WWF has contracted a private military company to deliver anti-poaching. Israeli-based Maisha Consulting offers training for poaching units in Garamba National Park, DRC and has provided security advice and installed a network of remote surveillance cameras in Dzangha-Sangha National Park in the Central African Republic.³² The re-coding of poachers as criminals, militias and terrorists has made it possible to consider, accept and implement these new approaches that more closely reflect the methods of the war on terror and global intervention. These new approaches have been supported by a range of global funders. South Africa has received a lot of attention and some very large donations as well. These include US\$25 million (2014-2017) by the Howard G. Buffett Foundation to the Kruger National Park to set up an Intensive Protection Zone for rhinos inside the park; or R26.8 million (US\$ 2.5 million) to Peace Parks Foundation from the Dutch and Swedish Postcode Lotteries to work with Ezemvelo KZN to conserve rhinos in protected areas.

Militarization within national parks is also discernible in South Africa's current rhino wars. The appointment of Major General Johan Jooste (retired) as coordinator of anti-poaching for Kruger National Park in South Africa in 2012 is indicative of the increasing militarization of anti-poaching efforts. Jooste has argued that SANparks staff face a rising level of armed incursions by poachers, and that organized crime networks are involved, such that there is a need for a more aggressive response from those mandated with protecting rhinos. Jooste clearly identifies poaching as a declaration of war, linking it to wider regional security issues, such as immigration and governance failures (see Humphreys, and Smith, 2014; Rademeyer, 2013; Lunstrum, 2014; Dunn, 2009).³³ But the case of South Africa also indicates how policies that are initially designed for protected areas are quickly and easily reconfigured for further extension outside those boundaries. Humphreys and Smith (2014) point to a 'rhinofication' South African security, suggesting that the intensification of the anti-poaching strategy of SANParks is part of a trend towards militarization which resembles developments in late-modern warfare. These emphasise close targeting of individuals or groups, under the banner of 'man-hunting' or 'targeted killings'. South Africa's management plan for black rhino points to the critical importance of better intelligence systems to prevent poaching, rather than relying on prosecutions after a rhino has been killed (Knight et al., 2013: 38; Department of Environmental Affairs, 2013: 20). South Africa now offers a cash reward of R100,000 for information which leads to arrest and R1,000,000 for successful conviction of the heads of criminal poaching gangs. The initiative links in with Crime Line and allows the public to give anonymous information via SMS.³⁴ Büscher and Ramutsindela (in prep, 2014) argue that such approaches rely on rebuilding the kinds of intelligence and surveillance networks that characterised the Apartheid regime in South Africa

³² <http://maisha-consulting.com/environmental-security> (accessed 15.08.14).

³³ <http://www.sanparks.org/about/news/default.php?id=55388> (accessed 03.09.13)

³⁴ <http://www.sanparks.org/about/news/default.php?id=55388> (accessed 30.09.14)

Finally, the new 'offensive position' of war by conservation extends well beyond the boundaries of protected areas. The growing concerns about substantial increases in poaching and trafficking have attracted the attention of global funders, keen to support more forceful responses. Some indicative examples are useful here, many more could be cited. Google provided US\$5 million to WWF to purchase and operate drones as part of its anti-poaching initiatives;³⁵ and US\$750,000 was provided to ZSL for installation of camera traps with automated sensors in northern Kenya; the sensors transmit alerts of gunfire, vehicle movement, and human presence. These two projects were funded as part of Google's Global Impact Awards, which aim to assist in expansion of new technologies in key global challenges (for a broader discussion of philanthropy in conservation see Ramutsindela, Spierenburg and Wels, 2011; and Holmes, 2012). The militarized response is also discernible in broader anti-poaching strategies in Kenya. For example, Kenya Wildlife Service declared 2011 the 'year of the rhino' to direct focus and resources; the rhino ranger force has been expanded by more than 25% during 2011 via a process during which rhino scouts on private lands were converted into Kenya Police Reservists; community scouts have also been offered formal training in wildlife protection, sniffer dogs have been used at international ports, tracker dogs have been used for monitoring, and rhinos have been relocated from areas of high risk to areas of low risk (KWS, 2012: 24).

In February 2014 the US Government announced its National Strategy to Combat Wildlife Trafficking; its three approaches are increased enforcement, demand reduction and increased international cooperation and commitment (White House, 2014). In June 2014 the UK Department of Environment, Food, Rural Affairs and the Department for International Development invited applications to a £10 million illegal wildlife trade challenge fund which was available to help develop the Elephant Protection Initiative support practical actions to combat poaching and trafficking in line with the three pillars of the London Declaration and hosting a follow up conference in Botswana in March 2015.³⁶ It is not a requirement that projects are linked to protected areas per se, they can extend out in spatial terms, but they can also be engaged at the national and regional levels, since training of law enforcement officials and support for design and enforcement of new national level anti-poaching laws can also be supported by the fund.

