

bushmeat hunters. There is a slim possibility that a few of the other scattered, isolated populations of Grauer's gorilla have survived, but if so, numbers are likely to be small and declining and they may face the same fate as those in KBNP.

Given that the forests in and adjacent to KBNP were estimated to contain 86 per cent of the world's Grauer's gorillas, and that the other 14 per cent is also likely to have been hit by poaching, the evidence indicates a possible 80-90 per cent reduction in only three years.

If this park and its magnificent gorillas are to be given one last chance, it must be with both parts of the park, and the corridor of land that links them, intact. Now is the time of action!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The information in this report could not have been gathered without the kind, and often courageous, assistance of many people. I am grateful to all those who gave freely of their time, including (in approximate order of meeting them):

In Kigali: Vince Smith, Jean de Dieu Ntiruhungwa, Francois Nkinziwike; Viateur Nsengimana;

In Goma: Vital Katembo, Tuvor-Wundi, Dieudonne Ntambabazi, Claude Sikubwabo, Henry Girhuza, Kasuku wa Noyo; Stanislas Bakinahe, Anicet Mburanumwe-Chiri and the staff of ICCN;

In Bukavu: Remy Mitima, Kasereka Bishikwabo, Carlos and Christine Schuler-Deschryver, John Kahekwa, Mbilizi Wenga and the staff of GTZ and ICCN.

For security reasons, some cannot be named here, but named and anonymous, they should know that the world is indebted to them for their continued commitment to conservation in the face of threats to their personal safety.

In England, I am grateful to Greg Cummings, Jillian Miller, Judith Egerton and Celia Davis of DFGFE, to Ben Dykes and David Pledger of BFF for help in the rapid production of this report, and to Stanley Johnson and Cindy Milburn of the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) for their support and advice.

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Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise in support of H.R. 643, legislation which would reauthorize the African Elephant Conservation Act. I would certainly like to compliment and commend the chairman of the Subcommittee on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife, and Oceans, the

gentleman from Maryland (Mr. GILCHREST), who also happens to be the author of this piece of legislation, a dear friend and a colleague, and certainly also would like to commend the chairman of our Committee on Resources, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. HANSEN), and our ranking Democrat, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL), for their support in bringing this legislation to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, it was not too long ago when the annihilation of the African elephant population was predicted, if not expected, to occur by the close of the 20th century. Such was the devastation, that by the end of the 1980s the population of African elephants, which once had ranged over virtually the entire Sub-Saharan region of the African continent, was reduced to small remnant populations suffering from widespread poaching and other conflicts with the needs of the growing human population.

In response to this conservation crisis, the Congress of the United States passed the African Elephant Conservation Act in 1988, and the fate of this flagship species has been improving ever since.

Grants initiated under the African Elephant Act have been responsive, effective, and successful in supporting conservation activities throughout Africa. As a result, many range states today have taken great strides in reducing poaching, which was at one time approaching epidemic proportions. Grants have also supported activities to confront and fight the illegal trade in wildlife and to build conservation capabilities to the village level, where there is still much more that needs to be done.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 643 is a straightforward reauthorization of this act. The administration fully supports this legislation, and I commend the staff of the Fish and Wildlife Service for their cooperation in working with us to improve this legislation. As a result, the few refinements that were adopted during consideration by the Subcommittee on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans should stimulate greater public involvement, help create new partnerships and ensure fair and equitable support for local conservation activities.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, great progress has been made in recovering African elephants from the precipice of disaster. That is an achievement for which we can all be proud. Yet future progress is contingent on the United States maintaining its strong leadership and support for this very successful and effective international wildlife conservation effort.

Again, I commend my good friend from Maryland for sponsorship of this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 643, legislation which would reauthorize the African Elephant Conservation Act. I am pleased that today we are also considering H.R. 700 to reauthorize the Asia Elephant

Conservation Act. These bills are vital to insuring the survival of one of the earth's "flagship" species.

Less than two decades ago, the African Elephant population teetered on the brink of extinction. Rampant poaching fueled by the black market trade of ivory and the encroachment of human development had reduced the once abundant population to a small trace of its former prosperity.

The African Elephant Conservation Act was enacted in 1988 in response to this crisis. The grants initiated under the act have dramatically reduced poaching by working with local communities to eliminate the illegal trade in endangered wildlife and to foster sustainable conservation practices.

