



September 25, 2017

Mr. Shintaro Yamada
 Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer
 Mercari, Inc.
 P.O. Box 171
 San Francisco, CA 94104

Mr. Ryo Ishizuka
 Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer
 Mercari, Inc.
 P.O. Box 171
 San Francisco, CA 94104

Mr. Tommy Tomishima
 Co-founder and CPO
 Mercari, Inc.
 P.O. Box 171
 San Francisco, CA 94104

Dear Mr. Yamada, Mr. Ishizuka, and Mr. Tomishima:

I am writing on behalf of the undersigned 28 organizations to appeal to you to cease all of Mercari's sales of elephant ivory products. In the midst of a global elephant poaching crisis, we urge you to end Mercari's role in the ivory trade, and to support African and Asian elephant range states in protecting their iconic elephants from this destructive trade.

Mercari's role in Japan's ivory market is significant and growing. A recent report¹ by a non-government organization documented 573 ivory items, excluding whole tusks and semi-processed ivory, available for sale via Mercari in a four-week snapshot analysis in May-June 2017. An average of 143 advertisements

¹ <http://www.traffic.org/home/2017/8/8/traffic-surveys-find-thousands-of-ivory-items-sold-weekly-on.html>

were added every week, with a significant number of sellers offering multiple ivory items, indicating that ivory traders are using diverse online channels to sell their products. Especially problematic is that only three out of nine whole tusks were posted with the required registration cards, and several items' descriptions about their origins clearly indicated they were obtained illegally.

Recently in Japan, two major retail outlets have taken strides to eliminate elephant ivory sales. Rakuten Ichiba, Japan's leading e-commerce company, enacted a policy prohibiting all ivory product sales which went into effect August 1st. That policy is expected to be extended to your customer to customer sales competitor, Rakuma. AEON, one of Japan's largest retail companies with more than 50 malls across Japan, prohibited ivory sales in its directly managed stores in June 2015 and recently announced it is expanding its policy to all mall tenants, phasing out all sales of elephant ivory by tenants in all AEON malls across Japan by March 2020.

In addition to Rakuten and AEON, most major retail companies have adopted policies to ensure that endangered and threatened species are protected from commercial trade. E-commerce industry leaders eBay, Etsy, Amazon, Google, Alibaba, Tencent, and Taobao have already enacted laudable policies that prohibit the sale of elephant ivory products on their sites globally. We encourage Mercari, as Japan's leading customer to customer marketplace and a globally mindful and growing company, to urgently cease all ivory sales consistent with its peers to protect elephants.

Poaching for ivory is driving the slaughter of 20,000 – 30,000 African elephants a year. It is the main cause of decline in Africa's elephants, and the trade in ivory. Poaching fuels and is fueled by corruption, undermines the rule-of-law, costs the lives of rangers and community members, and is having a destabilizing effect on rural communities, many of whom rely on elephant-based ecotourism. A recent continent-wide census showed that elephant populations in southern and eastern Africa had declined by nearly 30 percent from 2007 to 2014.

It is now widely recognized that all ivory markets contribute to the illegal trade. The vast majority of African elephant range states now support banning the ivory trade and there is a clear global momentum to close down all ivory markets. The United States finalized a near-total ivory ban in 2016, China's ban will go into effect by the end of 2017 and Hong Kong SAR has also announced plans to end domestic ivory trade. There is also extensive public support for closure of domestic ivory markets globally including in Europe. For example, an opinion poll carried out in September 2016 in the United Kingdom suggested that 85 percent of respondents supported a complete ban on all trade in ivory. At the last meeting of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in October 2016, representatives agreed by consensus to adopt a resolution recommending that all nations contributing to illegal trade or poaching close domestic ivory markets urgently.

Unfortunately, despite any admirable attempts by the private sector to strengthen controls and increases monitoring of ivory items, the flaws in the Government of Japan's controls are unable to prevent illegal ivory from entering the market. Japan's poorly regulated market makes it incredibly easy for illegal ivory to be laundered onto the legal marketplace – its controls are a façade. Thus, the only course of action to ensure no illegal ivory is sold via Mercari is to ban all sales of elephant ivory.

Retailers that continue to sell elephant ivory are stimulating the demand for ivory products and facilitating loopholes that enable the laundering of illicit ivory. We hope Mercari will eliminate its sales of elephant ivory and its role in the ivory trade, and thus demonstrate a comprehensive and progressive global commitment to sustainability and protecting wildlife.

We would be grateful to speak with you or your representative about this matter. Please contact my colleague, Amy Zets Croke at amyzets@eia-global.org, to reply to our correspondence or to arrange a call or meeting.

Thank you in advance for your positive reply to our appeal to help protect Africa's iconic elephants.

Sincerely,



Allan Thornton, OBE
President
Environmental Investigation Agency

On behalf of:

African Wildlife Foundation
Animals Asia Foundation
Animal Welfare Institute
Born Free Foundation
Born Free USA
Campaign Against Canned Hunting, South Africa
Center for Biological Diversity
David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation
Elephant Action League
Elephants Without Borders
For the Love of Wildlife Limited
Future For Elephants
Generation Awakening
Global March for Elephants and Rhinos
Gordon Consulting
Humane Society International
In Defense of Animals
International Fund for Animal Welfare
Japan Tiger and Elephant Fund
Japan Wildlife Conservation Society
OliveSeed Foundation
Outraged SA Citizens Against Rhino Rhino Poaching (OSCAP)
Pro Wildlife
Southern Tanzania Elephant Program (STEP)
Species Survival Network
Tears of the African Elephant
Wildlife of Africa Conservation Initiative (WACI)

Enclosed: *The Dirty Secrets of Japan's Illegal Ivory Trade*

CC: Ren Ito, Executive Officer of Mercari, Inc.; Managing Director and CEO of Mercari
Europe Ltd.
John Lagerling, Executive Director and Chief Business Officer
Lisa Lechner, Chief Compliance Officer