It is clear, then, that the production of poachers as terrorists, and as legitimate targets for a war by conservation, has had material effects at several scales. We can discern militarization of approaches within the boundaries of protected areas (see Duffy, 2014; Smith and Humphreys, 2014; Lunstrum, 2014; Dunn, 2009); but we can also detect a range of new offensives that extend well beyond these boundaries and into the lands and communities that surround them. Further, war by conservation infuses national and global level policies and debates, not just in the biodiversity conservation sector but also in debates about how best to respond to global security concerns.

CONCLUSION

We are entering a new phase marked by a shift from fortress conservation to war by conservation. Conservation is becoming deeply implicated in advancing the global security agenda of that strategy. This shift has been facilitated by a rise in illegal hunting of elephants and rhinos (in particular) in Sub-Saharan Africa, the development and deployment of new forms of surveillance technology (such as drones) and the production of a discursive link between poaching and terrorism. The remarkable similarity of statements from NGOs, Governments and international organizations has provided legitimacy for the claims, especially that ivory is used to fund Al Shabaab. There is much to be concerned with here. Using debates on interventionism, Just War Theory and Responsibility to Protect allows for a better understanding of how the argument of *poacher-as-terrorist* is being deployed and what implications it holds for practice on the ground. The core themes that are more usually associated with narratives around global security have been effectively used and operationalised in relation to 'defence/protection' of the non-human world. It has become more possible to consider and authorise the use of force in defence of wildlife, or to prevent ecocide (to return to Eckerlsey's (2007) argument). While conservation has a long history of using violent methods (Neumann, 2004) including shoot-to-kill, the current phase differs because it offers conservation activity as part of a global security apparatus; therefore using force to protect elephants and rhinos is increasingly presented and justified as a win-win of conservation and global security. The implications of this in terms of long term conservation practice are potentially significant.

First the ways that conservation is combining with security concerns has the potential to place rangers in the front line, not in a poaching war but in the war on terror. This has implications for

³⁵ <http://www.worldwildlife.org/stories/google-helps-wwf-stop-wildlife-crime> (accessed 15.08.14)

³⁶ DEFRA/DfID Call for funding applications, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-illegal-wildlife-trade-challenge-fund> (accessed 15.08.14).

current and future staff. For example, rangers did not necessarily enter the profession with the goal of being active soldiers; put crudely they did not 'sign up' or consent to being combatants in a war on terror. For some this will not be acceptable, and conservation agencies are likely to lose valuable well trained staff at a time when they can least afford to.

Second, it raises complex questions about the impact on communities of shifting to conservation as a form of combat or military style intervention that extends beyond the boundaries of protected areas. Such a shift has the capacity to fundamentally change hard won relationships with local communities, alienating them and reducing their support for conservation in the longer term. Of course there will inevitably be cases where local communities welcome greater levels of enforcement of parks because it provides them with security from armed groups such as LRA, Janjaweed and Al Shabaab. Nothing is ever unremittingly negative or positive.

Third, although the extension of war by conservation both in terms of territory and strategy is currently confined to a few countries, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa (notably Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania, Mali, Gabon and Central African Republic), it sets a precedent. It is entirely possible that once key populations of rhinos and elephants are either lost to poaching or are secured in those locations, then organized poaching will turn to new sources of supply (e.g. Namibia for rhinos and Botswana for elephants). Equally, if new 'frontlines' open up in the war on terror, then the war by conservation is already operational and can be more easily and quickly utilised and extended. There are already examples from other regions, such as the use of drones and other military tactics in Kaziranga National Park in India and use of drones to monitor illegal fishing in the territorial waters of Belize, also known as an important drug trafficking route in Central America.

Forth, such shifts have the capacity to undermine conservation NGOs. There are significant reputational risks associated with working closely with state-level security services. This is especially important communities that regard the state as an oppressive force rather than as a (in Weberian terms) a democratic representative and provider of security and welfare. Conservation NGOs run the risk of simply being regarded as facilitating and implementing the agenda of a hostile actor (the state). Similar arguments can be made with regard to whether conservation NGOs might be regarded as unwelcome agents of powerful states engaged in the war on terror. Forming such alliances makes conservation a central part of a global political project – moving it far from its core mission of trying to save species from extinction.

Finally, in theoretical terms, the shift towards war by conservation presents us with a rich and fascinating field of conceptual enquiry. Greater interrogation of the implications of extending the principles of interventionism, R2P and pre-emption to non-human nature is required. This will help us to understand the process through which some species come to be defined as so important (in global terms) that they require military protection, including shoot-to-kill of human beings, in order to survive. This will inevitably entail greater engagement with theoretical debates around human rights, animal rights and notions of ecocide. Further, it is important to investigate whether the (continuing) neoliberal phase of conservation laid the groundwork to make war by conservation possible; for example, without the neoliberal phase, would conservationists have accepted the use of private military companies so readily if they had not already developed such strong links with the private sector more broadly. The aim of this paper is to open up that debate and indicate areas for future work.

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