At a time when we are confronting the loss of many species, every effort must be made in Congress to preserve species of plants, animals and their habitats throughout the world. We must continue to strengthen endangered species laws and to support the strongest possible measures to ensure the survival of the world's elephants and other wildlife populations.

Mr. FALEMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GILCHREST. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. GILCHREST) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 643, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. GILCHREST. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

ASIAN ELEPHANT CONSERVATION REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2001

Mr. GILCHREST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 700) to reauthorize the Asian Elephant Conservation Act of 1997, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 700

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Asian Elephant Conservation Reauthorization Act of 2001".

SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION OF ASIAN ELEPHANT CONSERVATION ACT OF 1997.

Section 7 of the Asian Elephant Conservation Act of 1997 (16 U.S.C. 4266) is amended by striking "1998" and all that follows through "2002" and inserting "2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, and 2007".

SEC. 3. LIMITATION ON ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.

Section 7 of the Asian Elephant Conservation Act of 1997 (16 U.S.C. 4266) is further amended—

(1) by striking “There are authorized” and inserting “(a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Of amounts available each fiscal year to carry out this Act, the Secretary may expend not more than 3 percent or \$80,000, whichever is greater, to pay the administrative expenses necessary to carry out this Act.”.

SEC. 4. COOPERATION.

The Asian Elephant Conservation Act of 1997 is further amended by redesignating section 7 (16 U.S.C. 4266) as section 8, and by inserting after section 6 the following:

“SEC. 7. ADVISORY GROUP.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—To assist in carrying out this Act, the Secretary may convene an advisory group consisting of individuals representing public and private organizations actively involved in the conservation of Asian elephants.

“(b) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.—

“(1) MEETINGS.—The Advisory Group shall—

“(A) ensure that each meeting of the advisory group is open to the public; and

“(B) provide, at each meeting, an opportunity for interested persons to present oral or written statements concerning items on the agenda.

“(2) NOTICE.—The Secretary shall provide to the public timely notice of each meeting of the advisory group.

“(3) MINUTES.—Minutes of each meeting of the advisory group shall be kept by the Secretary and shall be made available to the public.

“(c) EXEMPTION FROM FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the advisory group.”.

SEC. 5. TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

(a) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—The Asian Elephant Conservation Act of 1997 is amended as follows:

(1) Section 4(3) (16 U.S.C. 4263(3)) is amended by striking “the Asian Elephant Conservation Fund established under section 6(a)” and inserting “the account established by division A, section 101(e), title I of Public Law 105–277 under the heading ‘MULTINATIONAL SPECIES CONSERVATION FUND’”.

(2) Section 6 (16 U.S.C. 4265) is amended by striking the section heading and all that follows through “(d) ACCEPTANCE AND USE OF DONATIONS.—” and inserting the following:

“SEC. 6. ACCEPTANCE AND USE OF DONATIONS.”.

(b) TECHNICAL CORRECTION.—Title I of section 101(e) of division A of Public Law 105–277 (112 Stat. 2681–237) is amended under the heading “MULTINATIONAL SPECIES CONSERVATION FUND” by striking “Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act, subchapter I” and inserting “Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act of 1994, part I”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. GILCHREST) and the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. GILCHREST).

Mr. GILCHREST. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support this legislation, H.R. 700, to extend the Asian Elephant Conservation Act. This act was first proposed in 1997 by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SAXTON) in response to the dramatic decline in the population of Asian elephants.

There are many reasons why the population of this keystone species has fallen to less than 40,000 animals in the wild. However, the overriding reason has been the loss of essential habitat. In the short time the Asian Elephant Conservation Fund has been in place, the Fish and Wildlife Service has spent \$3 million on 27 conservation projects in nine different range countries. These projects have assisted in the construction of anti-poaching camps, equipped field staff, and educating local indigenous people about the critical importance of conserving this species.

During our subcommittee hearing, Ms. Ginette Hemley of the World Wildlife Fund testified that “when tigers and elephants thrive, the whole ecosystem thrives. When they suffer, the entire ecosystem suffers, including the people that live in or around it.”

Mr. Speaker, I urge an aye vote on H.R. 700. I am confident by reauthorizing this small investment of money we will provide huge conservation benefits.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 700, a bill to reauthorize the Asian Elephant Conservation Act.

