

Tuesday, 15th of March 2016

Dear Colleagues,

The *Elephants & People*, *IFAW France* and *Awely* NGOs launched in April 2015 the EleWatch Monitoring Initiative, and we would like you to be part of the monitoring network. The objective of EleWatch is to collect and share data and information about ecotourism related to elephants and their natural habitats. (as described in the following pages).

Establishing a network of experts who will contribute to data collection efforts is an important element of EleWatch Initiative. The experts come from a variety of complementary backgrounds, but they all share a common interest in elephant-related tourism. This group of experts includes: directors of National Parks where elephants are protected; owners or managers of private game reserves that contain elephants; local managers of tourism offices; wildlife guides or tour-operators who regularly work in natural areas where elephants can be observed; owners or managers of hotels or camps within or bordering wildlife areas; NGOs that focus on elephant conservation; and individuals who have a professional or personal involvement in elephant observation and conservation (e.g., photographers, scientists, researchers, artists, journalists, writers, politicians, businessmen and businesswomen, etc.).

We hope you will be part of the project. Your contribution to the EleWatch Monitoring Initiative will only require a small annual time commitment (approximately five minutes). However, we encourage you to contribute as much as you wish! All data and information collected will be published on the EleWatch website at [www.elewatch.net](http://www.elewatch.net), and authors will be credited for their contributions.

If you are willing to participate in the EleWatch Monitoring Project, please contact us at [contact@elewatch.net](mailto:contact@elewatch.net) with the following information:

1. Your name, e-mail address, and a brief description of your role as it relates to elephant conservation and elephant watching.
2. The name of the elephant wildlife area(s) you are most knowledgeable about. If possible, please provide the Google Map GPS coordinates (<https://maps.google.com/>) for the main entrance. (e.g., the coordinates for the main entrance to Deux-Balé National Park\* in Burkina Faso, are: 11°44'15.8"N 2°52'17.7"W or 11.737722, -2.871583)
3. The number of visitors recorded at that site for 2015 including the number of national visitors (e.g., for the Deux-Balé National Park, the total number of visitors in 2015 was 214 people, including 109 national visitors). If 2015 visitor data are not available, please send the most recent figure.
4. The approximate average spending of a visitor (entry fees if any, guiding fees, transportation, lodging and food, other local expenses...) (e.g. for the Deux-Balé National park, the average spending is around 60 USD for one day of Elephant Watching)

In addition to your participation, we ask that you distribute this document to any other colleagues or contacts who could contribute to the EleWatch Network. Thank you for your assistance.



Julien Marchais  
coordinator of the EleWatch initiative  
a program conducted by the NGOs "Elephants & People", *IFAW France* and *Awely*

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\*Data for Deux Balé National Park have been provided by Mr. Harouna Sawadogo, the Park Director. He has provided statistics for 2009 to 2013, which have enabled us to compute annual averages and assess recent ecotourism trends.





**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

## Rationale

Surprisingly, several long-term studies have been dedicated to the value of dead elephants (MIKE, ETIS), but no studies have been designed to monitor the value of living elephants. As a result, we can trace illegal trafficking of ivory and elephant poaching and quantify the financial value of these activities, but we cannot compare these figures to the value of legal elephant-related tourism!

To fill this gap, we launched the EleWatch Monitoring Initiative in April 2015. This initiative focuses on the economic and non-economic (ecological, cultural, aesthetic...) values of elephants and their natural habitats as they relate to national and international ecotourism throughout African and Asian elephants' range (50 countries).

EleWatch has five major action-oriented objectives:

- Provide accurate and reliable data on the reality and potential of elephant-watching based tourism, country by country and site by site, to show where these activities have been successful and to highlight disparities in ecotourism across elephants' range. This information will be used to target investments to regions where ecotourism is under-developed but highly feasible.
- Provide decision makers, investors and stakeholders with case studies and information required to foster elephant-watching based tourism in areas where current ecotourism development is limited.
- Create a dedicated network where all stakeholders, especially those who coexist with elephants, can communicate about current models of ecotourism and work toward advancing elephant-watching based tourism for the benefit of local communities.
- Mobilize elephant enthusiasts, both international and those in elephant range countries, to promote elephant-related ecotourism and increase the flow of visitors to wildlife sites where tourism is still very low. Together, the EleWatch community will develop a strong political voice to encourage ecotourism that maintains elephants in their natural habitats.
- Contribute to the emergence of best practices related to elephant-watching tourism, whether elephants are wild or under human care, to build consensus around the necessary conditions for maintaining elephants.

Our fifteen years of field experience, has convinced us that the economic and non-economic values of elephants and their natural habitats must bring enough benefits to the communities that coexist with them if elephant conservation is to be sustainable in the future. The challenge is not only to conserve elephants and wildlife, but also to significantly improve the welfare of the underprivileged populations that coexist with elephants through a sustainable ecotourism model that creates jobs and yields revenues. This can only be achieved through sound investment and carefully conceived operations that generate substantial benefits that are shared fairly among stakeholders.

The EleWatch monitoring initiative has been launched by three French NGOs with the goal of becoming an international tool shared by all stakeholders concerned with elephants conservation and positive human-elephant coexistence. A monitoring panel is being formed to advance the progress of the EleWatch initiative, foster its implementation, and build a strong Elephant Watching Network. Any individual who has knowledge and experience with elephant-watching based tourism is invited to join the *LinkedIn group*:

<https://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=8295342>.

Moreover, to create a large and diverse community including all elephant enthusiasts, anyone interested in elephant watching can join us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/DesElephantsEtDesHommes> (French)

<https://www.facebook.com/elephantsandpeople> (English)

All volunteers eager to replicate these pages in their own languages are most welcome. We also hope to create a network of EleWatch pages in all elephant range countries. If you can assist us with this, please contact us at [contact@elewatch.net](mailto:contact@elewatch.net).

*Previous page : Draft of the cover page of the first EleWatch annual report planned for September 2016.*