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# Ivory and Insurgency -
# The Securitization of Poaching and
# Illegal Wildlife Trade in Africa

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I, Helle Haukvik, declare that this thesis is a result of my research investigations and findings. Sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been appended. This work has not been previously submitted to any other university for award of any type of academic degree.

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## Acknowledgements

## Abstract

The issue of poaching and illegal wildlife trade (IWT) in Africa has transformed from being a biodiversity concern to being considered a matter of security. Since 2010, it has been declared a threat to national and even global security by a wide range of actors including the United Nations, the EU and the White House. This thesis use securitization theory and discourse analysis to investigate how and why this development has taken place.

By analysing the discourses within and between major global actors, the analysis shows that the current global discourse of security is characterized by a "double threat presentation", where biodiversity and international security are both presented as existentially threatened through poaching and illegal wildlife trade. This development is explained by five main enabling factors. First, evidence suggests that the threat against species survival have escalated along with the Western fears of (Islamic) armed groups. In addition, the threat presentation fitted well to the U.S.' strategic goals and identity as a security state in the post-9/11-context. The role of Africa in global politics is also likely to have facilitated a securitization. Furthermore, powerful environmental NGOs played an essential role as initial securitizing actors and they still continue to exert significant influence on anti-poaching policy and practices. The growing number of private actors within security and technology have also had vested interests in establishing and manitaining a successful securitization discourse. Potential consequences of the securitization are also discussed. These include effects on anti-poaching practices and the risk that African states lose more power to outside actors. Lastly, the positive and negative aspects of bringing the security logic into conservation are highlighted.

The analysis indicates that a securitization has occurred. However, this thesis argues that a security perspective is unlikely to be effective neither regarding species survival or the prevention of wildlife resource trades as threat finance. In particular, it should be ensured that security arguments are not used to justify extreme measures and that sensational security claims are not allowed to detract attention from the underlying causes of poaching and IWT. The results of this thesis indicate that securitization theory can be a useful perspective for analysing environmental issues.

# List of Acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| **AU** | African Union |
| **AFRICOM** | United States Africa Command |
| **CDA** | Critical Discourse Analysis |
| **CITES** | Convention on Illegal Trade in Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna |
| **CS** | Copenhagen School |
| **EAGLE** | Eco Activists for Governance and Law Enforcement |
| **EAL** | Elephant Action League |
| **ETIS** | Elephant Trade Information System |
| **EU** | European Union |
| **GEF** | Global Environmental Facility |
| **ICCN** | Insitut Congolaise pour la Conservation de la Nature |
| **ICCWC** | International Consortium for Combating Wildlife Crime |
| **IFAW** | International Fund for Animal Welfare |
| **INTERPOL** | The International Criminal Policy Organisation |
| **IR** | International Relations |
| **IUCN** | International Union for Conservation of Nature |
| **IWT** | Illegal Wildlife Trade |
| **LRA** | Lord's Resistance Army |
| **MIKE** | Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants |
| **NGO** | Non-governmental Organisation |
| **PIKE** | Proportion of Illegally Killed Elephants |
| **SADC** | Southern African Development Community |
| **TRAFFIC** | The Wildlife Trade Monitoring Network |
| **UNODC** | United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime |
| **UNDP** | United Nations Development Programme |
| **UNEP** | United Nations Environmental Programme |
| **U.S.** | United States |
| **USGAO** | U.S. Government Accountability Office |
| **WCS** | Wildlife Conservation Society |
| **WWF** | World Wildlife Fund |

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# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

## 1.1 Introduction

*"The deadly path of conflict ivory starts with the slaughter of innocent animals and ends in the slaughter of innocent people"* (Kalron and Crosta, 2013)

Increasing evidence suggests that the world is witnessing almost unprecedented rates of biodiversity loss. Wildlife constitutes a minor, but essential part of the planet's biodiversity as well as a significant contribution to the economy through tourism revenues in many countries. In Africa, poaching and the accompanying illegal wildlife trade are thought to be an increasingly important factor for the decline in large mammals, adding on to existing threats from climate change and habitat destruction (Haenlein and Smith, 2016). But in addition to constituting a biodiversity threat, the issue of poaching and illegal wildlife trade (IWT) is increasingly framed as a matter of security. An emerging discourse links poaching and illegal wildlife trade to the funding of armed groups, conflict and insurgency, and claims that it therefore constitutes a threat to our security. While traditionally considered to be a conservation issue, the problem is now increasingly presented as an urgent security threat. This thesis aims at analysing how and why poaching and illegal wildlife trade has "turned to security". It will use securitization theory and discourse analysis to investigate the transformation process of poaching and IWT from biology to security, and to identify the main characteristics of the new security discourse. Moreover, it will discuss how this development can be explained, and the potential consequences of the securitization.

## 1.2. Background

The illegal wildlife trade is part of a rapidly growing sector of environmental crime which also includes illegal trade in flora, logging, fishing, mining and waste. In 2016, the value of environmental crime was estimated to be the fourth largest crime sector in the world after drug trafficking, counterfeit crimes and human trafficking. With an annual value of 7-23 billion UDS, illegal wildlife trade is considered to be a relatively low-risk way of making high profits (Nellemann (eds.) et al, 2016). Increasing attention is currently being given to the role of professional criminal networks in the trade, as well as the role of illegal wildlife trade in financing conflict and armed groups, so-called threat finance. Traditionally, poaching and illegal wildlife trade has been considered a conservation issue best dealt with by biologists, conservationists, game rangers and bureaucrats (Rademeyer, 2016).

Although the nature of the illegal wildlife trade is truly global and involves countries all over the world, the current rise in demand is mainly ascribed to an expanding middle class in China and other Asian countries (see e.g. Gao and Clark 2014; Sollund and Maher, 2015). The value of the trade rise with the increased demand, and rhino horn is now thought to be worth up to $60 000 per kg (Hübschle, 2016, p. 17).

Since around 2010, media, national governments and various organizations has come to embrace the idea that poaching and illegal wildlife trade is not just an urgent crisis for biodiversity, but also a major contributor to global insecurity. The discursive link between poaching, illegal wildlife trade and security has turned out to be a powerful one, perhaps explained by these remarks by Hillary Clinton at the Partnership Meeting on Wildlife Trafficking in 2012: "(…) there´s something for everybody. If you love animals, if you want a more secure world, if you want our economy not to be corrupted globally by this kind of illicit behaviour (…)" (Clinton, 2012). The White House has characterized poaching and illegal wildlife trade as fuelling instability, undermining security and posing "a serious and urgent threat to…global security" (White House, 2013). Elephant ivory has been the subject of particularly dramatic metaphors, referred to for example as "the white gold of jihad", as well as claims that it contributes to financing armed groups and even terrorists (Kalron and Crosta, 2013).

Over the recent years, large amounts of funding and attention has been given to the poaching and IWT-problem. Between 2010 and June 2016, a total of 1.33 billion USD was committed by 24 international donors to 1105 projects aiming to reduce poaching and illegal wildlife trade in Africa and Asia. A majority (63 %) of the funds were committed to Africa (Secretariat of the Hanoi Conference, 2016). In the same time period, Western states were worried about insurgency and terror developing in Africa and spreading to the rest of the world. The link between poaching, IWT and security represents a chance to "kill two birds with one stone"; saving vulnerable animals and making the world a safer place at the same time.

But the turn to security is controversial. Critics fear that security arguments can draw focus away from the real, underlying causes of poaching and IWT and be used to disguise other, underlying motivations that are not in the interest of either wildlife or security (Duffy, 2014; Lunstrum, 2014). Furthermore, fears have been voiced that the security focus could make

anti-poaching practices more extreme, potentially using security arguments to legitimate violence. According to Duffy (2015) this could result in a shift from "war for biodiversity" to "war by conservation".

In the following I start by explaining and justifying my choice of research problem, before clarifying my core concepts of poaching, illegal wildlife trade and securitization. In chapter 2, after a brief literature review, I will introduce the field of International Relations security studies and the way securitization theory fits into it. The core concepts of the Copenhagen School securitization will be explained before presenting the variant employed in this thesis: a modified securitization theory inspired primarily by Balzacq (2011) and Croft (2012). Chapter 3 on methodology will show how securitization theory and critical discourse analysis was applied in the analysis, before presenting the results in chapter 4. This chapter is built up corresponding to my research questions 1-4: First I will describe the main characteristics of the security discourse, then discuss the securitization process. Subsequently, I will discuss the factors making securitization possible before examining the potential consequences of this turn to security. Finally, I will summarize my main findings and make recommendations for the way forward.

## 1.3. Identifying a research problem

As a veterinarian doing parts of my studies in South Africa and Kenya, and with a long-lasting interest in animals and nature conservation, I noticed a shift in the framing of poaching and illegal wildlife trade a couple of years ago. Up until this point, the threats to biodiversity had been apparent, but vague and complicated because they were part of much larger development processes. The most commonly referred threats to wildlife populations used to be settlement expansion leading to habitat destruction, or disruption of ecosystems by pollution, climate change or disease. Poaching had also often been mentioned as a threat to key species, but when the new alleged connections to security and terrorism were introduced, causal relationships suddenly seemed simpler, and the solutions closer. While this immediately seemed compelling, I started to wonder whether this assumed nexus could be too simplistic.

Was it really true that poaching and illegal wildlife trade undermines international security through funding insurgencies and terrorism? And if so; could we solve the problem by declaring a "war on poaching"? My personal impression was that waging such wars in general

were unlikely to be a simple or wise solution. However, I wanted to investigate the subject in more depth. When I started my studies of International Relations and became acquainted with securitization theory, I realized that the term "securitization" seemed to describe what was happening to poaching and illegal wildlife trade. The first part of any thesis is to identify an issue to investigate, and I had thus found mine.

Before proceeding it was essential to decide for sure whether this issue was actually suitable for a securitization analysis. According to Balzacq (2011, p.32) at least one of two criteria should be fulfilled for this to be the case: "it should be a focus of public attention or debate" and/or «"he issue should be a target for activities related to public opinion or legal and/or political actions". It seemed clear that the case of poaching and illegal wildlife trade fulfilled both of these criteria and trusting Balzacq I felt confident to go ahead with my analysis.

## 1.4. Objectives and research questions

Securitization analysis is a study of threats and their representations. In general, the main questions of any study performing a securitization analysis are: What makes something a threat? What, or who, is threatened? Why is this issue considered to be a threat at that time? (Buzan, Wæver and De Wilde, 1998, p.32) These questions also formed the basis for my research questions.

My overall objective was to investigate the securitization discourse, explain how and why poaching and illegal wildlife trade had become securitized, and discuss the potential consequences of the securitization. My research questions were:

1. **What characterized global security discourses on poaching and illegal wildlife trade in Africa in the period 2010-2017?**
2. **To what degree has poaching and illegal wildlife trade in Africa become securitized?**
3. **Which factors can explain the turn to security?**
4. **What are the potential consequences of a security framing?**

## 1.5. Justification

As the focus on the link between conservation and security is quite recent, there has not yet been extensive research on this topic. Although attention is currently increasing, various authors have pointed out that scholarly knowledge is lacking (Duffy, 2014; Elliot, 2016; Lunstrum, 2014). An analysis of the discourse on poaching and illegal wildlife trade can contribute to the understanding of how and why the issue became securitized by shedding light on which assumptions and knowledge claims that underlie the threat presentations made by the various actors.

Additionally, despite the word "securitization" occasionally being used on this topic, it's use has been superficial, i.e. without elaborating on the concept or making further use of securitization theory. This study aims to contribute towards filling this knowledge gap. Although conservation is clearly a global environmental issue, perspectives from International Relations scholars have been few and far between. Hopefully, the perspectives of securitization theory employed in this thesis will prove to be a relevant contribution.

## 1.6. Core concepts: defining poaching and illegal wildlife trade

Before proceeding with the analysis, it is necessary to define the core concepts of my research questions. Conceptualization is essential because properly defined concepts are "thinking tools" for the researcher that will guide the rest of the analysis (Leander, 2008). It is therefore necessary to specify the central terms used in this thesis, in particular "poaching", "illegal wildlife trade" and "securitization".

Regarding the subject of illegally hunting or taking of wildlife and the onward trade of these products up until it reaches the consumer, there is no unanimous term which is agreed upon. Illegal wildlife trade, wildlife crime and wildlife trafficking seem to be used interchangeably, and often without a clear definition. The word "poaching", i.e. the actual acquisition by hunting and most often killing wildlife, is sometimes included and sometimes not.

This observation is in accordance with Haenlein and Smith (2016), who states that the international community lacks a common definition, as well as a common understanding, of what constitutes illegal trade in wildlife. The International Consortium on Combatting Wildlife Crime, a collaboration between CITES, INTERPOL, UNODC, World Bank Group

and World Customs Organization, use the term "wildlife crime" and include "all fauna and flora" in their definition (CITES, n.d.). The EU uses the term "wildlife trafficking" in their action plan, defining it as "international and non-international illegal trade in wild animals and plants and derived products, and closely interlinked offences such as poaching" (European Union, 2016, p.7). In their report on environmental crime, UNEP and INTERPOL use the term "illegal trade and poaching of wildlife and plants", treating it as a subtype of environmental crime separate from e.g. illegal fishing, logging and mining (Nellemann (eds.) et al., 2016). The wildlife trade monitoring network TRAFFIC use the word "wildlife trade" defined as "any sale or exchange of wild animal and plant resources by people" and makes no separation between legal and illegal trade (TRAFFIC, 2018), while CITES, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, use "wildlife crime" in order to encompass the whole process from poaching to processing, transport, export, sale, possession and laundering of associated financial benefits from both fauna and flora (CITES, n.d.).

Because no unanimous definition is agreed upon, I have chosen one that I felt gave the most straight-forward description of the problem. This thesis has thus used the term "poaching" to refer to the illegal killing and/or taking of wild animals from its natural environment, not including flora, fishing or logging. The subsequent process of transportation, buying and selling will be referred to as "illegal wildlife trade", abbreviated IWT. Seeing that the analysed texts are often unspecific and seldom separate between the two, they will primarily be analysed together, referring to the whole chain of events as "poaching and IWT". Importantly, poaching is not an uncontroversial term. Originating during the colonial era, the term «poaching» was ascribed to traditional African hunting practices that were criminalised by the settlers, while "hunting" referred to European hunting practices that remained legal, in practice transferring control over wildlife resources to Europeans. According to Somerville, "the criminalisation of indigenous hunting under colonialism enabled corruption to become the core of the illicit hunting and trading networks" (2016, p.242). Whether various types of hunting should be legal, or illegal are still very much debated, and the criminalisation of poaching is discussed extensively elsewhere. However, because the term is still widely used both in oral language and academic writing despite its historical connotations, I will also employ it in this thesis. I thereby take for granted the existing definitions of illegal killing of wildlife, without going into whether the underlying criminalisation in each case is right or wrong, or whether it is a case of subsistence hunting by local inhabitants or organized activity

by professional, foreign actors.

There are generally considered to be two main types of poaching: "Poaching for the pot" is typically subsistence hunting in rural communities, which involves killing small and medium sized game for meat ("bushmeat"). This type of hunting can be an important source of protein in many areas but might be illegal regardless of whether it affects endangered species, e.g. because it takes place within a protected area or use traditional hunting methods which are no longer allowed such as snares or poisoned arrows.

The other type of poaching is "poaching for profit", which is when the hunting is done for commercial purposes other than meat and often by external rather than local actors. The classical example of this would be the hunting of elephants for ivory, in which their tusks are cut off and taken away while the rest of the elephant carcass is left behind. To what extent which type is dominant, and to what degree this poaching for profit has become professionalized is subject to debate. Some hold that the majority of poachers are still poor subsistence hunters regardless of potential opportunistic involvement with larger networks, while others focus on the role of large mafia-like cartels that hunt professionally using high-tech military equipment and even helicopters. As we will see, the security discourse often ignores this difference. To further complicate the picture, hunting for bushmeat is no longer necessarily only associated with subsistence hunting. Increasingly, bushmeat is also traded and exported domestically to urban populations which have no problem accessing other sources of meat but eat bushmeat for traditional or cultural reasons (Lindsey et al., 2013). Another central "thinking tool" needed for the analysis is the theoretical concept of "securitization". Balzacq proposes to define securitization as "a set of interrelated practices, and the processes of their production, diffusion, and reception/translation that bring threats into being" (2011, p. xiiv). This definition fits well with the way the securitization term is used in this thesis and will be expanded on in the theory chapter.

## 1.7. Narrowing the focus: limitations

I investigated the time period from 2010-2017, because it is during this period that the link between security, poaching and illegal wildlife trade became widespread. Importantly, I was interested in characteristics of the discourse on poaching and IWT concerning *security*. Although a thorough analysis of all aspects of the poaching and IWT discourse would be interesting, this is outside the scope of this thesis. Consequently, although I aimed to include a wide range of actors within each actor group, it will be the ones where the security discourse

is present that are emphasized because it is only among these that the security perspective can be analysed.

Additionally, my focus on security means that it is the first part of the illegal wildlife trade chain that is in focus. Issues concerning transport, smuggling and not least demand are without a doubt also important, but because the security perspective relates mainly to the supply-side of the trade chain, this is what I will emphasize.

Similarly, the species that are most frequently mentioned in security terms are African elephants and rhino. Although it did turn out that many documents about poaching and IWT did not specify species or even area, I concentrated on poaching and illegal wildlife trade on the African continent, excluding e.g. documents concerning illegal trade in tiger parts. Although it was not my initial intention to focus on the "poster species" elephants and rhino, data on these species are by far most extensive and most easily accessible. Also, being the ones most often associated with security concerns, they ended up being quite central also to my analysis.

