

115TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 4819

To promote inclusive economic growth through conservation and biodiversity programs that facilitate transboundary cooperation, improve natural resource management, and build local capacity to protect and preserve threatened wildlife species in the greater Okavango River Basin of southern Africa.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 18, 2018

Mr. FORTENBERRY (for himself, Mr. ROYCE of California, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mrs. LAWRENCE, and Ms. BASS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

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## A BILL

To promote inclusive economic growth through conservation and biodiversity programs that facilitate transboundary cooperation, improve natural resource management, and build local capacity to protect and preserve threatened wildlife species in the greater Okavango River Basin of southern Africa.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Defending Economic  
3 Livelihoods and Threatened Animals Act” or the  
4 “DELTA Act”.

5 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

6 Congress finds the following:

7 (1) The greater Okavango River Basin, which  
8 ranges from the highland plateau of northern Angola  
9 to northeastern Namibia and northern Botswana, is  
10 the largest freshwater wetland in southern Africa.

11 (2) The greater Okavango River Basin is the  
12 main source of water and livelihoods for over a mil-  
13 lion people, and the effective management and pro-  
14 tection of this critical watershed will help advance  
15 important conservation and economic growth objec-  
16 tives for such countries, local communities, and the  
17 broader region.

18 (3) The greater Okavango River Basin is home  
19 to the largest remaining elephant population in the  
20 world, as well as other threatened wildlife species.

21 (4) Poaching and trafficking of threatened wild-  
22 life species in the greater Okavango River Basin has  
23 increased in recent years, and has the potential to  
24 undermine regional stability by disrupting local gov-  
25 ernance and management of resources, and sup-

1 planting key economic opportunities for community  
2 members.

3 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

4 It is the sense of Congress that it is in the strategic  
5 interest of the United States to engage with the Govern-  
6 ments of Angola, Botswana, and Namibia, along with do-  
7 nors, regional organizations, nongovernmental organiza-  
8 tions, local communities, and the private sector, to ad-  
9 vance conservation efforts and promote economic growth  
10 and stability in the greater Okavango River Basin.

11 **SEC. 4. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

12 It is the policy of the United States to promote inclu-  
13 sive economic growth through conservation and biodiver-  
14 sity programs that facilitate transboundary cooperation,  
15 improve natural resource management, and build local ca-  
16 pacity to protect and preserve threatened wildlife species  
17 in the greater Okavango River Basin.

18 **SEC. 5. STRATEGY.**

19 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State and the  
20 Administrator of the United States Agency for Inter-  
21 national Development, in coordination with other relevant  
22 Federal agencies, shall seek to work with the Governments  
23 of Angola, Botswana, and Namibia, and in partnership  
24 with donors, regional organizations, nongovernmental or-

1 ganizations, local communities, and the private sector, to  
2 develop a strategy to—

3           (1) create and advance a cooperative framework  
4           to promote sustainable natural resource and wildlife  
5           management practices in the greater Okavango  
6           River Basin;

7           (2) protect traditional migration routes of ele-  
8           phants and other threatened wildlife species;

9           (3) combat wildlife poaching and trafficking;

10           (4) address human health and development  
11           needs of local communities; and

12           (5) catalyze economic growth in such countries  
13           and across the broader region.

14           (b) ELEMENTS.—The strategy established pursuant  
15 to subsection (a) shall include a description of efforts to—

16           (1) promote cooperative and sustainable natural  
17           resource and wildlife management policies and prac-  
18           tices within and among the countries of Angola, Bot-  
19           swana, and Namibia, with a particular focus on the  
20           greater Okavango River Basin;

21           (2) protect and restore wildlife habitats and  
22           traditional migratory patterns of elephants and  
23           other threatened species;

24           (3) combat wildlife poaching and trafficking in  
25           Angola, Botswana, and Namibia, including within

1 regional and national parks and reserves, by building  
2 the capacity of the governments of such countries,  
3 local law enforcement, community leaders, and park  
4 rangers to detect, disrupt, and prosecute poachers  
5 and traffickers;

6 (4) promote conservation as a foundation for  
7 inclusive economic growth and development within a  
8 comprehensive assistance strategy that places An-  
9 gola, Botswana, and Namibia on a trajectory toward  
10 graduation from the need for foreign assistance;

11 (5) identify opportunities and mechanisms to le-  
12 verage public-private partnerships to contribute to  
13 support the implementation of this strategy; and

14 (6) establish monitoring and evaluation mecha-  
15 nisms, to include measurable goals, objectives, and  
16 benchmarks of success, that are included in grants,  
17 contracts, cooperative agreements to ensure the ef-  
18 fective use of United States foreign assistance.

19 **SEC. 6. UNITED STATES SUPPORT FOR RESPONSIBLE NAT-**  
20 **URAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND ELE-**  
21 **PHANT CONSERVATION.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State and the  
23 Administrator of the United States Agency for Inter-  
24 national Development, in coordination with other relevant

1 Federal agencies, are authorized to prioritize and advance  
2 ongoing efforts to—

3 (1) promote inclusive economic growth through  
4 responsible natural resource management and wild-  
5 life protection activities in the greater Okavango  
6 River Basin;

7 (2) provide technical assistance to governments  
8 and local communities in Angola, Botswana, and  
9 Namibia to create a policy-enabling environment for  
10 such natural resource management and wildlife pro-  
11 tection activities; and

12 (3) build the capacity of local law enforcement,  
13 park rangers, and community leaders to combat  
14 wildlife poaching and trafficking.

15 (b) COORDINATION WITH PRIVATE SECTOR.—The  
16 Secretary, the Administrator, and other relevant Federal  
17 agencies are authorized to work with the private sector  
18 and nongovernmental organizations to leverage public and  
19 private capital to promote sustainable resource manage-  
20 ment, combat wildlife poaching and trafficking, and sup-  
21 port inclusive economic growth and local livelihoods in the  
22 greater Okavango River Basin.

23 (c) MONITORING AND EVALUATION.—The Secretary  
24 and the Administrator shall establish monitoring and eval-  
25 uation mechanisms, to include measurable goals, objec-

1 tives, and benchmarks, to ensure the effective use of  
2 United States foreign assistance to achieve the objectives  
3 of this Act.

4 **SEC. 7. REPORT.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the  
6 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State  
7 and the Administrator of the United States Agency for  
8 International Development, in coordination with other rel-  
9 evant Federal agencies, shall submit to the appropriate  
10 congressional committees a report on the implementation  
11 of this Act.

12 (b) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The report re-  
13 quired under subsection (a) shall include a description of  
14 the strategy required by section 5, including—

15 (1) the monitoring and evaluation plans and in-  
16 dicators used to measure performance under the  
17 strategy;

18 (2) any legislative impediments to meeting the  
19 objectives of such strategy;

20 (3) the extent to which Angola, Botswana, and  
21 Namibia have demonstrated a commitment and will-  
22 ingness to cooperate to advance efforts described in  
23 section 5(b); and

24 (4) progress made to date in meeting the objec-  
25 tives of such strategy.

1           (c) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term “appro-  
2   priate congressional committees” means—

3           (1) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the  
4   Committee on Appropriations of the House of Rep-  
5   resentatives; and

6           (2) the Committee on Foreign Relations and  
7   the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

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