

The World Marches Against Extinction of Elephants and Rhinoceros

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The Global March for Elephants and Rhinos (GMFER) provides an opportunity for people across the globe to unite in peaceful demonstration marches, demanding immediate government action to protect our endangered elephants and rhinoceros.

This movement began in 2013, with the 'International March for Elephants' organised through the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust's (DWST) 'iworry' campaign. Using the slogan 'one every fifteen minutes', the iworry campaign educated people to the reality that at current rates of poaching both African and Asian elephants will likely be extinct by 2025. Over 20,000 people in 42 cities marched on 4th October 2013 (World Animal Day), demanding that all governments increase protection for wildlife against poaching, and calling for a total ban of the ivory trade.

Building on the success of the International March for Elephants, the GMFER has continued the campaign in what will become an annual event, to protect elephants and rhinoceros, and also to promote justice for all wildlife. Over 35,000 elephants and 1000 rhinoceros are killed annually for ivory and horn. Capture of elephants and rhinoceros for live trade and tourism also cause death and injury to animals and compromise their wellbeing. Human deaths are another unfortunate consequence of wildlife trade, with rangers killed directly in the line of duty and wildlife crime funding activities of terrorist organisations.

Specifically, the GMFER aims to put pressure on governments worldwide to use their political leadership to end wildlife trafficking; to ban trade in endangered wildlife body parts; to immediately close carving factories and retail outlets selling

products made from ivory and rhinoceros horn; to destroy illegal wildlife products; and to strengthen law enforcement to protect wildlife from poaching.

World Animal Day 2014 saw tens of thousands of people from 137 cities across all seven continents, participate in peaceful demonstrations. Ten marches were held in Asia including Cambodia (Siem Reap), China (Hong Kong), India (Bangalore, Chennai, Hyderabad and Mumbai), Japan (Tokyo), Sri Lanka (Colombo), Thailand (Chiang Mai), and Vietnam (Hanoi).

Poaching is largely driven by consumer demand for ivory and rhinoceros horn in Asia, although a lucrative trade exists in the U.S. and Europe also. However, China is the world's largest consumer of ivory, and Vietnam is the world's largest consumer of rhinoceros horn. It is therefore of utmost importance that Asia actively participates in ending ivory and rhinoceros horn trade.

The GMFER creates a platform to raise awareness across Asia, and for the public to voice their displeasure at the treatment of wildlife, to their governments. The increasing participants across Asia are encouraging signs and we must continue to build on this momentum.

In India, home to more than half of Asia's wild elephant populations, four cities participated. Over 150 people took part in the GMFER in Bangalore. The march was concluded with a clay modelling demonstration, encouraging the participants to make their own clay elephant. In the evening a play and a documentary were shown. The aim of this exercise was to get back in touch with nature as soil is the source of everything.



Impressions from the march held in Bangalore, India
 Photos provided from the organizers “Friends of Elephants”

In Colombo, Sri Lanka, an estimated 350 people, marched to protest against the ivory trade and also the live capture of young elephants from the wild, with participants including school children, conservationists, politicians and film stars.

we will not stand by while they endanger the future of elephants and rhinoceros.

Events such as the GMFER unite people in a fight for a common cause, and show governments that

For more information on the GMFER, upcoming demonstrations and events you can participate in, and progress for the 2015 GMFER please visit their website:

<www.march4elephantsandrhinors.org>



Impressions from the march held in Colombo, Sri Lanka