Because illegal wildlife trade crosses borders, and as the security implications are allegedly also global, I decided to analyse the problem on a global level. This means that I examine the framing by a variety of powerful international actors such as states and NGOs, well suited for theories of International Relations. It also means, however, that I had to keep focus on global and regional organisations and states without taking into account their internal debates and nuances. I am aware that to present the whole of the U.S. or EU, every environmental NGO or the whole of Africa as having a unified opinion on a complex issue such as poaching and illegal wildlife trade is a somewhat problematic simplification. Still, these actors often do present common positions at global level events. In the case of Africa, I am aware that there are regular disagreements about conservation policies regarding hunting and sale of confiscated wildlife products between Eastern Africa (often headed by Kenya) and Southern Africa (often headed by South Africa). I did, however, find that although the details of anti-poaching practices are of course different in every country, a division between East and South did not seem prominent in the analysed African documents. All in all, I believe that this simplification was justified and necessary in order to be able to perform this analysis on a global level within the scope of a master thesis.

## 1.8. Reflection on own role and biases

Working with texts is challenging because texts can have several "meaning potentials": they can be interpreted in different ways by different readers. Based on the background and competence of the reader, she will find different nuances and highlight various parts of the text as more relevant compared to other readers. According to Neumann, "a researcher needs a basic level of cultural competence to recognize the shared understandings that create a common frame of reference" (2008, p.63). This means that in order to be able to analyse and understand texts about poaching and illegal wildlife trade on the African continent, the researcher should have a basic degree of cultural and academic competence on wildlife, conservation and Africa.

I had followed the framing of African wildlife issues for a while. When becoming a veterinarian, I did parts of my studies in South Africa, and in the thesis for my bachelor's degree in Sub-Saharan African Studies I investigated the narrative of a WWF conservation project in Namibia. I have travelled extensively on the continent and briefly been part of the conservation community, attending symposiums and field courses on wildlife conservation as a veterinarian. Throughout this process, I have often been baffled by the influence of foreigners like myself on African conservation and about the way African issues in general are portrayed in the West. My own experience of Africans as both competent and capable is not commonly reflected in Western discourse on Africa, not either in the case of wildlife conservation. Although important, I believe that the focus on wildlife too often leave out people living with wildlife in their daily life. These reflections are likely to have influenced the position of this thesis.

All in all, I decided that I did have a basic level of cultural competence necessary to perform this analysis. Ultimately, whether you are a foreigner like me or a native inhabitant, the most important part is to be aware of your own background and reflect on how it influences your interpretations (Neumann, 2008). I hope that the introduction above has revealed my own position and potential biases as someone with a strong interest in wildlife conservation, but also a critical position to power relations in conservation, the relationship between wildlife and human livelihoods and the portrayal of Africa in the West. Although it is impossible to rid myself of these potential biases, I have tried to pay attention to them throughout the research process. There is still always a possibility that someone else might have made different interpretations.

# CHAPTER 2: LITTERATURE REVIEW AND THEORY

## 2.1 Literature review

Studies of poaching and illegal wildlife trade have been carried out from a wide range of perspectives from various disciplines. Different fields often tend to research various aspects of the trade which, although the methods might be similar, often entail varied theoretical perspectives.

Obviously, studies by ecologists and biologists are essential in order to examine the effects of the trade on existing populations of wild animals in different areas and ecosystems (see e.g. Bennett, 2014; Eniang, Akpan and Eniang, 2008; Weston and Menon, 2009). Much of the recent knowledge on the scale and nature of IWT is produced by national governments through annual reports to CITES (see e.g. Cites.org, 2017). United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) has provided regular reports on issues concerning wildlife conservation, poaching and illegal wildlife trade, often in collaborations with other organisations such as INTERPOL or UNESCO. Examples include general reports on the role of natural resources in conflict (UNEP, 2009a) and the use of international law to protect the environment during conflict (UNEP, 2009b). They have also published reports on specific cases such as environmental crime's effect on gorillas in Congo (Nellemann, Redmond and Refisch (eds.), 2010), and on illicit trade in chimpanzees, gorillas, bonobos and orangutans (Stiles et al., 2013).

Large conservation NGOs such as World Wildlife Fund and TRAFFIC also contribute to knowledge about poaching and illegal wildlife trade in Africa. Examples include Milliken and Shaw´s study of rhino horn trade between South Africa and Vietnam (2012) and investigations of the security implications of illegal wildlife trade (IFAW, 2008; Ratchford, Allgood and Todd, 2013).

Within social science academic literature, we also find multiple contributions to wildlife conservation, including to the particular problem of poaching and illegal wildlife trade. Where traditional conservationists are typically natural science-oriented, judging conservation success and failure from its direct impact on ecosystems, social sciences have often been occupied with investigating social, political and human consequences of different

conservation approaches. Research on conservation policies in various contexts and their advantages and disadvantages for human livelihoods have been carried out in many variants (see e.g. Büscher et al, 2016, Calfucura, 2018, Duffy et al., 2015).

Criminologists have also increasingly engaged in the issue of poaching and illegal wildlife trade. The perspectives of "green criminology" are particularly relevant. Green criminology investigates the social, economic and political conditions behind different forms of environmental harms and the societal conditions and financial interests facilitating and motivating them. Criminologists are also involved in more philosophical debates of what really should, or should not, be considered "criminal" in the environmental setting (Potter, 2012). On the topic of poaching and IWT, criminologist studies typically focus on identifying offender profiles and motivations as well as evaluating the effects of law enforcement and punishments. Moreto, Brunson and Braga investigated law enforcement rangers' role and experiences with own wrongdoings such as corruption (2015), while Runhovde (2017a) and Sollund and Maher (2015) have a macro-level perspective, examining respectively the role of Uganda in the illegal trade of ivory and features of the illegal wildlife trade in the UK, Norway, Columbia and Brazil.

Within political ecology, a particular focus has been given to the issue of exclusion and marginalisation of local people from protected areas (Bocarejo and Ojeda, 2016; Brockington and Igoe, 2006) and the conservation-poverty debate (for a review see e.g. Duffy, St John, Büscher and Brockington, 2015). State accumulation and control through conservation is another common subject for political ecologists (see e.g. Benjaminsen et al. 2013; Bejnaminsen and Bryceson, 2012). The security aspects of conservation have recently been approached as an "accumulation by securitization", seeing security arguments as a new form of accumulation practices where security arguments are used by states to dispossess people of their land (Lunstrum and Ybarra, 2018; Massé and Lunstrum, 2016).

Other research inspired by market research and political economy and have focused on identifying the wildlife trade chains and factors influencing supply and demand of wildlife resources, often focusing on elephant ivory and rhino horns (Hübscle 2016; Schneider 2008; Zimmerman 2003).

A smaller body of research within social sciences have focused on the relationship between

militarisation, violence and conservation. Several studies critically evaluate the change in conservation practices and the current trend towards increased anti-poaching enforcement efforts. Duffy (2010, 2014, 2015, 2016) and White (2014) have studied what they mean are anti-poaching practices starting to resemble a "war on poaching". Some speak of a "green militarization" (Lunstrom 2014; Marijnen and Verweijen, 2016), others "green security" (Kelly and Ybarra, 2016) or "green violence" (Büscher and Ramutsindela, 2015). But the concept of green militarization has also been criticized, e.g. by Shaw and Rademeyer (2016) who argue that militarized responses and a language of "war" is far from new in Africa. They also argue that concepts such as "green militarization" risk obscuring rather than explaining what is really happening on the ground. Instead, they argue that focus should be on where the limits to militarisation should be and how such immediate responses can be tied to more long-term engagement.

Somerville (2016) has examined the discourse on illegal ivory trade and describes what he calls "a developing insurgency discourse". Regarding the evidence base of the alleged links between security threats and IWT, a recent Whitehall Paper edited by Haenlein & Smith (2016) examined the evidence linking poaching and IWT to human security, conflict, terrorism and organised crime. They found that particularly in the case of Africa there is a wide range of myths and misperceptions.

Regarding securitization theory, it has been applied to a wide range of issues ranging from health to transnational crime. Emmers (2003) and Emmers, Greener and Thomas (2008) have applied it to transnational crime and human trafficking in Asia, and Jackson (2006) to trafficking of people and drugs in the same area. Environmental issues have recently received increased attention from securitization perspectives, in particular regarding the issue of climate change (Corry, 2012; von Lucke, Wellman and Diez, 2014; Trombetta, 2011).

The word "securitization" is occasionally used to describe the security turn in conservation. However, as mentioned above it is rarely elaborated on and often lack a clear definition (see e.g. Cavanagh, Vedeld and Trædal, 2015; Lunstrum, 2015; Massé and Lunstrom, 2016). A notable exception is Elliot (2007, 2016).

In conclusion, although literature on poaching and IWT is abundant, because a securitization perspective has not been systematically applied to this issue before I found it necessary to

develop and thoroughly describe a suitable securitization framework. The result makes up the theory chapter, which will now follow below.

## 2.2 Theory
### 2.2.1 Security studies

*"Security in politics is neither a neutral nor a simple idea (...) to have something labelled security is to give it priority on the agenda. Security, above all, is a powerful political concept; it is the sort of word that energizes opinion and moves material power"*

Ken Booth (2005, pp. 21-22)

The concept of security is as contested as it is interesting. According to the Oxford online dictionary security is "the state of being free from danger or threat" (Anon., n.d.). Most of us have a sense of what security means from our everyday lives. Part of what makes the concept so interesting might lie in the fact that it combines the objective and the subjective. For example, it is a well-known paradox that we can feel secure while driving a car, but insecure while flying, although the car ride is statistically much more likely to constitute a threat. The fear of terrorism is another example of an issue which objectively is unlikely to threaten our security but might still have a huge impact on our subjective feeling of being (in)secure. In other words, security includes both *being* and *feeling* safe (Booth, 2005, p.21). In the case of poaching and illegal wildlife trade, this nuance is significant because a discursive turn towards security is likely to reflect, and/or affect, our subjective feeling of the threat, and hence the strategy and potential measures to be taken against it, regardless of the objective facts or reliability of the underlying evidence.

Within International Relations (IR), the word "security" has many definitions, but there is a common understanding that security has to do with threats to something (a referent object, e.g. what is to be secured (Booth, 2005, p.2)). Traditionally, security studies have been dominated by the so-called *realist* approach. Realist security studies see the state as the obvious referent object, and security concerning state matters, e.g. threats to its territory or military capacity, which are typically analysed using rational choice models (ibid). They view threats as material conditions existing regardless of our attention or opinion of them, downplaying the subjective side of security. Instead security (and insecurity) concerns material conditions that can be observed "out there" and examined, counted or measured without considering our subjective opinion of them (Glasser, 2016). An example of this

would be to consider a state's security in terms of the size of its military, or the number of nuclear weapons it possesses vs the number of nuclear weapons of its enemy.

This realist security perspective was increasingly critiqued for being too narrow in focus, and as it was unable to foresee and explain the end of the Cold War alternative security approaches started to emerge. Since the 1990s, a new branch of security studies has established itself alongside the realist branch. These alternative perspectives are often lumped together in the category "critical security studies" because they reject the realist view of threats as solely objective entities and take into account subjective experiences of security[1]. Instead, they share a wider view of what the security concept can entail, lessening focus on the state and the military and emphasising how culture and identity shape our subjective feeling of security (Knudsen, 2001).

All critical security studies see security and threats as constructed through social and discursive action. Depending on whether one subscribes to a "soft" social constructivism or a more radical post-structuralism, the threat representations might be seen as inseparable from our construction of them, or as having both a subjective and objective side which could be analysed separately (Booth, 2005). In this thesis, the threat construction of poaching and illegal wildlife trade as a matter of security will be the subject of the discourse analysis and can be said to constitute the subjective side of security. But consistent with a soft constructivist perspective, I will also pay attention to the "objective" side, i.e. the material reality. The estimated value of the illegal wildlife trade, statistics showing the increase in trade and poaching over the last decade and the status of involved wildlife species will be used as background material but also as one of the explanatory factors in answering my research questions. Although this can be viewed as a mixing of realist and constructivist perspectives, we will see below that this shared focus on threat construction and "real" existential threat is not unique, but in fact a characteristic of the Copenhagen School securitization theory and many of the variants emerging from it (Emmers, 2016, p.172).

While the understanding of what security entails has deepened and broadened, the issues that

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[1] I am aware that definitions vary, e.g. the Copenhagen School sometimes seek to distance themselves from the label critical security studies while the Aberystwyth scholars seek to restrict it to only those theories with what they call an emancipatory goal. Regardless, for the purpose of this thesis I will still use the broad definition of rejecting traditional realist assumptions.

can be studied with a security lens have also expanded because "the theoretical approach you take towards examining security will determine the type of subject matter that you consider constitute security" (Collins, 2016, p.7). Threats that can be studied from a security perspective are no longer only military, but include intra-state conflict and terrorism, health related issues such as hunger or pandemics and environmental issues such as climate change or, like in this thesis, biodiversity loss through poaching and illegal wildlife trade. The broadening of the security agenda has made it possible to include non-state actors in the analysis, ranging from ethnic groups, intergovernmental organizations to the media (Dunne and Schmidt, 2014).

Despite their shared rejection of the narrow realist premises discussed above, the alternative approaches are quite diverse. The Welsh School is explicitly normative, seeing emancipation, defined as "the freeing of people (as individuals and groups) from those physical and human constraints which stop them carrying out what they would freely chose to do» and security as «two sides of the same coin" (Booth, 1991, p.319). Knowledge is seen as social and always in someone's interest, and the Welsh School aims to expose these interests in order to contribute to social change and improvement (Booth, 2005). Other variants of critical security studies include the so-called Paris School and feminist security studies. Neither of these approaches will be investigated further in this paper, which will instead apply perspectives from the Copenhagen School (CS), and specifically it's theory of *securitization*.

Securitization studies have become "perhaps the primary forum in which broadly social constructivist approaches have challenged traditional – largely realist and neorealist- theories" within IR (Williams, 2003, p.511). The Copenhagen School's securitization theory will also be the perspective of choice for this thesis. However, I must admit to partially sharing the normative ideal of the Welsh scholars that critical security studies should strive to contribute to political and social progress. Although obviously a tall task for a master student, this might be reflected in this thesis in various ways; in my critical approach to the security discourse on poaching and illegal wildlife trade, the modifications I make to the classical Copenhagen School securitization theory (discussed below), as well as in the analysis and discussion of findings.

### 2.2.2 Copenhagen School securitization theory

*"There are intellectual and political dangers in simply tacking the word security onto an ever-wider range of issues." (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, 1998, p.1).*

Recalling the definition presented above, securitization is the social construction of something as a security issue, in short "practices (...) that bring threats into being" (Balzacq, 2011, p. xiiv). Any securitization is considered to involve four basic components: someone presenting an issue as a threat (the securitizing agent), a potentially harmful object (an existential threat), something that is being threatened (a referent object), and someone accepting the issue as a security threat (an audience) (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, 1998).

Contrasting the view of insecurity and threats as objective entities, CS securitization hold that threats are primarily discursive and social constructions that cannot be separated from the threat itself. Although the existence of real world threats is not denied, it is considered both impossible and even uninteresting to define and analyse them just as "real" security issues detached from world politics because there is no threat blueprint: even material threats are not fixed categories but depend on threat constructions (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, 1998, p.30). What some might interpret as a threat, might not be threatening for someone else. As an example, no-one can deny the fact that nuclear weapons have great potential for damage, but in the hands of what is considered a friendly state they might not be perceived as threatening at all (they might even be seen as enhancing your security). In essence, "no issue is essentially a menace. Something becomes a security problem through discursive politics" (Balzacq, 2010, p.1). Consequently, discourse analysis has a central role in the study of securitization. The CS understands securitization as a *speech act*: "It is not interesting as a sign referring to something more real; it is the utterance itself that is the act. By saying the words, something is done (like betting, giving a promise, naming a ship)" (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, 1998, p.26). For the CS it is the uttering of the word security that makes securitization happen, and it takes place almost instantly in the speech act moment (McDonald, 2008). In other words, a security speech act has extraordinary powers. The word "security" does not merely describe something but changes and influences it, because security is associated with its own logic that transforms ordinary relations into relations of security (Huysmans, 2006).

A securitizing move is generally considered to be a purposeful speech act done by representatives or governments. The social construction of a threat which takes place when an

issue is labelled "security" gives it an urgency that sets it aside from, and even above, normal politics. Issues of security are "so important that it should not be exposed to the normal haggling of politics but should be dealt with decisively by top leaders prior to other issues" (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, 1998, p.29). For a securitization to be considered successful, the audience must accept the threat presentation made in the speech act. If this is the case, extraordinary measures can be advocated in the name of security. Securitization is therefore associated with distinct and often extreme measures because it is handled within "the realm of secrecy, of national security, of decision" (Williams, 2003, p.524). According to Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde (1998, p.34), to make something into a security issue is "to transfer it to the agenda of panic politics". Therefore, they consider securitization to be the extreme on an axis that goes from ordinary politics, via politicization to securitization; a drastic development that should be avoided. The opposite of securitization is regular measures resulting from normal political processes.

It is when a speech act is presented by a securitizing actor to and audience that threats are constructed or deconstructed. Although any issue in theory can be securitized, a successful securitization must fulfil two criteria. First, it must follow the "rules", i.e. speaking security includes appropriate form, grammar and plot. The uttering of the word "security" is the key rhetorical criteria, and the fact that the speech act is in this way a conventional procedure is part of what makes it possible to predict the likelihood of a securitizing move being successful. Secondly, the securitizing actor making the statement must hold an appropriate position, i.e. have sufficient social capital to be able to make a credible presentation and convince the audience (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, 1998, p.32). In this way, securitization is a form of «social accomplishment" (Williams, 2003, p.514). Finally, it is also helpful if in the speech act "certain objects can be referred to that are generally threatening – be they tanks, hostile sentiments or polluted waters" because this will facilitate the acceptance of the threat presentation (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, 1998, p.33). In the case of poaching and illegal wildlife trade, we will see below that the alleged link to terrorism, which is indeed an alarming reference, seems to have been a central to the threat presentation.