I certainly would like to commend my good friend, the former chairman of the Subcommittee on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife, and Oceans, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SAXTON), for being the author and the sponsor of this legislation, and certainly for his continued leadership in protecting the world's imperiled wildlife heritage. I also thank the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. GILCHREST), our current chairman of the subcommittee, for his leadership in bringing this legislation forward.

Mr. Speaker, unlike African elephants, the plight of Asian elephants was not widely known until 1997, only 4 years ago. Sadly, we have learned that the population of Asian elephants, at one time flourishing throughout Southern and Southeast Asia, is now fragmented into populations scattered across 13 countries, most of which are shrinking.

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In addition, Mr. Speaker, domesticated use of Asian elephants for transport and other industrial activities has removed animals from traditional areas and further stressed wild populations. With so many changes to the natural habitat, domesticated uses are now one of the several factors which are a threat to the future viability of Asian elephants in the wild. This issue needs to be addressed in a manner which addresses traditional cultural values and the continued survival of the species.

Fortunately, Mr. Speaker, the Asian Elephant Conservation Act has helped address these threats. Grants initiated under the act have provided valuable financial assistance to impoverished areas to support a wide range of conservation activities. Most notably, the development of conservation strategies and education tools to address the growing frequency of elephant-human conflicts, a scenario which often proves deadly for the elephants, the local villagers, or both, has been especially effective.

The grants have also supported important ecological studies, construction of anti-poaching camps, and provided conservation training in several range States. Progress, albeit slow, has been made.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 700 is a bill which was ordered reported by the Committee on Resources by unanimous vote. In addition, the administration fully supports this legislation, as do many international conservation organizations, including the World Wildlife Fund and the Wildlife Conservation Society.

Everyone agrees that the technical amendments to the existing act contained in H.R. 700 will only improve the effectiveness of the grant program throughout southern and southeast Asia.

Mr. Speaker, unfortunately there are still many remaining challenges to overcome if we hope to sufficiently recover stable and ecologically viable populations of Asian elephants throughout the animal's historic range. Yet, that is a global conservation challenge that the United States should not shy away from.

Conservation assistance made available under the Asian Elephant Conservation Act is desperately needed, and again, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GILCHREST. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SAXTON).

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman and the ranking member of the subcommittee for the great work they have done in expeditiously bringing this bill to the floor.

I am pleased to rise today to speak in favor of H.R. 700, the Asian Elephant Conservation Reauthorization Act of 2001, which I introduced on February 14 of this year. I was pleased it was reported favorably out of Subcommittee on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans on March 29, 2001, and was pleased that it was finally reported out of the full committee on May 16.

Four years ago, I introduced this bill because I was startled to learn that there were less than 40,000 Asian elephants living in the wild. Furthermore,

nearly 50 percent of those elephants were living in various national parks in India, while the remaining animals were scattered in fragmented populations throughout 12 other countries in south and southeastern Asia.

The primary reason for this serious decline in population is the loss of essential habitat. It is no secret that elephants and man are in direct competition for the same resources. In most cases, it is the elephants who lost. In addition, Asian elephants are poached for their bones, hide, teeth, meat, and they are still captured for domestication, and conflicts between elephants and people are escalating at an alarming rate, even today.

Furthermore, it was clear millions of people were not aware of the plight of the Asian elephants. In addition, range countries lacked the financial resources to help conserve this flagship species. Without an international effort, the future of the Asian elephant was in serious jeopardy.

In response to this problem, along with a number of other Members, I proposed the establishment of the Asian Elephant Conservation Fund. This concept was modeled after the highly successfully African Elephant Conservation Act. The primary goal of my legislation was to obtain a small amount of Federal assistance for on-the-ground conservation projects.

Fortunately, this legislation was overwhelmingly approved by both bodies and was signed into law on November 19, 1997. Under the terms of this new law, the Congress could appropriate up to \$25 million to the Asian elephant conservation fund until September 30, 2002. In fact, some \$1.9 million in Federal funds has been allocated, and those monies have been matched by an additional \$1.1 million in private donations.

Those funds have been used to underwrite 27 conservation grants in nine different range countries. The type of prospects funded have included development of an elephant strategy in Sri Lanka, identification of a suitable managed elephant range in Malaysia, equipment for the local population assessment of Asian elephants, school education to support Asian elephant conservation in India and trace the mobility patterns of Sri Lanka's elephants.

