



Join the EleWatch Network

(Vannes, February 1st, 2017) – EleWatch is the contraction of "Elephant Watching". It is an observatory and network that promotes an elephant-related ecotourism which is a tourism that is economically viable, socially equitable, and environmentally sustainable. The main goals of this initiative are to develop, monitor, and promote an ecotourism that is respectful of all wild areas where elephants live.

Launched in April 2015, EleWatch conducted an exhaustive assessment of nearly 600 EleWatch sites across Africa and Asia. The first results, published in September 2016, indicate that nearly 70 % of EleWatch sites are under-developed. A summary of those results is available in the following pages.

In 2017, the objective of EleWatch is to develop a collaborative website where all data available on Elephant Watching activities will be published and shared. All stakeholders are invited to contribute to and benefit from this new conservation tool.

Information about wild areas where Elephant-Watching activities are offered or could be developed will be available on the EleWatch website. Therefore, EleWatch will be an essential tool to promote all stakeholders : protected area managers, owners and managers of private reserves, tourism authorities, tour-operators offering Elephant and Wildlife Watching activities, camps and hotels owners and managers, tourist guides, NGOs, and individuals who, professionally or not, are involved in elephant-watching (through photography, science, conservation...).

Through this website, contributing stakeholders will be able to join the network and benefit from the expertise of all registered contributors. Together, we will be able to express the full potential of Elephant-Watching.

If you are interested in the EleWatch Initiative, please feel free to send us an email at contact@elewatch.net , join the [LinkedIn EleWatch](#) group and follow the [Facebook EleWatch](#) page.

Please share this document as much as possible with people you think might be interested in the EleWatch Initiative. Thank you very much in advance !

Julien Marchais – EleWatch Initiative coordinator - www.elewatch.net





EleWatch : To Protect Elephants, Let's go admire them !

Reality and potential development
of national and international ecotourism
in natural areas where elephants live



Edition 2016



Elephant Watching, long-term solution for elephant conservation and positive human-elephant coexistence

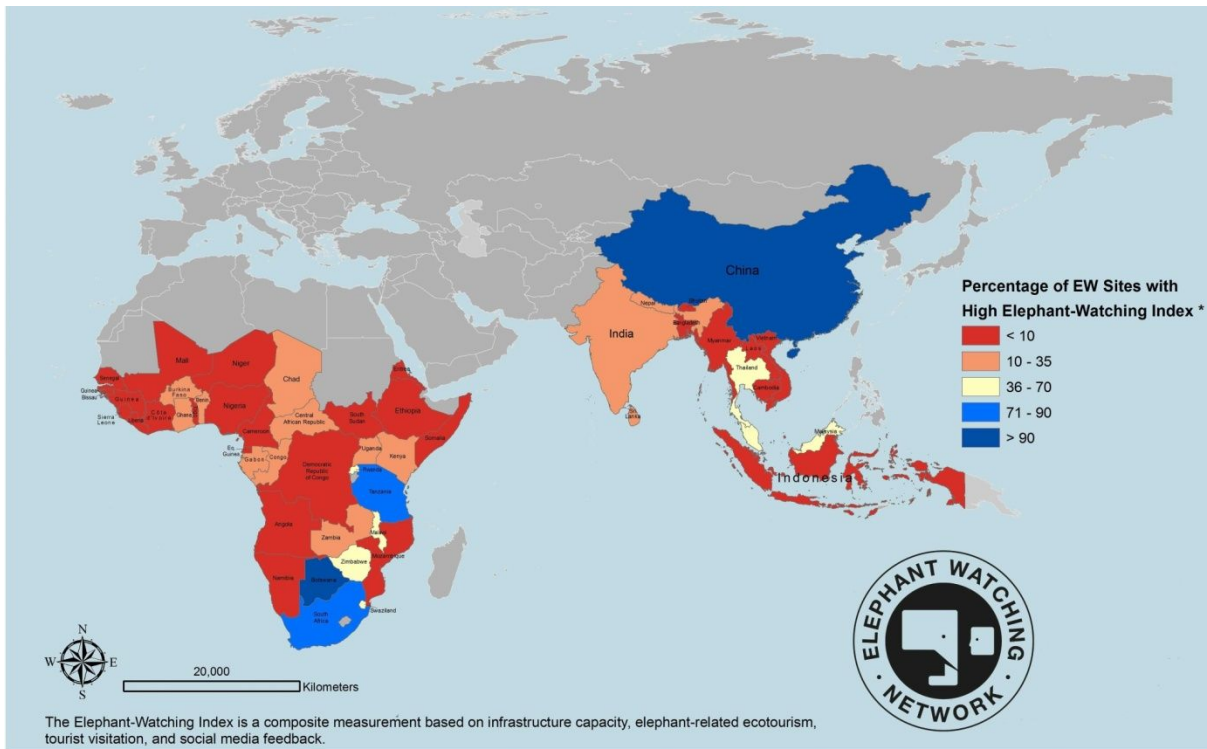
Elephants are fascinating and complex social beings. As ecosystem engineers and “megagardeners of the forests”, elephants modify their environment and are essential to the survival of many species. In addition, they are part of the world heritage and have a long history of associations with humans.