As mentioned above, securitization requires that a *securitizing actor* makes a *securitizing move* by presenting an issue as an *existential threat* to a *referent object.* Although a securitization actor often requires emergency measures to handle the threat, this is not a mandatory part of CS securitization. This essence of the securitization vocabulary is small but

crucial to understand thoroughly, and I will therefore explain it in further detail below.[2]

A *securitizing actor* is "someone, or a group, who performs the security speech act" (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, 1998, p.38). By declaring something as existentially threatened and appeal to the audience to accept the threat presentation, the securitizing actor initiates the securitization process and seek to move an issue away from normal politics. For the CS, successful securitization is dependent on being performed by a sufficiently powerful and legitimate actor. Common securitizing actors are therefore "political leaders, bureaucracies, governments, lobbyists and pressure groups" (ibid). In the case of poaching and illegal wildlife trade, there has been many possible securitizing actors, with a possible converging interest of political leaders, governments and pressure groups in elevating the issue on the agenda. If, and how any of these have acted as securitizing actors will be discussed in the upcoming analysis.

A *securitizing move* is the presentation of an issue as an existential threat to a referent object. Securitizing moves work by making a group feel threatened and then propose urgent measures to save the group and/or their identity. CS school assumes that audience support is mobilized by "asserting that the survival of the in-group is at stake" (Croft, 2012, p. 83). Securitization is intentional and strategic, used on purpose by specific actors to legitimize specific policies. The following analysis will show that there has been no lack of discursive moves by a variety of powerful and/or legitimate actors that has certainly had the potential to function as a securitizing move.

The *referent object* is the issue that is presented as threatened. The threat must be existential, i.e. so large that it threatens the objects´ survival. Additionally, a prerequisite for a securitization is that the referent object must "have a legitimate claim to survival" (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, 1998, p.36). This legitimacy is not necessarily natural and must therefore be established by the securitizing actor and accepted by the audience. Krause and Williams (1997) argue that while traditional security studies see the referent object as just an object, critical security studies require that the ideas, norms and values of the referent object must also be taken seriously. The CS referent object is often the state, because it is

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[2] All vocabulary definitions in the following paragraphs, unless explicitly stated otherwise, refer to securitization theory as presented by Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde in their 1998 book «Security: A New Framework for Analysis».

"historically endowed with security tasks and most adequately structured for the purpose" (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, 1998, p.37). But although the state is a privileged actor, it is not supreme. According to Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, this makes CS securitization theory state-dominant, but not state-centric (2003, p.71). The referent object can also be a non-state actor but must be some sort of collective. This is because a securitizing move must be able to appeal to a "we"-feeling to be successful, i.e. accepted.

When it comes to what constitutes an *existential threat*, there is no universal standard for what it entails, but it is implied that it must be large enough to have a significant impact on the referent object. An existential threat must always be understood in relation to the referent object. Some sectors have many potential threats and referent objects, while others have few. In the military sector the referent object is most often the state and the existential threat is to the state's survival. In the political sector, the state is still the most likely referent object, while the threat can be to its sovereignty or perhaps ideology. Within the environmental sector there are a wide range of potential referent objects ranging from climate change to species survival. However, a common underlying concern for environmental issues is the relationship between humans and nature, and the fear of destroying nature and decimate our own livelihood. Species survival is mentioned explicitly as a case of existential threat that can be securitized (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, 1998, p.23). However, I would argue that in the case of poaching and illegal wildlife trade in Africa, the environmental aspect, i.e. the threat to species survival of, on its own does not seem to have been sufficient to initiate a securitization. However, coupled with other threats perceived as more directly connected to our own daily security, it would turn out to form a highly efficient narrative.

In addition to the securitizing actor, *functional actors* might play a part in the securitization. Functional actors are actors other than the securitizing actor or referent object that significantly affecting the dynamics of a sector. An example from the environmental sector can be a big polluting company, or in the case of poaching and illegal wildlife trade a technology company producing drones and surveillance equipment that can be used to track down poachers.

Finally, a securitization often legitimizes *exceptional measures*. This implies that a securitized issue is given priority because it is seen as more important and urgent than other issues: it is imperative that the threat is dealt with, *now*. If it is not done, the consequences will be

enormous, potentially making other issues irrelevant (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, 1998). Emmers (2016, p.172-72) points out that while extraordinary measures introduced by a state are generally easy to anticipate, (e.g. the use of force), it is less obvious what would constitute an extraordinary move from a non-state actor such as an NGO. In the case of poaching and illegal wildlife trade however, I will argue that the ability of non-state actors to initiate extraordinary measures becomes evident in the analysis.

Regarding the outcome of a securitization attempt, the CS does not regard a successful securitization as positive. On the contrary, it should be avoided: "Basically, security should be seen as negative, as a failure to deal with issues as normal politics. Ideally, politics should be able to unfold according to routine procedures without this extraordinary elevation of specific "threats" to a prepolitical immediacy." (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, 1998, p.29). It is possible to bring securitized issues back into normal politics, particularly if the "social consensus underlying the capacity for decision is challenged" (Williams, 2003, p. 524). The return from security and back to normal political discourse is referred to as desecuritization, and the CS believes that this should be attempted with as many issues as possible (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde,1998). This makes up a normative point of securitization theory: by being able to analyse securitization processes it is made possible to recognized them, and possibly curb their development.

## 2.3. A securitization framework for a global level analysis of poaching and illegal wildlife trade in Africa

Although the CS core vocabulary described above is widely accepted as "a grammar for analysing security " (Croft, 2012, p.79), the underlying assumptions have been subject to much criticism and suggestions for improvements. Emerging, alternative securitization approaches take various amounts of inspiration from poststructuralism, critical theory and speech act theory, as well as other social theories like Bourdieu's sociology and Foucault's governmentality (Balzacq, Léonard and Ruzika, 2016; Balzacq 2011). In this existing myriad of securitization variants, it was necessary for me to find a good fit for my empirical case of poaching and illegal wildlife trade.

Balzacq argues that one of the challenging tasks for students performing empirical studies of securitization is to "unpack and re-present diverse approaches into a coherent set of

assumptions guiding empirical research" (2011, p. xiv). To uncover a variant of securitization theory that fit my own ontological and epistemological premises as well as my case, I will review the criticisms against the CS assumptions that are most relevant in the case of poaching and illegal wildlife trade and adjust the theory used for this thesis accordingly. The resulting theoretical framework that guided my analysis is mainly inspired by Crofts "post-Copenhagen" securitization theory (2012) and Balzacq`s sociological securitization (2011).

### 2.3.1. Securitization as a contextual process

It is a central CS premise that securitization is a *speech act*. This implies that securitization takes place in a particular moment and is to a very little degree a gradual process. Focus on the individual speech act highlights the political choice of "conceptualizing a special way" (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, 1998, p.21) something which might be advantageous for ascribing responsibility. Still, it seems empirically unlikely for a threat perception to change from one moment to the next (Williams, 2003).

The CS view lay out a set of fundamental rhetorical criteria that will make securitization take place provided that the statement is made accordingly by a sufficiently powerful actor. This makes securitization a conventional procedure, an almost pre-destined act that consequently downplays the role of context, social practices and power relation (Balzacq, 2011). Balzacq argues instead that securitization originates from a combination of textual and cultural meaning (2011). Lipschutz argues along the same lines that discourses of security and threat are "the products of historical structures and processes" (1995, p.8 in McDonald, 2008, p.576) and Huysman (2006, p.i) states that "security policies and responses do not appear out of the blue, but are part of a continuous and gradual process, pre-structured by previous developments."

Instead of a pure speech act then, securitization can be considered an intersubjective process influenced by a variety of factors (Balzacq, 2011). An alternative view is therefore to assume a gradual process where an issue can become more (or less) susceptible for securitization depending on historical, economic and political context as well as changing power relations between the actors involved in negotiating security. In the case of poaching and illegal wildlife trade, African wildlife conservation has a long history of using military inspired methods. I will argue that it would seem odd to assume that a change towards security resulted from one speech act rather than develop over time. Viewing the development as a

process dependent on context and power relations allows me to take into account socio-political and historical factors that I believe are important in explaining why the specific representation resonated with the audience at that particular time.

### 2.3.2. Expanding the focus on speech

Another consequence of defining security as a speech act, highlighted among others by McDonald (2008), is that it risks leaving out other forms of threat representations. After all, securitization takes place within a context of pre-existing understandings of other signs and texts. Silences, intertextuality, images, practices and physical action are examples of aspects that are not speech acts but can still influence and condition security constructions. The 3-minute animated film "Last Days" (Bigelow, 2014) with the catch phrase: "End ivory-funded terrorism" and the movie "White Gold" (2014) about the illegal ivory trade narrated by Hillary Clinton are examples of potentially influential threat presentation that would be left un-noticed by a strict focus on speech act. Therefore, this thesis will depart from the focus on speech and instead regard securitization as an intersubjective process. In order to include a range of different threat representations in the analysis the term "text" will be used in the broadest sense to include e.g. images and video. This will be explained further in the methodology chapter.

### 2.3.3. Including security as silence

Hansen (2000) critiques the speech act focus for neglecting security issues where speaking out is not possible. She calls this "security as silence" and argues that speech act theory "presupposes the existence of a situation in which speech is indeed possible" (2000, p.285). This means that if subjects are unable to speak, they will not have a role in a conventional securitization framework. But silence can also be highly political: "Silence is a powerful political strategy that internalises and individualises threats thereby making resistance and political mobilisation difficult." (ibid, p.306). A similar critique is voiced by Booth, stating that "if security is always a speech act, insecurity is frequently a zipped lip" (2007, pp.167-68).

In the case of poaching and illegal wildlife trade, this is a relevant point because, as we will see in the analysis, while there is no lack of powerful winners, the potential losers from a securitization are often less powerful in setting the global agenda. Although silence cannot be

the subject of discourse analysis, I will aim to include security as silence by focusing on perspectives that are left out rather than solely what is being said.

### 2.3.4. Factoring in an external reality

A final amendment to the view of security as a speech act is that it overemphasizes *threat presentation*, rather than the actual threat. By presenting threats as originating mostly from the actors themselves, the focus is overwhelmingly on the subjective part of security. According to Ole Knudsen (2001), such a focus underemphasizes the fact that many threats are also very real, existing regardless of how they are apprehended. He believes that "threats have to be dealt with *both in terms of perceptions and in terms of the phenomena which are perceived to be threatening*" (2001, p.360, emphasis in the original). I agree with Knudsen and with Balzacq (2011, p.12) that "it is not theoretically useful nor is it empirically credible to hold that what we say about a problem would *determine* its essence". This does not mean that threat constructions are not important, only that it is also necessary to consider the external context outside of language, and its effect on securitizations. After all, "to win an audience, security statements must, usually, be related to an external reality" (Grace, 1987, pp.48-49).

Consequently, the more critical the times are, the easier it is to get an audience to accept a threat presentation. Therefore, my theoretical framework will see securitization as depending on a perceptive environment in addition to securitizing moves. In the case of poaching and illegal wildlife trade in Africa the levels of elephant poaching in 2011 had the highest number of illegally killed elephants since the start of monitoring in 2001, and a tripling of illegal ivory trade compared to 1998-levels (UNEP, CITES, IUCN, TRAFFIC, 2013). The fact that 2011-2012 is also the time when the security-discourse started to catch global attention supports an amendment of the CS framework towards an alternative view where the threat itself is analysed as a factor contributing to the discursive threat construction.

### 2.3.5. Expanding the state focus

It is a well-known argument within critical IR theories that too much focus on the state will leave out a lot of actors, issues and viewpoints. The extent of state-centrism that is predetermined within the CS framework is a matter of debate, and various texts from the central CS actors also differ on this point. Although the CS does not define states as the only possible securitizing actors, they seem to find that states are most often the ones capable of

making securitization happen. Consequently, they have been criticized for focusing too much on the voices that are already powerful. The assumption that a securitizing actor must be capable and legitimate is criticized by McDonald (2008, p.565), pointing out how this involves "leaving power where it is in security terms". Even though one might believe that the state is still the core actor, it is difficult to disagree that unless non-state actors are also included, a securitization framework might potentially miss a significant actor, or perhaps even a global shift in power relations. These actors will therefore be included in the analysis of poaching and IWT.

### 2.3.6. Making the audience part of the analysis

Balzacq argues that the audience is undertheorized and that they should be analysed empirically (2011). Croft (2012) argues that the assumption of an audience as bystanders, merely accepting or rejecting the threat presentation should be relaxed, because the audience can perform a crucial role in securitization. In line with viewing securitization as a process rather than a speech act, the audience is involved by "accepting, extending and deepening the securitizing move made by the elite" (Croft 2012, p. 85). The empirical analysis of who constitutes the audience in a case of securitization is not necessarily an easy task. I still aim to include the audience as a category in the analysis and thereby consider their role as potential contributors to the securitization.

## 2.4. Summing up: a post-Copenhagen securitization theory

I have outlined a modified securitization theory, largely consistent with what Croft calls a "post-Copenhagen securitization theory" (2012, p.73-110)[3]. This means that the securitization framework applied in this thesis makes use of the core concepts of securitization, but when putting them to use in the analysis is guided by the following assumptions which differ from the CS approach:

- That threats are not only what we make of them, but also have an external reality;
- That securitization is dependent on context, historical factors and power relations;
- That securitization can develop gradually as a process along a continuum from risk to threat rather than make a sudden break from normal politics

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[3] My assumptions differ mainly in leaving out his concept of ontological security. This is because I consider its focus on the individual less suitable for my analysis, which takes place on the global level.

- That silences, images and practices can contribute to securitization, not just speech;
- That the composition and role of the audience should be analysed empirically
- That non-state actors should be included in the analysis

Empirical studies of securitization do not necessarily fit perfectly with a theoretical description of security. Regardless, I believe that the flexibility of the framework described above allows for a consideration of a wide variety of factors that can be useful in explaining securitization.

Finally, Claire Wilkinson (2007) argues that the underlying understanding of society and the focus on speech act and the state makes securitization theory of limited use in non-Western settings with different socio-political contexts. Although my analysis takes place on a global level where many of the biggest actors must be said to represent "the West", my focus is on the supply side of poaching and illegal wildlife trade in Africa, making African states and their role central to the analysis. Balzacq, Léonard and Ruzika (2016, p.507) discuss this critique and point out that the broadening of the security agenda has made it more relevant outside of Europe, and that as an increasing number of non-European scholars have put the theory to use "the European dimension of the studies of securitization should not be overestimated nowadays". I believe that given the adjustments presented above, the securitization framework is well suited to capture the securitization process of poaching and IWT in Africa.

The practical use of this framework in the empirical analysis will be the subject of the following chapter on methodology.

# CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

## 3.1. An intrinsic, explanatory case study of poaching and illegal wildlife trade

Case study research attempts to investigate a specific setting, event or subject in a thorough and systematic way to obtain a "thick description" of it; a nuanced, deep understanding of a specific phenomenon (Berg and Lune, 2012). Because I wanted to study in depth how and why poaching and illegal wildlife trade could become a security issue, a case study was therefore a good fit.

Although case studies can be used to generate theory, I used what Yin (2003a, in Berg and Lune, 2012) refer to as a theory-before-research model: I developed my vocabulary of securitization theory first, and let it guide my data collection. My goal was not to test securitization theory or use this case to develop grounded theory. Instead, I wanted to perform what Stake (2000) calls an intrinsic case study. This means that although some of the findings might turn out to be applicable in similar cases, the motivation behind the research was that it "needed to be done because something important had happened there" (Berg and Lune 2012, p.335). The main goal of the case study was to understand and explain essential qualities of the process turning poaching and illegal wildlife trade into a matter of security, and the associated discourse surrounding this theme. I also wanted to investigate the causes and discuss the potential consequences.

### 3.1.1. The securitization dilemma

A potential dilemma of securitization studies is that the researcher is likely to repeat the securitizing claims and thereby risk becoming a contributor to the securitization process. I consider this problem to be of little relevance in this case for two reasons: Firstly, as this is only a master thesis, its influence is bound to be minimal. Moreover, and in line with the theoretical assumptions of securitization as a contextual process, my analysis will argue that the security-discourse is already widespread at the global level because of an enabling socio-political context as well as characteristics of the threat itself. I consider it unlikely for this global development to be affected by a single speech act such as this thesis.

## 3.2. Discourse analysis

### 3.2.1. Key premises of discourse analysis

Discourse analysis is the most commonly used method in securitization studies. Although it is not the only potential method, it is a great fit with securitization theory because it can be used to investigate how discursive politics transform previously "normal" issues into security issues (Balzacq, 2011). According to Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, "the way to study securitization is to study discourse and political constellations" (1998, p.25).

There are multiple definitions of discourse. Phillips and Jørgensen (2002, p.1) describe it as "patterns that people's utterances follow when they take part in different domains of social life" and "a particular way of talking about and understanding the world". An underlying premise in discourse analysis is that language does not just neutrally reflect the world but embody different understandings of it. Contrasting discourses represent divergent knowledge claims and world views. Therefore, it also makes sense to use discourse analysis to study the emergence of specific threat presentations. According to Bartelson, discourse can be seen as a "battle over truth" (1995, p.2), which is consistent with the underlying assumption of securitization theory that threat presentations are affected by power relations.

Discourse analysis comes with specific ontological and epistemological premises. Like securitization theory, it belongs to the broad category of social constructivist approaches, meaning that our knowledge about the world is seen as socially constructed rather than an objective truth. The existence of a material reality is not denied but focus on language and discourse is important because this is how physical objects acquire meaning. The way we speak about the world represents a particular understanding of it, and these understandings are structured in patterns with different meanings. These patterns often differ in specific context and on specific subjects and can be analysed as discourses (Gee and Handford, 2012).

It is important to study discourse because our view of the world influences which possibilities, challenges and courses of action we deem possible in any given situation. Different discourses often represent different truths, each with a distinct set of problems and possible solutions. Because they are fluid rather than predetermined by external conditions, discourses can be constantly created and re-created through discursive practice and social

interaction. Although language in itself does not change the physical reality, "different discourses each point to different courses of action as possible and appropriate (...) Thus the ascription of meaning in discourses work to constitute and change the world" (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002, p.9). On the international level, this might potentially reflect a change of politics. According to Iver Neumann, discourse "produces preconditions for action" that are likely to affect which policies and actions are put in place (2008, p.62). For poaching and IWT, a discursive turn to security can entail changing practices on the ground. Although a securitization might be intended or unintended, "the use of a specific conceptualization is always a choice – it is politics, it is not possible to decide by investigating the threat scientifically" (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, 1998, p.32). Wetherell (2001, p.25). calls this choice of certain conceptualizations the "politics of representation". It is this social struggle where different people, groups or institutions further different representations of the world that is the subject of discourse analysis. Control over a discourse can be a source of power, but there is no guarantee that a certain interpretation will remain dominant over time because social meaning is fluid. This is a particularly central point for critical discourse analysis, which will be elaborated on below.