These projects were carefully analyzed and competitively selected from a list of nearly 100 proposals that were submitted to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

While the early indication is that the worldwide population of Asian elephants has stopped its precipitous decline, it is unrealistic to believe that \$3 million can save this species from extinction. Nevertheless, this law has sent a powerful message. I am pleased to have introduced this reauthorization, and am hopeful that it will pass the House today.

Mr. GILCHREST. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 7 minutes to my good friend, the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE).

(Mr. ABERCROMBIE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks, and include extraneous material.)

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, before I begin my formal remarks, I would like to pay tribute to my good friend, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SAXTON). I think he is being a bit modest by simply citing the fact that he introduced this Asian elephant conservation bill and gave me the privilege of being able to sign it with him as the ranking member on his committee at that time.

I am very grateful to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. GILCHREST) and his staff, both for the majority and the minority, not only for the reauthorization on the present H.R. 700, but for the incredible, great work that the staff did with the introduction of the original bill.

My respect for the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SAXTON), I can say without reservation, was considerable before this took place, and has only risen since that time. If there is anyone in this body that carries through on the implications of any legislation with which he or she is associated, it is the gentleman from New Jersey.

In this particular instance, as he cited in his remarks, the Asian elephant simply did not have the kind of profile, either in world opinion or in the consciousness of those interested in the environment and conservation throughout the world, that the African elephant did.

The reauthorization in the previous bill is, of course, needed, and the work that has been done with regard to the African elephant and the role played by the United States of America in that has been considerable and most positive, as has been cited. But in this particular instance, because of the insight and the carry-through of the gentleman from New Jersey, the Asian elephant was able to achieve at least some place in the sun that it would not otherwise have occupied.

The implications for southeast Asia in particular are considerable because, as I will state in my more formal remarks, the Asian elephant is in fact a flagship species with respect to all kinds of considerations in the environment and conservation of other species, and I firmly believe that in time to come, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SAXTON) will be recognized not only as a pioneer with regard to Asian elephant conservation, but as one of the primary figures in the world environmental and conservation movement.

I wish to add one other thing, Mr. Speaker. I also want to pay tribute to, and I wish he was on the floor so I actually could look him in the eye when I was saying it, because of the pleasure it would give me, I want to mention in

particular the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO), who has been instrumental in educating me for one, I can tell the Members, on the questions of conservation of wild animals and the environment.

I think he has played a particularly positive role in support of the kinds of things that the gentleman from New Jersey has taken the lead on, and especially in the realm of wild animal conservation, the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO) is a leader. It is a pleasure to be associated with him in this regard, as well.

That said, Mr. Speaker, with recent awareness of the increasing threat to the welfare of the Asian elephant, an already endangered species, a bill entitled the Asian Elephant Conservation Act of 1997 was introduced into the House of Representatives in June of 1997. It passed the House in October, on October 21, and the Senate on November 8, and was signed into law by the President on November 19, 1997.

The act is designed to assist the conservation of Asian elephants by supporting and providing financial resources for the conservation programs of nations within the range of the Asian elephant, and projects of persons with demonstrated expertise in the conservation of Asian elephants. A grants program was established for awarding proposals that fulfilled the purpose described by the act.

This act has been very successful, Mr. Speaker, and is not a foreign giveaway program. The funds appropriated under this act are matched by the recipient countries. It gives them the necessary support so they can leverage this money with their own resources to establish conservation and research programs, communication networks and administration, to save these endangered animals.

Unless immediate steps are taken to conserve this magnificent animal, it will surely continue to disappear from much, if not most, of its traditional habitat. This program helps establish a win-win situation where recipient countries can explore management strategies that minimize poaching and negative elephant and human interaction in farming communities. In short, recipient countries are able to find solutions that are in their economic best interests.

Also assisting these countries on a wide range of projects are numerous non-governmental organizations and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank our good friends, the chairman and the ranking member, for giving us the opportunity to appear here. I want to say that while, for many, bills which come on the consent calendar may seem to be pro forma in presentation, over and over and over again when we examine the content and context of the bills before us, we find that they are addressing issues of prime importance, not only to people of the United States,

but in many instances we can say to people of the world. This bill is in fact one of them. I am very, very pleased and proud to have been associated with it, and count it as among the genuine privileges of holding public office, particularly in the House of representatives, to be associated with the individuals who have made this day possible.

