

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.

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

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-

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

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

(2) protect traditional migration routes of elephants and other threatened wildlife species;

(3) combat wildlife poaching and trafficking;

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

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

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

(1) promote cooperative and sustainable natural
resource and wildlife management policies and practices within and among the countries of Angola, Botswana, and Namibia, with a particular focus on the greater Okavango River Basin;

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

(3) combat wildlife poaching and trafficking in
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 pate 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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