Importantly, discourse analysis does not claim to discover what people "really" mean, or to expose the "real truth" behind discourse. It is the discourse itself that is the subject of analysis, exploring different patterns of representation and their consequences. An analysis of the evidence supporting these claims in the case of poaching and IWT would require a quite different thesis and has in fact already been done by Haenlein and Smith (eds., 2016). But as mentioned above, although discourse analysis does not evaluate truth claims, it is still possible to critically evaluate the statements from the discourse as part of the analysis. Neumann argues that "the more actions that the analysis may account for by demonstrating its preconditions, and the more specifically this may be done, the better the discourse analysis" (2008, p.63). By performing a discourse analysis of the framing by the dominant global actors, as well as taking into account contextual factors, I hope to be able to account for the most important preconditions that can explain how and why poaching and IWT became securitized.

### 3.2.2. Critical discourse analysis

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) consists of a range of approaches that share a goal of contributing to social change and aim to create "critical language awareness". As mentioned above, discourse can influence both perceptions and policies. CDA seeks to create awareness

by making discourse and its consequences more visible in order to provide people with an opportunity to challenge dominant discourses, resist oppression or change the discursive order (Fairclough, 2012).

CDA sees discourses as a social practice that is both constitutive and constituted: it contributes to creating the social world, but it also reflects it. This differs from purely post-structuralist understandings of discourse which see language as fully constituting the world (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002). Fairclough elaborates on this relationship between the real world and discourse within CDA by explaining that "The discursive constitutions of society does not emanate from a free play of ideas in people´s heads but from a social practice which is firmly rooted in and oriented to real, material social structures" (1992, p.66). Consequently, any CDA analysis must consider how political and social influences contribute to the creation of discourse.

Another important aspect of CDA is that discourse can have ideological effects. This means that discourse can legitimize and reproduce existing, unequal power relations (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002). Because discourse is seen as having this productive potential, it is important to examine whose interests are furthered by a particular discourse to uncover how discursive practices affect existing power relations. Again, we see the overlap with the securitization theory´s focus on context and power relations.

When performing a discourse analysis, there are many aspects that might be taken into consideration. This analysis will pay particular attention to some key aspects of discourse: intertextuality, interdiscursivity and modality.

*Intertextuality* describes if, and in what ways, texts relate to other texts. The most apparent form of intertextuality is citing, but it can also be less explicit such as reproducing specific words, phrases or even meanings from other texts. We will see that the poaching and IWT security discourse has a relatively high degree of intertextuality.

*Interdiscursivity* means how a text draws on other discourses. A discourse almost always draws on former discourses, as well as contemporary ones from nearby or opposing fields (Fairclough, 1992). Because poaching and IWT are simultaneously an issue of biology and crime, it would not be surprising to find language associated with biological discourse as well

as criminal discourse. If language normally associated with war, military, intelligence or security is present, this can indicate a security framing.

Finally, I will pay attention to *modalities* in the texts. Modalities are linguistic features that signal a mood or intention. It can be defined as "the speaker's degree of affinity with or affiliation to her or his statement" (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002, p.83). A speaker who wants to express strong confidence in a statement will use the truth modality to signal certainty, e.g. by saying «*It is clear that we need to act now*». By using this modality, the speaker seeks to remove doubts and reinforce authority. On the other hand, if the speaker wants to moderate a statement, hedges can be used. Hedges make something seem less stark, politer or downplay the importance of an utterance, e.g. by saying "*I am not an expert, but it might be a good idea to act now"* or even rephrasing a statement as a question e.g. *"Maybe some actions are required?".* A final example of a modality is permission, meaning to phrase something in a way that allow (or refuse) someone to do something: "*States may request assistance if needed"* (ibid.).

A central part of CDA is to relate texts to social practice. This is where discourse meets broader social theory. In addition to matters of interdiscursivity mentioned above, it also includes other circumstances that might affect discourse such as economic, historical or institutional factors: the discourse's "social matrix" (Fairclough, 1992, p.237). It is often by moving focus from linguistic details to seeing discourses in context that findings can be summarized, and conclusions drawn. Broadly speaking, a CDA should end up answering the question: "What are the ideological, political and social consequences of the discursive practice?" (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002, p.87)

### 3.2.3. Units and levels of analysis

The CS approach emphasize three units of analysis: referent object, securitizing actors and functional actors (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, 1998). They focus mainly on the agents, emphasizes discourse as text, and use linguistic analysis to identify identities, norms and values. Although this is useful, as already discussed above I believe that such an approach lacks focus on e.g. context, power relations and the role of the audience, which are essential in understanding a phenomenon like securitization. I therefore chose to use Balzacq's revised vocabulary of securitization (2011) for my analysis.

This vocabulary includes more levels and other variables than the CS approach.
It consists of three levels and their corresponding units. It is possible to focus on just one of the three levels, but "a more credible study of securitization requires an account of all three dimensions, i.e., "how", "who" and "what" (Balzacq, 2011, p.38). Because my research questions include all three dimensions, they must also be included in my analysis. Although it would be ideal to include all units on all levels, this would be too extensive. I therefore selected only what I consider to be the most relevant units on each level, i.e. the ones who were needed to answer my research question.

A table of the full securitization vocabulary taken from Balzacq (2011, p.36) is presented below. The units chosen for my analysis are highlighted in yellow:

*Table 2.1* The vocabulary of securitization (revised from Balzacq 2009a: 64)

| Levels | | Constituent analytics (UNITS) |
|---|---|---|
| | Agent | • Securitizing actor, audience, functional actor<br>• Power positions/relations<br>• Personal and social identities<br>• Referent object and referent subject |
| | Act | • Action-type<br>• Heuristic artefacts<br>• Dispositif<br>• Policy |
| | Context | • Distal<br>• Proximate |

## 3.3. Text sampling

### 3.3.1. What are texts?

To provide a thick description of how and why poaching and IWT became securitized, it was necessary to investigate a wide variety of sources. As mentioned in the theory chapter, contemporary political and social processes rely on much more than linguistics. According to Williams (2003), the global communicative environment has evolved into giving images and video an increasingly important role in political communication. Lene Hansen (2000) argues along the same lines that securitization does not have to be words but can also be practices in the form of non-textual sources. Therefore, I widened the focus from securitization as speech

act to include silences, images and practices. The analysis did not just include written sources like policy documents, resolutions and reports, but also speeches, pictures, a short film and newspaper articles. As we will see, the media quickly embraced the idea of poaching and IWT as a security threat, and images and movies contributed to creating an awareness in the public that was probably essential for the securitization process.

### 3.3.2. Sampling procedure

I decided to include the U.S., the European Union, and Africa represented by the African Union as well as regional African initiatives when relevant, such as the Economic Community of Central African States and the Southern African Development Community. I also included a variety of large environmental NGOs and the media.

The United Nations (UN) was not included as a separate actor in the securitization analysis. This is because despite having made some statements linking poaching, IWT and security, official UN statements are the results of negotiations and power plays between member states. The UN is a universe of its own where internal, discursive struggles over securitization takes place among the global state actors. I believe that the UN largely reflects the state actors already included in my analysis, rather than constituting an independent securitizing actor. Because of the choice to look at many actors, it was essential to delimit my focus only to the most relevant texts dealing with the issue of poaching and illegal wildlife trade in terms of security. This meant that official conference reports, resolutions, declarations and strategy documents were most central, although other documents often richer in information such as NGO reports, conference background documents and reports from hearings in the U.S. Senate were also included. The data was mainly collected from the official websites of the respective governments, inter-governmental organisations, NGOs or media outlets. The analysis of each individual actor started with a few central texts, and in the case a security argument was made I followed the references onwards to other texts. The data collection process was simultaneous with the data analysis, often going back and forth between the two.
In any text the first step of the analysis was to identify whether a security argument was present. If it was not, this was noted, but the specific text was not examined further. When a security argument was indeed present, the text was read in more detail according to my research questions.

Because both Africa and the EU obviously consists of many different countries that are more

or less involved in the issue of poaching and illegal wildlife trade, I chose to concentrate on official documents representing several countries. For Africa, this meant AU common strategies, summaries from regional summits and declarations from African regional meetings on poaching and IWT. For the EU, I looked at official policy documents on wildlife trade and wildlife conservation in Africa. The role of the U.S. was examined by investigating congressional records, testimonies, bills and executive orders dealing with security, poaching and IWT. In the NGO sector, reports concerning security implications of poaching and IWT proved to be abundant, and I analysed as many of these from various organisations as time allowed, including Elephant Action League, TRAFFIC, World Conservation Society, Conservation International, International Fund for Animal Welfare, the Tsavo Conservation Group, the Born Free Foundation, World Wildlife Fund and the EAGLE Network.

### 3.3.3. How much data

A central question in discourse analysis is how much data to collect. Ultimately, the answer is that the amount of data must be sufficient to answer the research questions. Neumann (2008, p.71) states that "To capture the breadth and depth of securitization processes, the analyst cannot focus on one text, but instead examine various genres of texts, at different points in time, in distinct social contexts". Reading a large amount of texts is necessary for any discourse analysis, but when the meaning in a category of texts started to be repeated and provides little new meaning it is reason to believe that you are about to reach saturation. In the case of poaching and IWT, when new texts started to repeat previous patterns and provided little new information, this was interpreted as a sign that I had read enough texts from that specific actor.

To examine a large amount of texts from many actors provided a huge challenge. In order to include enough breadth to get a good overview over the securitization process and the relevant actors, some sacrifices on depth had to be made. Still, faced with the choice between including the most central texts from many actors, or "any and all" texts from a selected few, I decided that the former option would be best suited for a securitization analysis.

## 3.4. Validity and reliability

Validity and reliability are concerned with the quality of research: whether the methods applied are followed rigorously and the interpretations and results are trustworthy. In qualitative research, criteria of validity and reliability differ from those applied to quantitative

studies. It is particularly challenging to apply standard quality criteria to social constructivist research methods such as discourse analysis because the very nature of post-positivist epistemologies entails that there is hardly such a thing as true knowledge or a correct version of reality (Flick, 2009). Despite this, various criteria for judging qualitative research has been suggested.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest trustworthiness as the most important factor, while according to Jackson (2011), focus should be on having internal validity in the sense that the evidence and arguments leads up to a corresponding, logical conclusion. Flick (2009, p.387) highlights methodological thoroughness: to follow the specific methodological criteria, but also to describe the methods and research process in enough detail to give the reader a good insight: "the reliability of the whole process will be better, the more detailed the research process is documented as a whole". He also highlights that discourse analysis should take special care to avoid "selective plausibilization". This involves careful consideration of how quotes from the data are selected to illustrate the findings. Although it might make sense to cite representative texts, it is crucial that the analysis is also able to explain nuances or even contradictions from the main findings. In this thesis I have taken particular care to be open about my own biases, be methodologically thorough and provide the reader with sufficient detail throughout the analysis.

Generalizability, sometimes referred to as external validity, concerns to what degree the findings from a study can be generalized. It is a commonly applied quality criteria in especially quantitative research (Flick, 2009). Although its relevance for qualitative research is more controversial, it can be argued that even findings from an intrinsic, explanatory case study like this might be applicable to other domains. This analysis might contribute to general understandings of how securitizations in the environmental realm evolve and how they might influence this sector. Moreover, by examining the interplay between a variety of actors in the field of global environmental politics, it can possibly shed light on dynamics between the relevant actors which might be of interest in other, similar cases.

# CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS

## 4.1. Major global security events

Concerns about the security aspects of poaching and illegal wildlife trade were presented for the first time around 2007, when an article in The Guardian claimed that Al-Qaeda-affiliated groups were profiting from poaching. In the following years a few other claims were also made, such as the Taliban being involved in illegal wildlife trade of falcons, tigers, elephants and rhino in Asia, but these caught little attention. (Elliot, 2016, p.73). When the claim was made related to the African continent around 2010 however, they started to spread among the high-level actors (Duffy, 2014; Elliot, 2016; White, 2014). From 2012 to 2015 there were more than 70 significant events dealing with the issue of poaching and illegal wildlife trade in the form of conferences, resolutions, declarations and ivory burns (CITES, 2015). In order to inform the reader about the more general developments before diving into the individual discourses, I will now present a brief overview of the major global events where the issue of poaching and IWT has been treated as a security matter over the last decade[4].

In 2008, the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) published a report with the title "Criminal Nature: The Global Security Implications of the Illegal Wildlife Trade", investigating the links between poaching, IWT and security. It stated that IWT is "not only a serious global environmental crime with profoundly negative impacts for endangered species protection, ecosystem stability, and biodiversity conservation, but a real and increasing threat to national and global security" (2008, p.4). The report also refers to the U.S. Department of State saying that "Wildlife trafficking is often closely linked to international organized crime and increasingly involves many of the same offenders and smuggling routes as trafficking in arms, drugs and people" (ibid). Later that same year, the U.S. House of Representatives held a hearing entitled "Poaching American Security: Impacts of the Illegal Wildlife Trade" (U.S. House of Representatives, 2008). Notably, though, this hearing was held before the Committee on Natural Resources, meaning that despite having security in the title the issue was at this time clearly still considered to be located within the environmental field. By contrast, subsequent hearings on poaching and IWT in the US Senate in 2012 and 2014 was presented before the Committee on Foreign Relations (U.S. Senate, 2012; U.S. Senate, 2014),

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[4] Although the following description of the process will largely follow a timeline of discursive events, this is merely a practical decision and does not imply that I consider the securitization process unilateral or linear.

and in 2015 in the House Committee on Foreign Relations subcommittee on terrorism, non-proliferation and trade (U.S. House of Representatives, 2015).

In 2011, a report presented results from an undercover investigation in Kenya declaring that Al-Shabaab was "actively buying and selling ivory as a means of funding their militant operations" (Kalron and Crosta, 2011). The report, which was written by Andre Crosta of the NGO Elephant Action League and Nir Kalron of the private security company Maisha Consulting, stated that Al-Shabaab´s monthly revenue from ivory were between 200-600 000 USD and that "trafficking in "conflict ivory" should sound alarm bells throughout the security and conservation worlds" because these "undetected funds enables Al-Shabaab to continue financing its war to control Somalia and perpetrate acts of terror like the bomb attacks in Kampala" (Kalron and Crosta, 2011).

In December 2012 a link between wildlife crime and regional security was acknowledged by the UN Security Council for the first time, subsequently requesting an investigation of the Lord´s Resistance Army´s role in poaching and illegal ivory trade. Concerns about the impact of transnational crime in wildlife was also expressed by the UN General Assembly (CITES, 2015; United Nations, 2012).

In 2013, a symposium by the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCWC) took place parallel to the CITES Conference of Parties (CoP 16) in Bangkok, where impacts of wildlife and forest crimes "on species and ecosystems, livelihoods, economies, and *national and regional security*" were acknowledged (CITES Secretariat, 2013, p.3, my emphasis). Later the same year the need to combat wildlife trafficking was recognised by the G8 summit and again by the UN Security Council who stated that poaching was among the factors fuelling conflict and crisis in Central Africa (Rosen, 2013; CITES, 2015). The Economic Community of Central African States also issued a Declaration on the Battle against Poaching in Central Africa where they recognized that poaching and illegal trade in ivory and wild fauna affects the environment, peace and security, as well as threatens innocent lives and economic growth (ECCAS, 2013). 2013 was also the year U.S. President Barack Obama issued an executive order on combatting wildlife trafficking, describing it as an international crisis that "continues to escalate" and is "generating billions of illicit revenues each year, contributing to the illegal economy, fuelling instability, and *undermining security*" (Obama, 2013, my emphasis).

Based on this executive order, Obama established a Task Force. As to be expected, it included representatives from the Council on Environmental Quality and USAID. Notably though, the Department of Homeland Security, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence and the National Security Staff were also included, affirming poaching and illegal wildlife trade as a matter of U.S. national security.

In the years after 2013 many global documents acknowledging the security aspects of poaching and illegal wildlife trade continued to be issued all over the world. An African Common Strategy for Combatting Illegal Trade in Fauna and Flora was finalized in 2015, and China announced a programme of actions to be taken against wildlife trafficking (African Union, 2015; Denyer, 2015). The U.S. Senate introduced the "Eliminate, Neutralize and Disrupt Wildlife Trafficking Act". One of its purposes was to "prevent the illegal wildlife trade from being used as a source of financing for criminal groups that undermine United States and global security interests" (2015). Several individual African countries have also adopted national action plans to combat poaching and illegal wildlife trade. The European Union published an Action Plan against Wildlife trafficking in 2016, and they also linked illegal wildlife trade to threat finance in their Communication on an Action Plan on the fight against terrorist financing (European Union 2016; European Commission, 2016).

It becomes clear that the perceived links between poaching, illegal wildlife trade and security, from now on referred to as the IWT-security-discourse, have spread to all the major global actors. But what characterizes this security discourse and the threat presentation? What is meant by "security", which metaphors or stereotypes are presented, and what is the degree of intertextuality between the various texts? In line with the first research question, this will be examined in the following chapter which investigates discourse characteristics.

## 4.2. Discourse characteristics

### 4.2.1. Africa

In the analysed documents from African states, there are very few references to security. When security *is* mentioned, it most often addresses human security, i.e. the threat to wildlife rangers in the field or local communities living in areas prone to poaching: "It is communities who suffer the most from the increased insecurity that results when there is poaching-related activity in the vicinity in which they live" (Molewa, 2017). Notably, the African discourse mentions the need to ensure "that any measures taken to combat wildlife crime will comply with the obligations under international laws relating to human rights, international

humanitarian law, and the rights of indigenous/marginalized populations" (Brazzaville Declaration, 2015). This is hardly ever mentioned by the other global actors. However, the African discourse also contains conflicting perspectives on this. An example is a Tanzanian Minster's support for shoot-to-kill policies, saying that "I am very aware that some alleged human rights activists will make an uproar, claiming that poachers have as much rights to be tried in courts as the next person, but let's face it, poachers not only kill wildlife but also usually never hesitate to shoot dead any innocent person standing in their way" (Brownstone, 2013).