Mr. Speaker, the Asian Elephant Conservation Act of 1997 was authored by U.S. Representative JIM SEXTON (R-NJ) and myself.

With recent awareness of the increasing threat to the welfare of the Asian elephant, already an endangered species, a bill entitled Asian Elephant Conservation Act of 1997 was introduced into the House of Representatives June 4, 1997. Passed by the House on October 21 and by the Senate on November 8, it was signed into law by the President on November 19, 1997. The act is designed to assist in the conservation of Asian elephants by supporting and providing financial resources for the conservation programs of nations within the range of Asian elephants and projects of persons with demonstrated expertise in the conservation of Asian elephants. A grants program was established for awarding proposals that fulfill the purpose described by the Act.

This act has been very successful and is not a foreign "give-away" program. The funds appropriated under this Act are matched by the recipient countries. It gives them the necessary support so that they can leverage this money with their own resources to establish conservation and research programs, communication networks and administration to save these endangered animals.

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This program helps establish a win-win situation where recipient countries can explore management strategies that minimize poaching and negative elephant and human interaction in farming communities.

In short, recipient countries are able to find solutions that are in their economic best interests. Also assisting these countries on a wide range of projects are numerous non-governmental organizations and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The United States must continue their leadership in this very important conservation program. I cannot overemphasize that this is where a relatively small appropriation has helped leverage a very successful program that has stopped the decline of the Asian elephant saving it from possible extinction.

We cannot allow the Asian elephant, which has such a direct impact on so many other species, to become extinct. The goal of this legislation is to stop the decline and hopefully rebuild the population of this irreplaceable species by financing with a small amount of federal money a number of conservation projects.

According to international experts, there are fewer than 45,000 Asian elephants living in the wild. On a daily basis, these animals face the loss of their forest habitat, poachers who kill them for their bones, hide, ivory and meat, capture for use in Burma's timber industry, and conflicts between elephants and man.

Unless immediate steps are taken to help conserve this species, it will continue to disappear from its historic habitat. We should not

allow this magnificent animal to disappear from this planet. This investment by the United States will significantly improve the likelihood that wild Asian elephants will exist into the 21st century.

The act was modeled after the highly successful African Elephant Conservation Act of 1988 and the Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act of 1994.

It established an Asian Elephant Conservation Fund to be administered by the U.S. Department of Interior. The measure would be authorized for 5 years and \$5 million per year.

The funding could be used for: Anti-poaching efforts, conservation management plans, translocation of threatened populations, monitoring of census figures and known populations, and public education for elephant conservation.

This legislation is endorsed by organizations like the World Wildlife Fund, Safari Club International and other conservation groups.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD the following information on the Asian elephant:

FACTS ON THE ASIAN ELEPHANT

There are an estimated 35,000 to 45,000 Asian Elephants living in the wild in 13 Asian nations.

The Asian Elephant is listed as "endangered" under the United States' Endangered Species Act.

The major causes for elephants' "endangered" status are: Loss of habitat caused by population growth (all Asian Elephants required a shady or forest environment and the forest habitat in Asia is rapidly disappearing); fragmented populations of elephants (there are only 14 populations that have more than 1,000 elephants each); and poaching for meat, hide bones, ivory and teeth (bones and teeth are used in traditional Chinese medicine).

The largest population of Asian Elephants in the wild are found in: India (20,000 to 24,000), Burma (5,000 to 6,090), and Indonesia (2,500 to 4,500).

Wild elephants are still captured and trained for use in logging operations in Burma.

The Asian Elephant is a flagship species and its conservation has a positive impact on other animals like tigers, rhinoceros, clouded leopards, Malayan Sunbears, Hoolock gibbons, lion-tailed macaques and peacock pheasants.

The Asian elephant can weigh up to 5400 kg (11,900 lb). It currently occupies forested habitats in hilly or mountainous terrain, up to about 3600 m (11,800'). An adult eats approximately 150 kg (330 lb) per day—mainly grasses but also leaves, twigs and bark. It feeds during the morning, evening and night and rests during the middle of the day, requiring shade during the hot season to keep from overheating. Elephants cannot go for long without water (they require 70-90 liters (19-24 gal) of fluid/day) and sometimes must travel long distances each day between their water supplies and feeding areas.