Across their entire geographic range, elephants are subject to ever growing human pressures. In addition to poaching, one of the main threats to their survival is the reduction and fragmentation of their habitats due to exploding human demography. As a result, wherever they exist wild elephants are in conflict with humans often from unprivileged communities struggling to maintain a decent life. To sustainably conserve elephants it is essential to improve human-elephant coexistence.

With the escalating decline of elephants over the last decade, in 2015, the NGOs *Des Eléphants & des Hommes*, supported by *Awely, wildlife and people*, and *IFAW France (International Fund for Animal Welfare)* launched the Elephant-Watching initiative or EleWatch. The mission of EleWatch is to promote the economic and non-economic (ecological, cultural, patrimonial, social, and aesthetic) value of elephants and their natural habitats through development of national and international ecotourism programs across their entire geographic range. EleWatch recognizes inclusive Elephant-Watching ecotourism as an important way forward for long term conservation of elephants and their coexistence with humans. This responsible form of tourism guarantees minimal impacts of ecotourists on wild elephant populations. It represents an economic activity that, if correctly developed, can constitute an efficient barrier against the various threats that elephants face and can support the creation of stable jobs and revenues for local communities.

As a first step, EleWatch investigated 544 natural areas (national parks, private or community reserves, and various protected areas...) spread over 37 African countries and 13 Asian countries where wild elephants are found and can be observed. EleWatch first results indicate that the situation is particularly worrisome: across almost 70% of these natural areas, Elephant-Watching ecotourism is vastly under-developed.

The map below shows a categorization of 50 countries from the geographic range of elephants based on the Elephant Watching Index (EWI). This index, developed by EleWatch, estimates the ecotourism value given to elephants and their habitats (EleWatchMap_EWIndex.jpg (2 MO), available upon request). There is a great disparity among countries that offer Elephant-Watching ecotourism. While regions such as Southern and East Africa have been able to promote Elephant-Watching ecotourism to a certain extent (respectively 57.1% and 31.1%), in West Africa, Central Africa, and most of Asia this activity is barely developed (EWI: respectively 4.3%, 7.8%, and 18.8%). It is important to notice the outstanding performances of Botswana but also surprisingly of China with only one but well promoted site.



EleWatch is sounding the alarm on the surprising lack of value given to elephants and their natural habitats across most of their current geographic range. To fight efficiently against the elephant decline, EleWatch emphasizes that one of the vital solution is to make Elephant-Watching ecotourism a development priority and suggests that countries which are well established destinations for Elephant-Watching be used as advanced models for other countries where this activity has not yet flourished. EleWatch will play a central role in active sharing of knowledge, best practices, and expertise between recognized Elephant-Watching sites, provided there is sufficient political drive and investment power.

To combine elephant conservation efforts, EleWatch is requesting all countries within the geographic range of elephants to join its network and:

1. Associate any project whose aim is to protect elephants with the development of national plans for Elephant-Watching.
2. Develop these national plans following meticulous guidelines to avoid the negative effects of tourism.

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