When the African states use the word security in other respects than human security it is largely general and unspecific, e.g. "the economic, security and stability impact of wildlife crime" (African Union, 2015). A notable exception is a description of poaching and IWT as threatening "national security, through the proliferation of weapons and the potential development of armed groups" (SADC, 2015). Another is the AU Common Strategy mentioning "terrorism or armed groups", and also making a specific reference to Al-Shabaab (AU, 2015). Interestingly, it is Al-Shabaab's role in illegal taxation of charcoal that is mentioned, and not poaching. But the poacher-terrorist-narrative is not completely absent in the African discourse. Botswana's President Khama has said that "Proceeds of trafficking are used to fund other crimes such as terrorism, arms and drugs trafficking" (Survival International, 2015). Similarly, Kenya's president Uhuru Kenyatta wrote an article in the Wall Street Journal titled "The path to defeating the Al-Shabaab terrorists". There, he describes a double threat of poaching and terrorism and states that "the war against poaching should be treated as a double-edged sword, which decimates two evils at once" (Kenyatta, 2013).
The metaphor of war used by Kenyatta is not uncommon in the African discourse. It is often used in combination with words such as "combating" or "defeating" poachers. For example, Uganda's president Museveni has stated that the next war is on poachers: "We defeated the terrorists, next agenda is defeating the poachers" (Jaramogi, 2018). In Tanzania, the Minster for Natural Resources and Tourism has made similar statements: "Despite successes realised in the *war against poaching*, it remains one of the major challenges facing the wildlife department" (Azania Post, 2017, my emphasis).

Still, by far the most prominent focus in the African discourse is that the threat is seen as damaging the "natural capital" of African countries, obstructing local livelihoods, development and economic growth. Natural resources are referred to as "the backbone of

national socio-economic development" (UNDP, 2014), which is frequently elaborated e.g. by stating that "the loss of African wildlife directly and indirectly affects the livelihoods of African people" (AU, 2015) and "robs our people of our natural heritage, but also handicaps our economies" (Arusha Declaration, 2014) This role of wildlife as natural capital is also highlighted in connection to the 2030 Agenda and the African Union's Agenda 2063 (AU, 2015; African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, 2016).

Interestingly, references to illicit financial flows are not uncommon in the African discourse, e.g. pointing out how illicit financial flows including natural resources "constitute a drain on the resources required for Africa´s development" (African Minsters of the Environment, 2015). The African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (2016) stated that Africa "loses an estimate of up to 195 billion USD annually of its natural capital through illicit financial flows", including losses from illegal wildlife trade. The African discourse also focus on demand for bushmeat as a driving force for poaching and IWT.

All in all, the African discourse largely presents human and economic security as referent objects for the threat of poaching and IWT. It pays relatively little attention to alleged links to conflict or terrorism. The threat presentation highlights wildlife as important for the African identity and heritage, but also its potential contribution to Africa's development goals. The focus on human consequences of anti-poaching measures are emphasized in the African discourse, along with illicit financial flows.

### 4.2.2. EU discourse
The EU discourse has a larger emphasis on the security dimensions of poaching and illegal wildlife trade than the African discourse. Although the environment is clearly emphasized as the referent object, the environmental threat is presented as closely connected to militias, terrorist groups and transnational organised crime networks: "Illegal wildlife trafficking is increasingly recognized as a further source of funding of terrorist and related activities" and "the proceeds of these illegal activities have funded militia groups and fuelled armed conflict" (European Union, 2016b) and "fuels a vicious cycle of further poverty, corruption, and illegal operations by terrorist organisations" (European Commission, 2015).

Despite focusing on these links, the EU discourse often highlight the lack of certain knowledge and use hedges to modifying the statements concerning security: "*in some*

*instances*, it also threatens national and regional security", "*despite the significant knowledge gap as regards the scale of links between poaching and wildlife trafficking on the one hand and the funding of militias on the other, there are reports confirming the existence of such links with several militia groups*" (European Commission, 2016a, my emphasis). The degree of intertextuality is high, with references to NGO reports such as "Kony´s Ivory" and "Tusk Wars" as well as several mentions of how other global actors such as the UN General Assembly, the UN Security Council, the G7 and the U.S. consider illegal wildlife trade to be a security threat.

The EU discourse presents what I would argue is a quite stereotypical image of Africa. It is referred to as a beautiful and "wild" place; "iconic wildlife continent", "the cradle of human evolution and a continent of extra-ordinary wildlife", but at the same time severely underdeveloped, lacking both infrastructure, stability and political agency: "a context of poverty, political instability, weak governance and porous international boundaries", "frequent civil wars, coups d'états, rebellions and cross-border incursions" and "heavily reliant on external support" (European Commission, 2015). The threat to international security is related to this context, with frequent references to various armed groups outside government control as potential benefiters from poaching and IWT.

In terms of underlying causes, Asians or Chinese demand is often mentioned. Additionally, poverty, poor governance and corruption are occasionally discussed. The use of bushmeat and firewood by local populations is presented as a problem where "many communities are exhausting the resources that guarantee their present and future livelihoods" (European Commission, 2015), even though a causal relationship between poverty and overexploitation of the environment is much disputed (see e.g. Robbins, 2012). Public-private-partnerships are highlighted as a potential solution to the problems of weak governance and lack of political priority. There is very little mentioning of the challenges of living with wildlife, as well as of the potentially problematic sides of anti-poaching efforts.

### 4.2.3. U.S. discourse
The U.S. discourse has an explicit focus on the security effects of poaching and illegal wildlife trade, and the threat presentation is overwhelmingly related to U.S. interests. In particular, the obligation to protect wildlife for future generations of Americans and the potential threat to U.S. national security are emphasized. Interestingly, the concern for

conservation seems to be partially rooted in identity, with the 2014 National Strategy for Combating Wildlife Trafficking declaring that "wildlife is inseparable from the identity and prosperity of the world as we know it" (p.3) and that it is important to "ensure that our children have the chance to grow up in a world with and experience for themselves the wildlife we know and love" (p.1). According to Hillary Clinton, the protection of wildlife is "a stewardship responsibility for us and this generation and future generations to come" (2012).

Regarding the threats to national security, this is explicitly stated as fact in several documents, determining that poaching and IWT is "a threat to global security with significant effects on the national interests of the United States" (Obama, 2014, p.3) and "threaten American security interests by strengthening criminal elements, subverting the rule of law, undermining economic development and fostering instability" (U.S. Task Force on Wildlife Trafficking, 2015, p.10). This security connection is often related to various armed groups, and the truth modality is prominent: "Ivory, like so many blood diamonds, is funding many armed fighters in Africa. Reports indicate that terrorists and militant groups – such as Al-Shabaab in Somalia; the Lord´s Resistance Army (LRA) in Central Africa; and Janjaweed in Sudan and Chad – are involved in poaching elephants and dealing in ivory" (U.S. House of Representatives, 2015, p.3). This intimidating threat is coupled with an urgency claim: "Now is the time for effective solutions to combat wildlife trafficking" (Obama, 2014, p.2). These references are also examples of the high degree of intertextuality in the U.S. discourse, with many similar claims being made based on media or NGO reports.

Like in the EU discourse, many harmful groups are mentioned as potential benefiters from poaching and IWT and they are referred to with a variety of different words including "militias", "armed groups", "terrorists", "rebels", "gangs", "militants", "rogue security personnel", "illegal groups" and "organized criminal syndicates". Claims that "terrorists are increasingly turning to criminal activities to fund their violent campaigns such as those that we are witnessing today by al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Boko Haram, al-Shabaab, and others" are frequently made (Luna, 2017). These groups "negatively impact national, regional, and even global security interests through corrosive corruption, increased instability, diminished economic activity, and general criminality" (Ford, 2015). Economic impacts are also mentioned, although less frequently, with poaching and IWT negatively affecting "economic opportunities from tourism" and "economic growth opportunities", including again the national focus by highlighting that it "also hurts the tourism sector in

countries, such as the United States, that have travel industries with important links to the African market" (Ford, 2015).

Africa is overwhelmingly negatively presented also in the U.S. discourse as unstable, weakly governed and prone to conflict and insurgency. The continent has "porous borders, corrupt officials, weak institutions and ungoverned spaces" (U.S. Task Force on Wildlife Trafficking, 2015, p.10) and because it consists of "fragile states with very porous borders in which there is not very clear governance and a lot of monitoring, it gives free passage, so to speak, for many of the bad actors that are involved in this trade" (U.S. Senate, 2014). Africans are typically not presented with any clear agency, i.e. being able to deal with the problem of poaching and illegal wildlife trade themselves: "those in Africa that are trying to enforce the law have very little resources (...) They are unarmed." (U.S. House of Representatives, 2015, p.2), "Local leaders are telling their national leaders that they can lose control of large swaths of territory" (Clinton, 2012).

The role of the U.S. as a global leader is emphasized in the discourse: "*We* need to empower law enforcement (in Africa)", (U.S. House of Representatives, 2015, p.3, my emphasis). The National Strategy for Combating Wildlife Trafficking "positions the United States to exercise leadership in addressing a serious and urgent conservation and global security threat" (Obama, 2014, p.2) and "fortifies U.S. leadership on countering the global security threat posed by wildlife trafficking" (U.S. House of Representatives, 2015, p.11). This is imperative because "If we do not act decisively, the region will remain an exporter of terror and a provider of safe havens where terrorists from other conflicts all over the world find refuge, illicit trafficking will continue to expand, arms and weapons will dangerously proliferate, women, men, and children will be trafficked, and drugs and illicit enterprise will corrode the rule of law and the gains of globalization" (Luna, 2017).

Although references to terrorists, militias and other groups are often presented using a strong truth modality, statements are also sometimes modified using hedges, e.g. "*we have good reason to believe* that rebel militia are players in a worldwide ivory market" (Clinton, 2012, my emphasis), likely reflecting the fact that most of these claims originate from NGO reports which again often rely on rumours or hear-say. Still, truth claims of a link between poaching, illegal wildlife trade and terrorism are dominant in the U.S. discourse, e.g. "We now know

wildlife trafficking money goes to help terrorists, as the drug money does" (U.S. House of Representatives, 2015, p.3).

An issue receiving less attention is the role of the US and the West as importers of illegal wildlife products. Additionally, one document refers to demand as "a complex and long-term issue» and shows a degree of modesty not frequently found elsewhere in the US discourse: "the factors are very different in each one of these countries. It is not a one-size-fit-all answer. And we certainly recognize that we, as the U.S. Government, do not have all the solutions" (U.S. Committee on Foreign Relations, 2014, p.31). This is contrasted by the issue of supply, where similar modifications are far and few between and the belief in quick one-size-fits-all solutions such as increased law enforcement is highly present.

### 4.2.4. Environmental NGOs

Moving on to the NGOs discourse, it is interestingly not as varied as one could have imagined. The different organisations share a common focus on what can be called a poacher-terrorist-narrative, meaning that poaching funds terrorist organisations.

There is a high degree of intertextuality, with frequent references to each other's reports as well as to statements from the UN and the U.S. describing poaching and IWT as security concerns. The poacher-terrorist narrative is widespread, with examples including statement like "ivory is bush currency for militants, militias, and terrorists" (Vira and Ewing, 2014, p.3), "militias, members of armed forces, bandits and criminal gangs are engaged in this bloody trade" (Agger and Hutson, 2013, p.10), and even stating that "Wildlife products have become a substantial source of income for terrorist organizations in Africa" (ICCF Group, quoted in Save the Rhino, n.d.). As in EU and U.S. discourses, a variety of different denominations are used when referring to these groups, including "criminal gangs", "extremists", "terrorist groups", "rebel groups", "organized crime syndicates", "warlords", "bandits", "members of armed forces", "insurgents", "militants" and "corrupt elites". The denominations are sometimes used interchangeably, consequently making it difficult to pin down exactly what is meant or to assess the reliability of the evidence behind the claims.

When the poacher-terrorist narrative was first brought forward by IFAW and Wyler and Sheik in 2008, the claims were often presented using hedges e.g. "These reports, *though at times vague or anecdotal,* indicate that an increasing number of poaching incidents could be tied to

organized crime, militias or terrorist groups" (IFAW, 2008 p. 4, my emphasis). But in more recent documents from the same organisation, the same claims are presented more confidently: "Organised criminal syndicates, insurgency groups, brutal militias, and corrupt military units are among the primary actors involved in large-scale, commercial-sized wildlife trafficking" (IFAW, 2013 p. 26). This can indicate that these claims have gained greater acceptance during the years from 2008 to 2013, representing a global shift towards security. Securitizing claims are still sometimes modified in the NGO discourse, but some actors indicate that hard evidence is unnecessary; "hard proof of the scope and scale of the links is elusive (…) but that, in itself, is not a reason to ignore or shun the problem" (Saunders, Jones and Stuart, 2016 p.2).

Images are plentiful in many NGO reports, and often serve to underline the threat presentation. Pictures of armed fighters, such as this photo of Al-Shabaab, can send a strong message despite the text perhaps treating the terrorist-poacher narrative with a degree of caution:



 (Saunders, Jones and Stuart, 2016).

The NGO discourse, with the U.S. discourse not too far behind, is the one where specific groups allegedly being involved in poaching and IWT are most frequently named. The Lord´s Resistance Army, the Janjaweed and Al-Shabaab are most commonly mentioned, but Seleka, the FARDC, (Forces Armées de la Republique Démocratique du Congo), DRC Mai-Mai militias and many more are also specifically listed as participating in poaching and/or illegal wildlife trade (Vira and Ewing, 2014; Kalron, 2015; Saunders, Jones and Stuart, 2016). The

reference to Al-Shabaab is a prominent example of intertextuality, as this claim originated from an Elephant Action League report in 2011 (Kalron and Crosta, 2011). The report's colourful language, with powerful metaphors and a strong truth modality, might be part of the reason why the Al-Shabaab link became so wide-spread:

*"**The deadly path of conflict ivory starts with the slaughter of innocent animals and ends in the slaughter of innocent people**. It is a source of funding for terrorist organizations that transcends cruelty. It is the 'white gold' for African jihad, white for its color and gold for its value. If we fail to act now, militant groups like al-Shabaab will lay down their roots deep in the African landscape, destroying its heritage for generations to come. Dangerous and unpredictable, al-Shabaab's involvement in ivory trade brings with it an alarming dimension, a dimension the world cannot afford to ignore"* (Kalron and Crosta, 2011, emphasis in the original)

Along with the EU and U.S. discourses, the focus on human security or consequences of anti-poaching practices is sparse in the NGO discourse, as is the focus on any ability of African governments to handle the problem themselves. A war discourse is to a certain degree present, e.g. statements about ivory trade being "born in war" and that nature reserves are being "cannibalized" (Vera and Ewing, 2014).

The stereotypical image of Africa identified in other discourse is also found here, as in this call from the Global Conservation Force to "Adopt a Ranger" (2017). Despite the good intention of raising money for more and better equipped rangers, a metaphor normally used on animals serves to give the rangers a submissive, passive role as recipients of outside help rather than capable actors with agency.

**Become a Wildlife Guardian,
Adopt a Ranger!**

Thinking about contributing to a greater cause but don't know where to start?

Do you love wildlife and want to help them thrive in their wild environments?

Want to help protect endangered wildlife?

If so, you should consider adopting an anti-poaching ranger!

(Global Conservation Force, 2017)

The NGO discourse is also rich with statements suggesting that the existence of African wildlife is not just important for the animals themselves or the African people but is connected to a broader identity or common good: "Even if you never get to see an elephant in the wild, the fact that they're out there makes the world so much more of a special place. I´d hate future generations to look back and turn to us and say: you let these incredible animals go extinct" (Wildlife Conservation Society, 2010).

A particular phenomenon from the NGO EAGLE Network, Eco Activists for Governance and Law Enforcement, illustrates how methods which would hardly be considered legitimate in Europe are being applied to the case of poaching and IWT in Africa. The organisation operates in nine countries in Western and Eastern Africa, "developing civic activism and collaborating with governments and civil society to improve the application of national and international environmental legislation" (EAGLE Network, 2017, p. 5). It has been supported by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for over ten years (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2017). The EAGLE Network carries out investigations, arrests and follow prosecutions, but most notably, they regularly publish pictures of wildlife crime offenders in their annual reports as well as on their official Facebook page:

(EAGLE Network, 2018)

The pictures are not anonymized, and the alleged offenders are made to pose with the confiscated goods. Judging by the texts associated with the pictures it does not seem to be a prerequisite that the people on the pictures are convicted before getting their pictures published for public humiliation. This shows how extreme measures can be justified by an urgent threat presentation. Furthermore, I believe that this practice contributes to the construction of the identity of Africans as "others", a point that will be discussed further below.

The IWT-security-discourse is generally widespread among the NGOs, but the security connection, and in particular the poacher-terrorist-narrative, is not equally prominent among all the groups. World Wildlife Fund makes occasional direct references to the poacher-terrorist-narrative, (WWF, 2015), but in general their focus on this alleged connection is quite modest compared to some of the other groups mentioned above: "Recent evidence shows that *some networks* are also linked to terrorist organisations" (WWF, n.d., my emphasis).

Lastly, a group of NGOs working on environmental issues from a human rights perspective

serve as critical voices to the general security-framing found in the environmental NGO discourse. An example of this is Survival International, who calls the poacher-terrorist-narrative "an exaggeration used to justify the militarization of anti-poaching squads and the persecution of tribal subsistence hunters" (2015).

### 4.2.5. Media discourse

The discourse found in the media is, perhaps not surprisingly, every bit as colourful in its threat presentations as the NGO discourse. In other words, the media discourse is rich in metaphors and emotions.