One calf is born every 3-4 years after a pregnancy lasting about 22 months. Although mature male elephants may live alone, females live in family groups consisting of mothers, daughters and sisters, together with immature males. Wild elephants can live to be sixty years old.

The Asian elephant once ranged from the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers in ancient Mesopotamia in the west, east through Asia south of the Himalaya to Indochina and the Malay Peninsula, including Sri Lanka and Sumatra and possibly Java, and north into China at least as far as the Yangtze River. In the 19th century it was still common over much of

the Indian subcontinent, Sri Lanka and the eastern parts of its range. By 1978, Asian elephant were found in the same countries as they are at present.

Female Asian elephants are not affected by ivory poaching (due to their lack of tusks), so poaching has not affected the overall population numbers of Asian elephants as drastically as it has in the case of the African elephant. The single most important cause of the decline of the Asian elephant has been the loss of habitat. They have also been affected by persecution due to the crop damage they are perceived to cause.

Counties where it is currently found: 1996: Occurs in Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

Maximum age: Sixty years in the wild (more than 80 years in captivity).

Social organization: The Asian elephant is gregarious, and, although males sometimes live alone, females are always found in family groups consisting of mothers, daughters, sisters and immature males. In the 19th century, these family groups usually consisted of 30-50 animals, but much larger groups, as large as 100 individuals, were not uncommon. Sometimes an adult male can be associated with a herd. When not, adult males usually remain solitary and disperse over relatively small, widely overlapping home ranges; sometimes they gather together in small but temporary bull herds. They do not seem to be territorial, and there is a great amount of toleration between them, except possibly when the cows are in estrus.

Asian elephants are very sociable and live in basic family units of one adult cow and her offspring. Daughters remain with their mothers, but sons leave at puberty, often joining bull groups or remaining solitary. Bull elephants associate with a family when a cow is in oestrus. This species does not appear to be territorial. Males have home ranges of about 15 square km, and herds of females of about 30 square km, which increases in the dry season. Seasonal migration has been made virtually impossible, due to human development.

Females usually have one calf after a gestation period of 18-22 months and give birth every three to four years. The calves weigh about 100 kg at birth and suckle for about 18 months. They can eat some vegetation after several months.

Asian elephants are now listed as endangered, and have long since vanished from Southwest Asia and most of China. Sri Lanka was once recognized for its large elephant populations, but today the numbers are being reduced. As the number of humans increases, the area of natural habitat that the elephants rely on is being depleted. Elephants are being forced onto farming areas, where they cause damage.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I certainly would like to compliment my good friend, the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE), for his eloquence and for his substantive remarks concerning this important issue of the Asian elephant.

I realize that perhaps some of the members of the public are wondering, in the midst of the \$1.3 trillion tax cut, Social Security, the health care problems, the hundreds of billions going to defense and all this, why are we talking about elephants.

I would like to compliment again both the gentleman from New Jersey

(Mr. SAXTON) for his sponsorship of the Asian Elephant Conservation Act, and my good friend, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. GILCHREST), for his leadership in not only the subcommittee, but for bringing the reauthorization of the African Elephant Conservation Act.

I recall that, and maybe this is something unique in our Nation and something that we ought to be grateful for, I recall years ago when there were problems with the dolphins. It was amazing, Mr. Speaker, that it was not government that brought this to the attention of the Congress, it was not business, it was the children of America.

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They were concerned about the slaughtering needlessly of some 200,000 dolphins a year by fishermen, and if they wanted to get after the tuna, they had to slaughter these mammals that are so beautiful. Beautiful creatures that the Lord has made as part of our environment.

Mr. Speaker, I think the same could be said about elephants, and I think we need to compliment and, again, thank the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. GILCHREST) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SAXTON) for their leadership in bringing these two pieces of legislation for consideration.

Again, I want to urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this bill. I want to thank also the members of our staff, from this side of the aisle, Mr. Dave Jansen and Mr. Jeff Petrich, for their staff expertise and the understanding of this piece of legislation for where we are now, in bringing this bill for consideration by the Members. Again, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GILCHREST. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALLOMAVAEGA) for his assistance, certainly the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SAXTON).

