



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CRUSHING THE IVORY TRADE

Wild Tomorrow Fund, a New York registered wildlife conservation charity working to save wildlife and wild places in southern Africa, announced today that they are the recipients of a \$100,000 donation as a result of the conviction of a Manhattan antique store for selling illegal elephant ivory in the largest ivory bust in New York State's history. These funds will be used to protect elephants, rhinos and other threatened species in southern Africa from the twin threats of poaching and habitat loss.

Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance, Jr., [announced](#) the guilty pleas of Metropolitan Fine Arts & Antiques and their owners, who were caught selling and offering for sale illegal elephant ivory at their store. As part of their sentence, the defendants were collectively ordered to make a \$200,000 contribution to two wildlife conservation organizations: \$100,000 to Wild Tomorrow Fund and \$100,000 to World Wildlife Fund.

The defendants were also ordered to forfeit all of the 1,657 ivory carvings seized from their store, valued at \$4.5 million. These items will be crushed next Thursday morning in Central Park. The public destruction of ivory sends a powerful and public message to devalue ivory products and stifle the ivory market. "Ivory should have no value other than on the face of an elephant," said Wild Tomorrow Fund's Executive Director, John Steward. "We must do everything we can as New Yorkers and global citizens to protect existing elephant populations. We are delighted to receive this donation as a result of the elephant ivory conviction. These funds will provide urgent supplies to anti-poaching units working on the ground in Southern Africa, and help to protect and secure habitat for rhinos, elephants, lions and other threatened and endangered species." Chairman of Wild Tomorrow Fund, Seth Hendon said "While organizations like Wild Tomorrow Fund do important work to preserve wild habitats and to assist rangers in South Africa who protect threatened species where they live, equally critical to the protection of these species is the painstaking detective and prosecutorial work necessary to eliminate the illegal trade in ivory. We commend the determination and hard work of the professionals at the Manhattan D.A.'s office and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and are proud to be their partners in this fight."

Wild Tomorrow Fund will also use a portion of the donation to fund the forensic analysis of the seized ivory before it is destroyed in Central Park next week. The ivory will be sampled for both DNA information, to

understand where the elephants were poached, and radiocarbon dated to understand when they were killed. This information will inform international law enforcement to aid in the identification of ivory poaching hotspots and to understand the age of ivory finding its way to New York. "This testing will enable us to understand more about the illicit ivory trade at the retail end of the supply chain. We will know definitively where the elephants killed to feed New York's ivory market were poached and when. This has enormous scientific and enforcement value, helping to save elephants by using cutting-edge science", said Wendy Haggood, co-founder and Director of Wild Tomorrow Fund. The analysis will be led by Professor Samuel Wasser, Director of the Center for Conservation Biology at the University of Washington, a world expert in the forensic DNA analysis of elephant ivory, together with Kevin Uno at the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory of Columbia University.

About Wild Tomorrow Fund

Wild Tomorrow Fund is a 501(c)(3) registered charity based in New York and a registered Public Benefit Organization (PBO) in South Africa. Wild Tomorrow Fund's vision is a world in which wildlife habitats are expanded and protected, working with communities to protect nature for the benefit of all.

Website: <http://www.wildtomorrowfund.org>

Please contact us for additional media including high resolution versions of the images below and photographs of the seized ivory.