The general IWT-security-discourse as well as the poacher-terrorist-narrative are highly present in international media. An article in Vanity Fair declared that "Ivory, like the blood diamonds of other African conflicts, is funding many rebel groups in Africa" (Shoumatoff, 2011). A New York Times article titled "Elephants Die in Epic Frenzy as Ivory Fuels Wars and Profit" states that "Africa is in the midst of an epic elephant slaughter» and that "some of Africa´s most notorious armed groups, including the Lord´s Resistance Army, the Shabab and Darfur`s Janjaweed, are hunting down elephants and using the tusks to buy weapons and sustain their mayhem" (Gettleman, 2012). This article is frequently referred to both in other media and government reports. Another New York Times article which was widely cited was entitled "The White Gold of Jihad", a direct quote from the Elephant Action League report, and announced that elephant poaching funds al-Shabaab and other terrorists, and therefore directly influences U.S. national security interests (Medina, 2013). "White Gold" is also the title of a 2014 movie narrated by Hillary Clinton which asks the question "is this luxury commodity really so desirable, considering the ugly reality of terrorism and looming species extinction?" (White Gold, 2014), while the National Geographic documentary "Warlords of Ivory" according to the Guardian "provides the first direct evidence linking ivory trafficking to terrorism" (Kahumbu and Halliday, 2015). The terrorist-link is also referenced in African media, e.g. "Poaching is funding global terrorism –and the world needs to know what is going on " (Watson, 2016).

The poacher-terrorist-narrative is often presented in dramatic language or pictures. An example of this is the webpage "End ivory-funded terrorism" and the associated short film by director Kathryn Bigelow. The 3-minute film from 2014 includes dramatic CCTV-footage showing people being shot during the Westgate shopping mall attack, and links it to a cartoon

history where Al-Shabaab is shown backing out of the mall, subsequently driving into the bush to trade in ivory and massacre elephants to fund their further activities. A part of the voice-over as well as the website logo is presented below:

*"Even though you only bought a trinket, you paid for something bigger. Westgate Mall, Kenya, Sept 21, 2013 67 dead, 175 wounded Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the Westgate attack. Al-Shabaab's income from ivory is roughly 600 000 US Dollars per month. But they're not the only ones. LRA Janjaweed militia Boko Haram All use money from poaching to fund terrorism"*



(Source: lastdaysofivory.com)

The claim of Al-Shabaab's 600 000 USD dollar income is presumably taken from the previously mentioned Elephant Action League report, which said that "A quick calculation puts Shabaab's monthly revenues from ivory at between US$200,000 and US$600,000" (Kalron and Crosta, 2011). Leaving no doubt about the urgency of the problem, the video ends with an explicit call to action by spreading the message, contacting policy makers or making a donation (End Ivory-funded Terrorism, 2014).

The fact that some of the armed groups presented as involved in poaching and IWT are Muslim (notably, Al-Shabaab and Boko Haram) has not been ignored by the media. Dramatic images of fighters wearing masks and flags, such as this screen shot of the trailer of the movie White Gold, are not uncommon.



(White Gold, 2014)

As we can see, the degree of intertextuality in the media is extremely high, and the poaching-terrorism-narrative has been particularly popular. But the media discourse not only influenced other media, it has also spread to official discourses at the highest global levels. For example, Tom Cardamone of the research organisation Global Financial Integrity, which focuses on tax evasion, money laundering and corruption, stated in a testimony for the U.S. Senate in 2012 that "Media reports indicate that two Bangladesh-based Islam terrorist groups affiliated with Al Qaeda, Jama-atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) and Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami (HuJI), are raising funds for their operations via the illegal poaching (...)" (Cardamone, 2012). Similar references are frequently made both in EU and U.S. reports.

Although the presentation of poaching and IWT as a threat to security because of terrorism is very dominant in the media discourse, there are exceptions. Critical voices are also present, e.g. declaring that "talking about ivory-funded terrorism overlooks the real sources of income for these groups" (Moritz, Pennaz, Ahmadou and Scholte, 2017) and that the Last days of ivory short film described above offers "a beguiling story divorced from reality" (McConnell, 2015).

The media discourse to some extent also includes a focus on corruption as an underlying cause of poaching and illegal wildlife trade. As an example, the so-called "Ivory Gate" in Malawi started with the newspaper Nyasa Times claiming that the Malawian National Intelligence Bureau collaboration with other government officials in organising and funding elephant poaching (Nyondo, 2016). References to problematic sides of anti-poaching practices are few and far between in the media but do exist and then most often originates from academics.

When placing blame, the increasingly large Chinese population in Africa is almost exclusively mentioned, an aspect which is shared among all the analysed discourses:
*"The real problem is the managers, who have the resources to directly commission some local to kill an elephant and bring them the tusks, and diplomats, whose bags are not checked, and the Chinese businessmen, who are taking over the economy of Africa. In the last decade the number of Chinese residents in Africa has grown from 70,000 to more than a million. (…). According to Traffic, a non-profit wildlife-trade-monitoring network, each day, somewhere in the world, an average of two Chinese nationals are arrested with ivory." (Shoumatoff, 2011).*

In conclusion, the discourse analysis has shown that the global actors' discourses have many common characteristics, and also some differences. Obviously, actor groups like these consisting of many individual actors will not have a single, unified view. Still, I believe that there is sufficient coherence within the actor groups to justify treating them as individual actors in a global level analysis. Based on the discourse findings I will in the following discuss to what degree poaching and IWT has become securitized. The discussion will be employ the securitization vocabulary presented in the theory chapter.

## 4.3. Has poaching and IWT become securitized?

The analysis has shown that references to security are found in all the major global actors' discourses. Although the details of the threat presentation and the meaning of security varies, it is clear that poaching and IWT is no longer "only" a biodiversity concern. As mentioned in the theory chapter, securitization requires that a *securitizing actor* makes a *securitizing move* by presenting an issue as an *existential threat* to a *referent object.* This basic vocabulary was modified to seeing securitization as a process dependent on context, history and power relations and including the external reality and the audience. I will argue that poaching and IWT in Africa has become securitized to a high degree, showing many characteristics of a successful securitization.

### 4.3.1. Threat presentation and referent object

To identify what exactly is under threat, i.e. the referent object, is not straight-forward. While species survival and biodiversity are the obvious referent objects for poaching and illegal wildlife trade, they are not the only one. The referent object and discursive threat presentation are central to securitization because it tells us something about what it is that needs protection and which interests and identities that are emphasized. In other words, they reveal parts of the subjective side of security (Trombetta, 2011). I will argue that the discourses share a dual threat presentation, with both wildlife and "international security" framed as urgently threatened. This casts African wildlife as well as a global "us" as referent objects. Interestingly, wildlife is presented as important not just by itself or to the African identity, but for a wider, global identity. Elephants seems to be among the species most frequently mentioned as a sort of common good that must be protected because the world would be considered a poorer place without them. In this way, preventive actions are presented as a shared moral responsibility.

The threat to international security is connected to a threat presentation where poaching and IWT finances terrorists and crime, and/or boosts conflict and war in already fragile African states. When poaching and IWT is presented in this way it concerns everyone because war, crime and terrorism can have global consequences. The poacher-terrorist narrative is particularly relevant in this respect, as its unpredictable nature means that it (at least in theory) can strike anyone, anywhere, at any time. The power of this double threat can be illustrated by a quote from director Kathryn Bigelow: "…it represents the diabolical intersection of two problems that are of great concern- species extinction and global terrorism. Both involve the loss of innocent life, and both require urgent action" (Feeney, 2014).

As mentioned above, the African discourse make relatively few references to security, while they are frequently found in the other discourses. Those discourses highlighting terrorism and conflict in their threat presentations are the same ones which present an image of African states as *already* prone to insurgency, instability and war. The threat then concerns chaos and conflict being exported from Africa to the rest of the world. This makes the referent object identity all non-African countries, or perhaps the West, rather than a truly global "us". This is illustrated by a quote from the Senior Director of the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs: "Unfortunately, what happens in Africa does not stay in Africa" (Luna, 2017).

Williams (2003) argues that for an issue to be securitized it must be cast in terms of friends and enemies. I will argue that the dominant global threat presentation is a story about a fight between "good" and "bad". The bad actors range from terrorists to criminals, and potentially include Africans referred to as "corrupt elites" or "rogue members of armed forces". Descriptions of poachers as poor, regular people are far and few between although they are occasionally present in the African discourse.

Even though the U.S. and EU both constitute significant markets for illegal wildlife products (Sollund and Maher, 2015), the discursive presentation is almost exclusively about increased Chinese demand. This finding is consistent with research on media discourse by Paterson (2018) which has shown that both China and the U.S. refer to their own activities in Africa as benign collaborations, while the global media largely present the U.S. as a friendly supportive actor and China as predatory.

Summing up, the IWT-security discourse is found to be about fragile wildlife on a continent that is presented as lacking in both development and control over their territory. This makes them, and the rest of the world, vulnerable to the threat of terrorism and conflict. Importantly, discourses can be productive, meaning that they give authority to speak and act. By presenting African states as unable to handle this problem themselves the discourse empowers external actors such as Western states and NGOs. But where did this threat presentation originate? Who were the securitizing actors, and can a securitizing move be identified?

### 4.3.2. Securitizing move(s) and securitizing actor(s)

In addition to the discursive threat presentation, the political processes underlying the threat are also essential to securitization (Trombetta, 2011, p.135). Although this thesis views securitization as a process rather than a speech act event, this does not mean that it is impossible to identify securitizing moves that might have influenced this process. Additionally, the identification of securitizing actors does not mean that securitization is necessary intentional: security problems can emerge out of social interaction and different practices which were not initially oriented towards a securitization (Balzacq, 2011, p.17).

As we have seen, claims of a link between poaching, IWT and security were first presented by environmental NGOs. Because the double threat presentation casting wildlife *and* international security only later emerged in the other actors' discourses, it seems reasonable to assume that NGOs were the initial securitizing actors at the global level. This interpretation is supported by the fact that there is a high degree of intertextuality in the IWT-security-discourse, with a large amount of metaphors and threat presentations originating in NGO reports. According to Fairclough (1992), a high degree of intertextuality can be interpreted as a sign of change, typically seen when a discourse is quite new. This fits well with the development of a new IWT-security discourse.

Consistent with the view of securitization as a process it evolved in multiple stages. Initially, the environmental NGOs were the securitizing actors. Their claims were quickly picked up by the media, which contributed to spreading in particular the poacher-terrorist-narrative. Still, the most profound effect was on the U.S. threat perception, which in turn made the U.S. function as a global securitizing actor. This interpretation is supported by the findings of the discourse analysis presented above, where the U.S. discourse, along with media and NGOs, contains the most exceptional threat presentations and clear calls for urgent action.

Despite being only one piece in the puzzle of the securitization process, if any *one* securitizing move were to be identified, the Elephant Action League Report report "Africa´s white gold of jihad" is a strong contender. There are indications that this report is among the main reasons why the poacher-terrorist-narrative caught on, not least because of its widespread media coverage. This narrative caught strong international attention, particularly from the U.S., and hence constituted a significant contribution to the securitization process. Interestingly, the initial securitizing actors are not states. However, although environmental NGOs made the initial securitizing moves, I would argue that a successful securitization ultimately was dependent on the threat presentation being accepted by a powerful state. Security cannot be defined by anyone, but some actors have this ability because they are considered to be legitimate voices on matters of security (Bigo, 1994). I will argue that despite a fall in status as a result of their increased unilateralism in the post-9/11-era, the U.S. is still definitely such a voice. Because the public are seldom fully informed about the status of various threats, they depend on the threat presentations made by what they consider to be legitimate actors. Official state discourse is generally considered to be reliable, meaning that if it presents an issue as a threat it is assumed that there is a good reason for it (Balzacq, 2011, p.25). This means that securitization moves are more easily available to public officials because they "hold influential positions in the security field based on their political capital and have a privileged access to mass media" (ibid., p.26).

After the initial securitizing moves by environmental NGOs the U.S. seems to have been the dominant securitizing actor. But what about Africa? Are they just victims of the securitization process? Balzacq, Leonard and Ruzika argue that "it is impossible to predict with certainty the effects of securitizing moves by Western states upon non-Western countries. Sometimes, states resist or subvert the framings that are produced by international organizations or other states" (2016, p.513). But although African states primarily frame poaching and IWT as an issue of economy, natural capital and development, this does not necessarily entail that they oppose a securitization. On the contrary, it could be seen as advantageous.

Vuori (2008, p.76) distinguishes between four strands of securitization based on their function. An example can be to raise an issue on the agenda, gain control or legitimize past acts. The fact that securitization can serve different functions for various actors likely facilitated the securitization process. In the case of Africa, advantages could potentially

include increased funding and attention, justification of state control over areas and populations or legitimating controversial enforcement practices. A commentary by Uhuru Kenyatta in the New York Times (2013) used the Al-Shabaab-connection to encourage support: "The jihadists who struck my country should be fought militarily but also financially. Let's work together." The SADC Law Enforcement and Anti-poaching Strategy states that "If wildlife crimes are seen as security issues, this helps greatly in achieving results" (2015, p.36). It is impossible to say whether the motivation in this and similar cases were indeed genuine concern about poaching and IWT, solving a related issue or merely a convenient excuse for something completely different. Regardless, it seems clear that African leaders had many reasons for supporting, or at least not rejecting, a securitization.

### 4.3.3. Audience

The definition of who the audience is often impacts whether a securitization is considered successful, but to empirically identify an audience can be challenging. As an example, during the war in Iraq exceptional measures were accepted by the UK Parliament and U.S. Congress, while being vigorously opposed by many regular people world-wide. Whether the securitization is then considered successful or not depends largely on who are defined as the enabling audience (Emmers, 2016, p.169).

Salter (2008, p.329) highlights how securitizing moves will always be different in different settings. Because an argument can be received differently by different audiences, a securitizing actor seeking accept for a threat presentation need to be able to "identify with the audience´s feelings, needs, and interests" (Balzacq, 2011, p.9). The presentation of poaching and IWT as a threat to international security is most prevalent among media, NGOs and Western actors while less so in African documents. This might be caused by the presentation relying on an image of Africa as unstable and conflict-ridden, something which is hardly in line with the feelings, needs or interest of African states. According to Wilhelmsen, "the discursive reception of the securitizing attempt in the "audience" will be conditioned upon how well it resonates with well-established representations in the given society" (2017, p.177). As will be further discussed below, this stereotypical representation of Africa is not uncommon in the West, something that can quite likely have facilitated the reception of this threat presentation among a Western audience.

Regardless, I will argue that the enabling audience in the case of poaching and illegal wildlife

trade has not been Western states. According to Croft we "need to conceptualize power as being concentrated not simply in the hands of government, but in a wider elite" (2012, p.82). The high degree of intertextuality among the discourses indicates that a global elite from the media, NGOs, Western and African states all accepted the framing of poaching and IWT as a double threat to wildlife and international security. According to Wright Mills, elites often come from similar social and educational background, and share ethnicity or gender, causing them to share interests and informal bonds (2000). In the case of poaching and IWT an audience consisting of global elites representing a variety of actors has likely been an important enabling factor for the securitization.

### 4.3.4. Outcome: a successful securitization

The discourse analysis has shown that in the case of poaching and IWT the dominant threat presentation concerns an existential threat to both wildlife and international security. Wilhelmsen argues that "Agreement on something as an existential threat (…) takes the form of a many-layered and dominant discourse" (2017, p. 177). The observation that this dual threat presentation can be found in such a broad range of high level documents indicates that the IWT-security discourse has indeed become quite dominant. There seems to be a general agreement that the referent objects wildlife and international security are under serious threat and that they are worth protecting even if it requires extraordinary measures. Although the securitization seems to have originated from environmental NGOs, their double threat presentation has gained widespread acceptance within a global elite including NGOs, media, Western and African state leaders. Although not analysed in depth here, the fact that the security framing is now also found in official UN documents indicates that the security discourse has become generally accepted among member states. This further supports the conclusion of a successful securitization.

All in all, I believe that poaching and IWT has become securitized to a high degree and represents a case of successful securitization. Despite occasional desecuritization attempts, the issue seems to remain firmly within the realm of security at the time of writing. The next chapter will investigate the enabling factors that facilitated this securitization. In line with the modified securitization framework of chapter 2, aspects of the actual threat, distal context, historical factors and power relations between the actors will be emphasised.

## 4.4. Which factors can explain the securitization?

I have now argued that poaching and illegal wildlife trade in Africa has become securitized. In order to explain why this securitization has evolved, I present four factors which could explain why the poaching-IWT-security narrative caught on when and where it did. I argue that five factors have significantly influenced the securitization process.

Firstly, an increasing number of African wildlife species have become threatened with extinction in recent years. In line with my theoretical assumption that threats are not just what we make of them, this has likely influenced the ability to frame wildlife as existentially threatened. Similarly, concerns about insurgency, terror and armed groups in Africa have been increasing, consistent with the second part of the threat presentation. Secondly, a security framing fitted well with the strategic interests of the U.S. in Africa, as well as with their identity in the post-9/11 context. The role of Africa in global politics, both in terms of historical and current socio-economic power relations, further enabled the framing of African states as weak and uncapable of competent governance. This was necessary for poaching and IWT on the African continent to be considered as a threat to global security. Despite this stereotypical image, a securitization could still be in the interest of many African state leaders. A fourth enabling factor is the role of large environmental NGOs. They assert powerful influence on the global elites by combining strategic goals with linguistic competence. Finally, actors from private security and technology businesses might have had an interest in furthering a security perspective and served as functional actors in the securitization process.

### 4.4.1. The actual threats

*4.4.1.1. The threat to wildlife*

As explained in the theory section, threats are not only social and discursive constructs, but "emerge also out of the claim itself" (Balzacq, 2011, p.26). There is little doubt that independent of the discursive threat presentation, the scale and impact of poaching and IWT has escalated over the last decade. According to a senior official of South African National Parks "It took years for this to become a priority crime and it is only now that 800 rhinos are being lost a year in Kruger that people are panicking, and things are finally beginning to change" (quoted in Rademeyer, 2016, p.18).