We did not get the Asian Elephant back again this time, as the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SAXTON) did, but certainly our thoughts are in the right place. It used to be that people thought that the habitat of the Asian and the African Elephant was an endless frontier.

Now we know it was not endless, and the frontier is gone. So it is highly appropriate for us, along with the international community, to set aside a small sliver of habitat that can in some small way reflect the bounty that used to be so that generations unseen in the future will be able to enjoy the magnificence of the creation that we now see.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, and colleagues, four years ago we unanimously ap-

proved the Asian Elephant Conservation Act of 1997, in order to protect the endangered Asian Elephant that proves so vital for ecosystems in Southeast Asia. Our efforts were not in vain.

Four years ago the Asian Elephant was caught in a downward spiral towards extinction. Poachers indiscriminately hunted them for their hides, meat, tusks, and teeth. Farmers and urban expansion destroyed their habitats. The effects of these actions were evident in 1997 when there were only an estimated 35,000 elephants left in existence. Today there are an estimated 35,000–50,000 elephants, demonstrating that while our efforts have succeeded to some extent, much more needs to be done.

Extinction of the Asian Elephant is still entirely possible, and we must not simply stand idle while this happens. Like most ecosystems of the world, the Asian Elephant is a vital part of its natural habitat, and its existence and interaction with other species proves crucial in maintaining an ecological balance within the Southeast Asian region. For example, the elephants feed on bark from trees that they uproot; smaller species of mammals, insects, and birds rely on "leftover" debris from these trees as a dietary staple. Extinction of the Asian Elephant would have multiple and severely negative effects on the populations of countless other species.

We must continue to protect this species from poachers and the deforestation that threatens to permanently displace it. By appropriating funds we will also actively discourage poachers, and encourage education that will bolster conservation efforts.

Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleagues, please join me in support in passing H.R. 700, so that we may ensure the survival of this beautiful and vital species.

Mr. GILCHREST. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WHITFIELD). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. GILCHREST) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 700, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. GILCHREST. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GILCHREST. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include therein extraneous material on H.R. 643 and H.R. 700.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages in writing from the President of the United States were communicated to the House by Mr. Sherman Williams, one of his secretaries.

RECOGNIZING CONTRIBUTIONS, ACHIEVEMENTS, AND DEDICATED WORK OF SHIRLEY ANITA CHISHOLM

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 97) recognizing the enduring contributions, heroic achievements, and dedicated work of Shirley Anita Chisholm.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 97

Whereas Shirley Anita Chisholm has devoted her life to public service;

Whereas Shirley Anita Chisholm served in the New York Assembly from 1964 to 1968;

Whereas Shirley Anita Chisholm became the first African American woman to be elected to Congress in 1968;

Whereas Congresswoman Chisholm was a fierce critic of the seniority system in Congress, protested her assignment in 1969 to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives, and won reassignment to a committee of the House of Representatives on which she could better serve her inner-city district in Brooklyn, New York;

Whereas Congresswoman Chisholm served as a Member of Congress from 1968 until 1983;

Whereas Congresswoman Chisholm proposed legislation to increase funding for child care facilities in order to allow such facilities to extend their hours of operation and provide services to both middle-class and low-income families;

Whereas in 1972 Congresswoman Chisholm became the first African American, the first woman, and the first African American woman to be a candidate for the nomination of the Democratic Party for the office of President of the United States;

Whereas Congresswoman Chisholm campaigned in the primaries of 12 States, won 28 delegates, and received 152 first ballot votes at the national convention for the nomination of the Democratic Party for the office of President of the United States;

Whereas Congresswoman Chisholm has fought throughout her life for fundamental rights for women, children, seniors, African Americans, Hispanics, and other minority groups;

Whereas Congresswoman Chisholm has been a committed advocate for many progressive causes, including improving education, ending discrimination in hiring practices, increasing the availability of child care, and expanding the coverage of the Federal minimum wage laws to include domestic employment;

Whereas in addition to the service of Congresswoman Chisholm as a legislator, Congresswoman Chisholm has worked to improve society as a nursery school teacher, director of a child care facility, consultant for the New York Department of Social Services, and educator; and

Whereas it is appropriate that the dedicated work and outstanding accomplishments of Congresswoman Chisholm be recognized during the month of March, which is National Women's History Month: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the enduring contributions and heroic achievements of Shirley Anita Chisholm; and