Evidence that the illegal ivory trade was intensifying appeared in the 2000s. After relatively low poaching levels in the 1990s, poaching started to increase around mid-2000s, with a large

increase around 2009 (UNEP, CITES, IUCN, TRAFFIC, 2013). In 2009, Ian Douglas-Hamilton, the founder of Save the Elephants, uttered concerns that the spike in elephant killings over the last two years could be a "tipping point" for elephants (2009, p.155). Four years later a report arrived at this same conclusion, estimating that poaching levels had tripled and that elephants were at risk of becoming locally extinct in Western and Central Africa (UNEP, CITES, IUCN and TRAFFIC, 2013). It concluded that although habitat loss, land use pressure and wildlife conflicts also threatened elephant populations, the most acute threat was poaching and illegal ivory trade. Another report presented at the African Elephant Summit in Botswana described similar findings of a steep rise in poaching since the mid-2000s, peaking between 2009-2011 and remaining high ever since (CITES, IUCN, TRAFFIC, 2013). According to data collected by the three surveillance bodies ETIS (the Elephant Trade Information System), MIKE (Monitoring Illegal Killing of Elephants) and PIKE (Percentage of Illegally Killed Elephants), large scale ivory seizures reached record numbers in 2013. Illegal killing of elephants surpassed 50 % of dead elephants in 2008 and remained stable above that level after 2010. These are levels of poaching that exceed the elephants' reproduction rate, meaning that if the current rates persist it will lead to extinction (CITES, 2014). In 2016, the majority of elephant ivory on the world market was believed to originate from Mozambique, Tanzania and Central African countries (Somerville, 2016, p.221). Chinese demand has been soaring along with their booming economy, while demand from large markets in Europe, the U.S. and Japan is on the decline.

The increase in poaching and illegal wildlife trade does not only concern elephants and rhino, although as conservation poster species and part of the "big five" they are subject to much high-level attention and probably also the most extensive data collection through monitoring programs such as MIKE, PIKE and ETIS. But other species such as pangolins, cheetahs and great apes also fall victim to poaching and illegal wildlife trade in increasing numbers. Luckily, they are increasingly also brought into the spotlight (Wittemyer et al, 2014). Even giraffes are threatened by poaching, which in combination with habitat loss has decreased their numbers and listed them as "Vulnerable" on the 2016 Red List of Threatened Species (Daley, 2016). Importantly though, the picture is not only bleak. The threat to elephants does not concern all of Africa, with some areas on the contrary struggling to deal with problems associated with over-population of elephants (Somerville, 2016). This is a nuance which is completely ignored by the IWT-security-discourse.

It seems reasonable to argue that a real-world increase in poaching and IWT facilitated the presentation of African wildlife as urgently threatened. But as we have seen above, this is only one part of a dual threat presentation. There is also the threat of poaching and IWT undermining international insecurity. To what degree was this claim also influenced by real world events?

*4.4.1.2. The threat to international security*

Poaching and IWT is portrayed as threatening international security through financing the activities of African rebels and insurgents. This narrative plays upon Western fears of terrorism and rebel groups originating in Africa and spreading to the rest of the world. As described in the discourse analysis, the groups named in the global discourse as benefitting from poaching and IWT include, but are not limited to, Al-Shabaab, LRA, Boko Haram, ISIS, Séleka and Janjaweed. Out of the organisations identified during the discourse analysis, only two are considered terrorist organizations by the U.S.: Al-Shabaab and Boko Haram (Bureau of Counterterrorism, nod).

Because of the often unspecific language found in the discourses, it is difficult to pin down which groups are in fact referred to when general references to militias, armed groups or rebels are made. The most wide-spread poacher-terrorist-narrative concerns Al-Shabaab financing a large portion of their activities from illegal ivory trade. Originating in the Elephant Action League report, this claim has largely been disputed. Christian Nellemann, the head editor of the UNEP report "The Rise of Environmental Crime" from 2016, has called it "total nonsense", and stated that ivory is at best a marginal source of income for this group (quoted in McConnell, 2015). He builds his statement on Al-Shabaab experts as well as the fact that subsequent research by others has failed to confirm the claims made in the EAL report. For example, the number of tusks indicated in the EAL report would imply that almost all ivory originating from Eastern, Western and Central Africa passed through the hands of Al-Shabaab, which is clearly unlikely. Furthermore, the fact that Mozambique, Tanzania and Central African states are the major supply countries and most of the ivory is being shipped out of Africa through Mombasa, does not support claims of a major smuggling route through Somalia (Somerville, 2016, p.237; TRAFFIC, 2016).

Still, according to UNEP, (Nellemann (eds.), 2016), environmental crime can in some

instances drive conflict and constitute one of many sources of income for armed groups. Douglas and Alie (2014, p.1) argue that "wildlife can have a powerful influence on violent conflict and security interest". There seems to be some level of certainty that both LRA and the Janjaweed take part in poaching elephants (Cooke and Schlickeisen, 2015; Haenlein and Smith (eds.), 2016; Nelleman (eds) 2016). Still, few believe that poaching and IWT make up a crucial part of these groups' income. The amount of ivory involved is small, and the effect of this kind of poaching is mainly a local problem (Somerville, 2016, p.199). Additionally, "although fighters from such groups might be the ones who pull the trigger, they are merely cogs in much larger wildlife smuggling networks who supply the demand" (Felbab-Brown, 2015). Another important point is that despite some evidence of links between poaching, armed groups and conflict, UNEP highlights that, unlike minerals and timber, "the value of ivory is not enough alone to fund a war" (UNEP, CITES, IUCN, TRAFFIC, 2013, p.58).

Despite the underlying evidence sometimes being questionable, the IWT-security discourse might be partially explained by the fact that it fits into a context of issues that were already being discussed in academic and policy circles at the time. One such issue was the concern about alliances between insurgency groups in unstable regions of Africa and other armed groups threatening the West such as Al-Qaeda. Another was the growing amount of revenue derived from transnational environmental crime, also a good fit with the IWT-security-discourse (Haenlein, Maguire and Somerville, 2016). Consequently, the threat presentation resonated well because it played upon existing concerns that regional conflicts might spread along with fears of terrorism which had been widespread in the West since 9/11 (Somerville, 2016, p.244).

All in all, the second part of the discursive threat presentation also to some degree seems to correlate with an underlying real-world threat. However, the discursive presentation is exaggerated and leaves it to the reader to fill in many details. It is hard to argue that this presentation would emerge based on the threat alone, and other potential enabling factors will be presented in the following sections.

### 4.4.2. U.S., Africa, and the post 9/11-agenda
#### 4.4.2.1. U.S.-Africa-relations
The discourse analysis also revealed that underlying assumptions of Africa as conflict-ridden and prone to insurgencies were widely present in U.S. documents. The framing of African

states as potential exporters of terror along with calls for U.S. leadership has commonalities with the discourse on "rogue states", although no African states have been officially listed as such by the U.S. government.[5] The historically (and contemporary) unequal relations between the U.S. and Africa can probably partially explain the discursive presentation of an exotic but uncapable Africa and the need for the U.S. to exercise leadership. With a significant Afro-American population originating from African slaves, racial tensions have resulted in the U.S. having "both a sense of hierarchy between America and Africa, as well as a sense of duty towards Africans" (Divon and Derman, 2017, p.41). With multiple stories in the last couple of years of ISIS destroying cultural heritage in Syria and Iraq (Buffenstein, 2017; Curry, 2015) there is a short mental leap towards embracing the idea of armed groups in Africa eradicating natural heritage. White (2014) argues that prior to 9/11 and the resulting "war on terror" it is unlikely that an issue-linkage with security concerns and terrorism would have been as influential as it turned out to be in this case.

### 4.4.2.2. A security state identity

The discourse analysis demonstrated that the U.S. were among the most important global actors in the securitization process. This indicates that the discursive threat presentation resonated well with U.S. identity and interests. This is unsurprising in a post-9/11 context where concerns about insurgency and terrorism coexisted with fears that the African continent might become a breeding ground for armed groups and Islamist movements.

Compared to the EU discourse, the US security discourse appear more extreme, perhaps reflecting their role as a "security state" as well as different attitudes towards power politics in the U.S. and Europe (Stritzel and Schmittchen 2011; Kagan, 2004). Security arguments might resonate particularly well in the U.S. because they identify as a military superpower with both willingness and capacity to act in issues of security (Stritzel and Schmittchen, 2011). And although American security interests in Africa are nothing new, they intensified as Africa become a "second front" in the war on terror after 9/11. Along with an increased focus on counter-terrorism operations, security motivations also became increasingly important for U.S. interest in Africa (Carmody, 2016; Paterson, 2018).

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[5] I am aware that the concept of "rogue state" is a disputed term which is no longer in use by the US State Department. As it was recently used by President Trump, I still consider it a relevant concept (BBC News, 2017).

According to a 2009 report from the U.S. Air Force, U.S. security interests in terrorism and transnational crime overlap with African environmental concerns, and environmental issues have significant potential for promoting U.S. and AFRICOM strategic goals (Jasparro, 2009). AFRICOM, the U.S. Africa command, "conducts military operations to disrupt, degrade and neutralize violent extremist organizations that present a transnational threat" (...) and "to help African partner nations build the capacity they need to secure the region" (Africom, n.d.). Both objectives fit well within an IWT-security-discourse. The U.S. currently has military presence in 53 out of 54 African countries and show few indications of decreasing this (Blevins, 2017). On the contrary, referring to the war on terrorism, Defense Secretary Jim Mattis recently told the US Senate that "You're going to see more action in Africa, not less (...)" (RT International, 2017).

*4.4.2.3. The role of aid*

Since the end of the Cold War, U.S. motivation for foreign aid has largely been about trade and economy (Divon and Derman, 2017). The U.S. is currently the leading aid donor to Africa, and USAID, the government agency for development aid, is one of the major actors involved in wildlife conservation projects including initiatives to combat poaching and IWT (Carmody, 2016; Usaid.gov, 2017). Since 2013, Kenya, South Africa, and Tanzania each received at least 1 million USD annually from the U.S. to combat illegal wildlife trade, and in 2015 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service awarded more than 50 million USD to 141 wildlife trafficking-related projects (USGAO, 2016; U.S. Task Force on Wildlife Trafficking, 2015).

According to Divon and Derman, the U.S. development discourse is based on a combination of idealism and self-interest (2017, p.34). They argue that U.S. development policies were subject to a securitization post-9/11 which has made them particularly susceptible to security arguments. As a result, poverty, weak institutions, corruption and vulnerability has increasingly been linked to terrorism and security concerns (ibid, p.90,92). It seems fair to assume that this also made for a receptive environment when similar claims were made in the case of poaching and illegal wildlife trade, and consequently might have facilitated a securitization.

In addition to exercising considerable power through USAID, the U.S. is also a major donor to other organisations working in the field of conservation. This gives them significant influence on policies and priorities. One such example is the Global Environmental Facility

(GEF), a financial institution which is the largest, single financier of conservation world-wide (Secretariat of the Hanoi Conference, 2016). According to the Wildlife Conservation Society, "the GEF supports U.S. national security goals abroad" and they argue that GEF funding is "a cost-effective way to support U.S. economic interests" (WCS, 2018).

### 4.4.2.4. Strategic interests

U.S. strategic interests in Africa should not be underestimated as an influence on the securitization process and outcome. Africa is strategically important for the U.S. as well as to other current and emerging powers such as China and India. The competition over access to African natural resources has been described as a "new scramble for Africa" (see e.g. Carmody, 2016; Gertz, 2016). While the US and Europe has traditionally been Africa's main trading partners, the Chinese economy has grown to become the world's second largest and they have risen to become Africa's largest individual trading partner (Carmody, 2016; Gray, 2017). While some see this relation as progressive and positive South-South cooperation bonds, the Chinese competition is likely to be one of many reasons for increased involvement of the U.S. on the African continent.

As a major investor in a range of African countries, there are evidence linking Chinese workers to the ivory trade as well as indications that newly built Chinese infrastructure can facilitate the transport of ivory from remote areas (IFAW, 2013). The Chinese also became the main buyers of African ivory at the end of the 1990s (Martin and Vigne, 2011). Although the U.S. has been, and still is, among the largest markets for the illegal wildlife trade, their demand started to decrease at around the same time that the demand from China increased. The discourse analysis showed how China is generally portrayed as the "villain" in the IWT-security-discourse. China themselves have repeatedly said that Western media are blaming the increase in poaching and IWT on China because of the increased involvement of China in Africa (Somerville, 2016). It could be speculated that a narrative where immoral Chinese actors are destroying wildlife and funding armed groups was particularly attractive to a U.S. that would not mind being portrayed as "the good guys" in the resource scramble across the African continent.

In conclusion, the threat presentation of the IWT-security-discourse converged with larger U.S. interests and strategic goals. This is highly likely to have facilitated the securitization process.

**4.4.3. The role of Africa**

*4.4.3.1. A global "Other"?*

The stereotype image of Africa revealed in the discourse analysis has long traditions. Schneider and Ingram argue that securitizing actors "develop maps of target populations based on both the stereotypes (of the referent subject) they themselves hold and those they believe to prevail among that segment of the public likely to become important to them" (1993, p.336). This indicates that the discourses' stereotypical image of Africa resonated well with the existing image of Africa among the global elites.

The West has a long history of portraying Africa as wild, dangerous and savage (see e.g. Adams and McShane,1992). As evident in the discourse analysis, an image of Africans as underdeveloped and in need of help persists today and is often presented along a more romantic perception of an "exotic" continent rich in "wilderness". Securitization theory predicts that the audiences accept for a threat presentation is facilitated if the threat concerns the survival of an "in-group". The IWT-security discourse creates the African identity as an "other", different and even opposed to a "normal" Western in-group or Self. According to Croft (2012) and Hansen (2006), securitization often hinge on these types of identity constructions of Self and Other.

The most threatening form of Otherness is a Radical Other. A Radical Other is radically different from the Self-identity in a malignant way, and "threatens the very existence of the Self" (Croft, 2012, p.86). The IWT-security discourse presents the poachers as people wanting to kill both animals and people in horrific ways, consistent with an identity as malignant, Radical Others. The presence of this extremely different and frightening identity is part of what makes the threat both urgent and existential.

A second form of Otherness is also present in the IWT-security discourse; that of an Orientalized Other. Said's concept of "orientalism" (1987) is the foundation of this form of otherness. An Orientalized Other identity is defined by being "oriental", or "exotic" in the sense of being different from the West. But rather than a neutral difference, this otherness is juxtaposed with weakness and lacking development. An identity as Orientalized Other has a certain degree of positive romantisation of "the exotic", like the beauty of African wildlife and nature. But the negative dimensions in terms of politics and power are far more dominant:

an Orientalized Other is weak and in need of help, they should "be led, governed, moulded and taught" (Croft, 2012 p. 90). This identity is prescribed by the IWT-security discourse to regular Africans, and to a certain degree also to Chinese. Examples that depend on this Other construction is the "Adopt a Ranger"- campaign presented in the discourse analysis, but also other events such as President Trump's recent reference to African states as "shithole countries". The latter prompted AU condemnation along with a statement claiming that this illustrates a "continued and growing trend" of U.S. administrations denigrating Africa (Mwaba, 2018).

These Other constructions are important contributors to the securitization process because they affect power positions between the actors as well as influence which measures are considered legitimate to defend the referent object. Wilhelmsen (2017) argues that in order to legitimize an existential threat, an Oriental Other is not sufficient, and in the IWT-security-discourse this identity mainly serves the purpose of supporting the threat presentation. However, the discursive identity as Radical Others ascribed to poachers could potentially contribute to increasing fear and create acceptance for emergency measures against them.

### 4.4.3.2. African agency

As mentioned above, Africa is strategically important for the U.S. as a "second front" in the war on terror. Additionally, and contrasting the view of Africa as globalization's loser, recent years have seen an increased interest in trade and investment in Africa (Carmody, 2016; Frynas and Paulo, 2006). Not only rich in wildlife but also other natural resources such as oil, gas and minerals, many African countries have experienced increased economic growth in the last decade (World Bank, 2017). Although there is much to be said about the negative consequences of the global powers' interests in Africa, I will argue that this also presents opportunities. African states are not only victims but have agency, also in the case of this securitization. As discussed above, although African states were not initial securitizing actors, the global elite which served as an enabling audience includes many African leaders. Despite the fact that the stereotypical discursive presentation of the continent did not fit Africa's interest or identity, the securitization could still be seen as convenient or even desirable for African states. In the case of the poacher-terrorist-narrative, Somerville (2016) argues that the Al-Shabaab-story fitted well with Kenyan politics and their enemy image of Somalis. Additionally, African's are fully capable of stereotyping other African countries as incapable and weak, while presenting their own country as capable and efficiently governed.

As an example, according to the director of Kenya Wildlife Service, a large part of their poaching problem relates to the fact that "Kenya is in the unenviable position of sharing over 1,700 kilometres of border with three countries with civil wars that are awash with firearms: Somalia, Ethiopia, and Sudan" (Shoumatoff, 2011). Although there is of course some truth in these claims, it illustrates how African states also participate in the discursive presentation of the continent.

Unfortunately, many African leaders also show a type of agency that makes up part of the problem when it comes to poaching and IWT, as well as many other African issues. Botswana, among the more successful countries in terms of poaching levels, also stands out as one of Africa's less corrupt countries. But despite some positive examples including Botswana and Rwanda, Sub-Saharan Africa was ranked the most corrupt region in the world in 2017 (Transparency International, 2018). Increasing amounts of evidence indicate that government officials in a range of African countries facilitate, or are even directly involved in, poaching and IWT (see e.g. EIA, 2014; Leithead, 2018; Somerville, 2016; Vera and Ewing, 2014).

The aspect of corruption is an important and difficult issue. Unfortunately, it is given little attention in the poaching-IWT-security discourse, something which might well explain why many African states were relatively keen to accept this threat presentation. Somerville argues that in particular for Kenya, Uganda and Zimbabwe, a security framing might be "a very useful way of deflecting attention from the corruption, patronage networks, crime syndicates, poor law enforcement and weak judicial systems that facilitated poaching and smuggling with impunity for those higher up the chain than the poor poacher in the bush" (2016, p.234). Without a doubt, it is not just the West who had potential interests in a successful securitization.

### 4.4.4. The influence of environmental NGOs

Environmental NGOs have for a long time played an important role in conservation, both in Africa and globally. The discourse analysis revealed that environmental NGOs have been active and influential in the securitization process. The IFAW report from 2008 made some of the first claims of a link between poaching, IWT and security, a Born Free report highlighted the role of Janjaweed in elephant poaching and claimed that Boko Haram threatens Cameroon´s elephants and countless other NGOs have made similar contributions which have influenced the securitization process (see e.g. Kalron and Crosta, 2011; Vira and Ewing,

2014). As most of these groups have a stated goal of conserving wildlife and nature, it is easy to see that they could potentially benefit from the increased attention and potentially increased funding that could result from a securitization.

*4.4.4.1. Linguistic competence*

Many environmental NGOs employ experts in the field of biology and conservation, and they are often considered to be competent actors on issues regarding poaching and illegal wildlife trade. Bourdieu (1993) argues that the most effective power is the one that is seemingly neutral, typically presented as "science". In order to persuade someone to accept an argument, or a securitizing move, it is essential that the actor presenting it is considered legitimate and knowledgeable and is seen as someone working for a common interest (Bourdieu, 1979). This combination of power, knowledge and trust is compelling, and I would argue that many large environmental NGOs possess this combination. As a result, they are considered to inhabit linguistic competence. This means that they are considered legitimate voices on specific issues such as wildlife conservation, and that their threat claims are considered reliable and worthy of attention. According to Brockington and Scholfield (2010, p.2), conservation NGOs are "widely known and trusted by northern publics as serving unproblematically good causes". Considered to be well-informed, legitimate actors inhabiting linguistic competence on the issue of poaching and illegal wildlife trade, they constitute powerful global actors with considerable influence on the securitization process.

*4.4.4.2. Strategy > science?*

Moreover, although many environmental NGOs do indeed have skilled professionals there are indications that their strategic role can often be prioritized over the scientific one. This can range from advocating in favour of the precautionary principle in situations with insufficient information to an "end justifying means"-approach where known facts are purposely ignored. This can be illustrated by the statement from the discourse analysis from the Tsavo Conservation Group saying that lack of evidence should not be reason enough to ignore the problem of ivory-funded terrorism. A similar example is a story of the chief executive of WildAid at a panel discussion following the showing of Bigelow's short film "Last days of ivory". Confronted with critique about the evidence behind the poacher-terrorist-narrative, he answered "It's not about the facts, it's about the emotion" (quoted in McConnell, 2015). Similarly, the Environmental Investigation Agency's report "Vanishing Point" was, according to a source referenced in Somerville as a leading elephant scientist, "a mixture of "pure gold

with a lot of dross" that had campaigning at its heart and left the reader to sort out what was accurate and what was there just to have impact" (Somerville, 2016, p.201).

As mentioned above, the Elephant Action League report where the Al-Shabaab link was first presented has been subject to a lot of criticism for being highly unreliable or even made up. The EAL response has been to modify their initial statements as well as arguing that the situation could have changed since they did their investigation. The following statement is now added below the report on their webpage:

*"NOTE: To be clear, EAL has never denied the importance of other far more substantial sources of profit for al-Shabaab – such as charcoal – but through this investigation, we simply exposed an important regional player that contributed significantly to ivory trafficking, at that time, and that the funds generated from this illicit activity were enough to partially fund Al-Shabaab's operations. The geo-political situation in that part of the world is very different now than it was between 2010 to 2012, which was the context and timeline in which this report was investigated and prepared. Militias and terrorist organizations do not drive elephant poaching and ivory trafficking, but they certainly did play a role then; and the international political and conservation arenas are finding that they continue to do so now. »*
(Elephant Action League, 2016)

Despite their controversial claims largely being refuted, EAL are still very much active and influential. For example, they run "Wildleaks", a "whistle-blower initiative" whose purpose is "to facilitate the identification, arrest, and prosecution of criminals, traffickers, businessmen, and corrupt governmental officials behind the poaching of endangered species and the trafficking of wildlife and forest products" (WildLeaks, n.d.). In 2016 EAL published a new report about Chinese demand for ivory as well as a Netflix documentary entitled "The ivory game", both featuring EAL executive director Andrea Crosta who co-authored the much-criticized report. The other co-author, Nil Kalron from the private security company Masha Consulting, is still also very active on the conservation arena. He is part of the increasing number of private companies participating in fighting poaching and IWT, a subject that will be discussed further below.

There is reason to believe that at least some environmental NGOs involved in the securitization process at times prioritized their role as strategists rather than scientists. In the

words of Keith Somerville, to gain attention for their cause many environmental NGOs ignored the lack of reliable evidence and "jumped on the ivory-insurgency bandwagon" (2016, p.207).

*4.4.4.3. Influence on the global hegemony*

Finally, the environmental NGOs strategist role is also evident in the way they are able to influence policies in a wide range of states, both in the West and Africa. More often than not, they are heavily represented in expert groups delivering background reports on poaching and illegal wildlife trade to politicians or sharing expert advice in the media, both of which can be very influential channels. In the process of collecting documents for the discourse analysis, it quickly became evident that representatives from environmental NGO were involved in producing a large part of the texts, as experts in the media and producing background documents which lay the foundation for discussion and decision among politicians. Importantly, this means that elements of NGO discourse are likely to be ubiquitous. This corresponds with the very high degree of intertextuality found in the discourse analysis.

However, this feature seemed to be a little less prominent in African texts. Although partnerships between African governments and NGOs are common, the official African documents to a larger degree seemed to rely on local experts' knowledge and sometimes field trips or other real-world experiences arranged for the decision-makers (see e.g. East African Community, 2016). This might be reasonable seeing that they are likely to be knowledgeable about their own problems and could explain why the African discourse to a certain degree stands out from the other actors.

An example which illustrates the great political influence of environmental NGOs on U.S. policy is the composition of the Federal Advisory Council on Wildlife Trafficking. The advisory board was established as a result of the 2013 Executive Order "Combat Wildlife Trafficking" in order to provide President Obama's Task Force with recommendations on issues including anti-poaching activities, law enforcement and demand reduction. Out of the seven permanent member of the Council, three come from environmental NGOs: the CEOs of Wildlife Conservation Society, African Wildlife Foundation and World Wildlife Fund. In addition, the four alternative members include the senior director of TRAFFIC and the executive director of WildAid. Needless to say, this Council has enormous influence on U.S.

policy towards poaching and illegal wildlife trade in general, and the National Strategy for Combatting Wildlife Trafficking in particular.

Another example is Conservation International which according to themselves are trusted advisers to U.S. House and Senate representatives. In 2013, the President of the Council on Foreign Relations was also a Board Member of Conservation International and made statements like "If you are in the national security business this [international conservation] has got to be part and parcel of what you do, no less so than the traditional foreign policy agenda." (Conservation International, n.d.). Similarly, Botswana's President Khama is also a Board Member of Conservation International (Corry, 2015). As a result, the U.S. as well as other states spend considerable resources on programs initiated by environmental NGOs. An example is the U.S. State Department's sponsoring of the ongoing ARREST program, "Africa´s Regional Response to Endangered Species Trafficking", an initiative launched by the NGOs African Wildlife Foundation and International Fund for Animal Welfare in collaboration with 8 African countries (Freeland.org, 2015).

In conclusion, the NGOs linguistic competence, strategic focus and ability to impact U.S. policies are likely important reason why the securitization process was successful.

### 4.4.5. Private sector and technology influences

In both the EU and U.S. discourses the role of private actors is emphasized. The EU document "Larger than elephants" highlights the role of private-public partnerships, arguing that they "bring accountability to the system and give the implementing partner a stronger and clearer mandate with greater decisional independence (including powers to hire and fire), and greater administrative and financial flexibility" (European Commission, 2015, p. 56). Similarly, the U.S. National Strategy for Combating Wildlife Trafficking (2014) highlights the need for improved enforcement in collaboration with private actors and NGOs as a result of the security consequences of poaching and IWT.

Strong links between capitalism and conservation are not new, and these calls for increased involvement of private actors can be viewed as part of a wider neo-liberal trend in environmental governance (see e.g. Holmes and Cavanagh, 2016; Igoe and Brockington, 2007; McCarthy and Prudham, 2004). In addition to the role of NGOs discussed above, the securitization of poaching and IWT is likely to be encouraged by private actors which could

potentially benefit economically from a securitization, mainly in the security and technology field.

This argument is supported by Leander, who argues that private security actors are not just passive implementers of existing policies, but also contribute to their development by influencing discourse and securitization processes (2005). Because these companies often both provide and analyze intelligence, they can exert significant influence on the threat construction. A security approach to poaching and IWT potentially involves tremendous business opportunities for companies providing private security or paramilitary training, as well as technology firms making equipment for surveillance such as drones and night-vision goggles. It is therefore likely to be in their interest to accentuate the security aspect of poaching and IWT and highlight their own role in a solution. In this way, their involvement could shape security practices and potentially assert significant influence on wildlife conservation (Leander, 2005).

### 4.4.6. Conclusion

The factors discussed above indicates that a securitization had many potential winners. In addition to being rooted in real, contemporary threats, the security framing converged the interests of the U.S., many African leaders, influential environmental NGOs, the media and private companies. Together, these factors can explain why the securitization of poaching and IWT in Africa was successful. But what will be the effects of this turn security? The final chapter will attempt to answer the final research question about what the potential consequences of the securitization can be.

## 4.5. Potential consequences of securitizing poaching and IWT

Securitization theory allows to highlight the political, normative choice behind a security framing, as well as the potential dangers associated with it (Elbe, 2006). This chapter will discuss the potential consequences of securitizing poaching and IWT. An important aspect of securitization theory is that a successful securitization can lead to legitimation of emergency measures, and the effect on anti-poaching policy and practices will be discussed first. Secondly, the risk of African states outsourcing self-governance to foreign public or private partners as a result of the securitization will be examined. The embeddedness of "security" to be viewed as so important that it might overshadow alternative approaches is discussed in section three. Finally, potential positive aspects of a securitization are highlighted,

emphasizing increased funding and attention as possible positive outcomes and asking whether the securitization could facilitate the introduction and coordination of a wide range of actors that is necessary to deal with the poaching and IWT problem, both in terms of wildlife survival and threat finance.

### 4.5.1. Effects on anti-poaching policy and practices

*4.5.1.1. Legitimating a "war on poaching"?*

African conservation policies have historically been dominated by "fortress conservation", meaning that where protected areas were established, inhabitants were removed or displaced, often forcefully and without compensation (see e.g. Brockington and Igoe, 2006). Since the 1980s, alternative approaches focusing on participation have been applied with variable success in many countries. However, by defining wildlife and international security as existentially threatened by poaching and IWT, securitization theory indicates that an acceptance for emergency measures to tackle the problem might be created. According to Wilhelmsen, this can either mean to intensify existing security practices or legitimate new ones (2017, p.175). A worst-case scenario is that a securitization makes "practices of brute violence and war seem logical, legitimate and, ultimately, necessary" (ibid, p.172). In the case of poaching and IWT, potential emergency measures are first and foremost related to the nature of anti-poaching practices.

Strengthened law enforcement and an increased number of rangers in anti-poaching operations are currently of increasing importance for African conservation. According to Jooste, the Head of South African National Parks special operations, the work of park rangers has gone from being 10 % law enforcement and 90 % conservation, to being 90 % law enforcement and only 10 % conservation (Hübscle, 2017). In addition to spending more time on enforcement, rangers are often equipped with sophisticated weapons and military surveillance equipment. This has led some to describe the intensification of anti-poaching practices as a "green militarization" (Jooste in Hübscle, 2017; Lunstrum, 2014, 2015). Although militarization and securitization are importantly not the same thing, a successful securitization can potentially legitimate this increased militarization of anti-poaching practices.

According to Lunstrum (2014, p.817) although militarised conservation practices are hardly new, they are now "broader and intensifying". Humphreys and Smith (2011) describe that

warfare-like methods are increasingly being used. A team of U.S. Marines has been in Chad to train rangers to track down poachers, Kenyan wildlife rangers have been trained by British paratroopers and British military advisors have collaborated with Gabonese security and anti-poaching forces (Somerville, 2016, pp.209, 211; Chambers, 2014). Kenya Wildlife Service has instituted a variety of new measures in response to the problem of poaching and illegal wildlife trade including the use of sniffer dogs, strengthening of park surveillance, increased intelligence and collaboration with Interpol (East African Community, 2016, p.11).

The discourse analysis included examples that could indicate accept for emergency measures to stop poaching, such as a Tanzanian Minister suggesting shoot-to-kill policies and seemingly disregarding the human rights violations potentially associated with this approach (Brownstone, 2013). Botswana is currently among the most radical African nations when it comes to anti-poaching, implementing these controversial shoot-to-kill policies in 2013. This makes it legal to kill suspected poachers on sight if necessary. Corry (2015) points out that in these situations "rangers always claim they were fired on first, and no one alive can say differently." Consequently, this makes up an exceptional deviation from the normal judicial processes of prosecution and trial elsewhere in society (Mogomotsi and Madigele, 2017). South Africa and Tanzania are among the other countries where similar shoot-to-kill policies are regularly suggested, although so far not implemented.

If the securitization results in increased militarisation of conservation it can be problematic for many reasons. Few people appreciate a militarisation of their nearby environment. Up until now militarised approaches have often been found to have significant costs, both financially and socially. Critics argue that despite their potential short-term results, these approaches might undermine conservation efforts in the long run. Negative effects of militarisation could potentially include legitimation of violent practices, undermining of community initiatives and participatory conservation approaches, stricter boundaries between communities and parks, reviving of unpleasant memories of violent history in conflict areas, an increased feeling of insecurity for local populations and potentially the killing of innocent people (Annecke and Masubelele, 2016; Lunstrum, 2014).

Some believe that the security focus results in a turn back towards fortress conservation, where top-down approaches, stricter law enforcement and less focus on participation and sharing of benefits and burdens removes ownership of wildlife and its potential benefits from local communities (Annecke and Masubelele, 2016; Duffy 2015). According to Duffy (2016),

militarising conservation is not effective for anti-terrorism or counter-insurgency, fails to address the underlying causes of poaching and IWT and undermines local communities support for conservation, representing a "triple fail, for security, people and wildlife".

According to Emmers (2016, p.173), the dangers of legitimizing security or military forces in civilian activities is particularly relevant in "new or fragile democracies and in countries with blurred civilian authority". As many of the African countries who are source countries for poaching and illegal wildlife trade are emerging democracies or still ridden with conflict, I believe that this is a particularly valid point. Regarding the effects on conflict-ridden areas, of which there are many in the case of poaching and IWT, Verveijen and Marijnen found that stricter law enforcement and military operations did not resolve local conflict in Virunga National park in DR Congo, but rather fed into it (2018).

Smith (2016) argues that military technology such as drones, although in theory useful instruments for biodiversity protection, are likely to have little or even adverse effect. This is because high-tech surveillance equipment might make local inhabitants feel like they are viewed as potential offenders, support the impression that animals are valued over people, as well as require extensive support from rangers on the ground to intervene if necessary (Ibid). Critics of militarisation also include conservationists such as Daniel Stiles of IUCN (2013), who argues that militarization won't protect the animals because potential gains for poachers are high enough to take the risk regardless. The conclusion that increased law enforcement efforts without complementary measures may have little effect is supported by research on management of other natural resources. For example, Tumusiime, Vedeld and Gombya-Ssembajjwe (2011) found little preventive effect of increased law enforcement on illegal harvesting of forest resources from protected areas.

A final example of potential emergency measure can be found in the report of the 2013 ICCWC-meeting, which states that in some cases it might be necessary to engage the military to fight poachers (Cites Secretariat, 2013, p.4). The use of military force must be considered an extreme measure, particularly when considering that many poachers are local inhabitants. Consequently, this would involve the state using military force on their own people. This example could indicate that the securitization can indeed facilitate extreme measures, which could risk turning the metaphor of a "war on poaching" into reality.

*4.5.1.2. Hardened attitudes*

The urgency of the threat and resulting extreme measures are not just reflected in anti-poaching practices on the ground, but also in increased use of combative language and hate-speech, in particularly online (Büscher, 2016; Humprehys and Smith, 2014; Lunstrum 2017). This point was also discovered in the discourse analysis (although not elaborated on), e.g. by the example of EAGLE´s Facebook page and the pillory mentality of the comments below the photos of alleged poachers. Another example is the commentary field belonging to an article discussing shoot-to-kill-policies at the Save the Rhino website (Save the Rhino, n.d.). Comments like "the poachers deserve to die", "Crucify poachers. (...) Have them agonize as much as possible before they die", and "Of course it's right to shoot to kill. There are billions of humans on this planet, but less than 17,000 white rhinos left" are very common. Although extreme conservationists have existed for a long time, it seems unlikely that the securitization will contribute to a more constructive dialogue on conservation issues. Rather, it might worsen this current trend and create even steeper fronts in the conservation debate.

*4.5.1.3. Adverse effects of elite priorities*

Balzacq, Léonard and Ruzika (2016, p. 518) argues that securitization leads to "the closure of political options, the oligopoly of decision-making, restrictions to public deliberation and the creation of 'deontic powers'". While the actors performing the actual poaching and risk falling victim to e.g. shoot-to-kill-policies are often poor and powerless, the actors who facilitate the process further up the trade-chain are less likely affected by the anti-poaching measures resulting from a security approach. Part of the reason why poaching and IWT thrive in some areas of Africa is the combination of weak institutions, corruption and patron-client relations that facilitate the trade (Somerville, 2016, p.242).

The enabling audience of the securitization process seems to have been a global elite, including some African leaders. As discussed above, the African elite is in many places highly corrupt and facilitate or even participate in the illegal wildlife trade. Examples of this are wide-spread from across the continent. Mozambique's "ivory gate", where the head of the Malawian National Intelligence Bureau was cooperating with elephant poachers, has already been mentioned above (Nyondo, 2016). There are also strong indications that a Uganda People's Defence Force helicopter was used for elephant poaching in DR Congo (Vira and Ewing, 2014; Njoroge, 2012). Similarly, an ongoing campaign in South Africa blames a "web of systematic corruption" for failing to deal with the poaching and IWT problem in general

and specifically for contributing towards the drastic decline in the rhino population of South Africa's Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park (Leithead, 2018). Unfortunately, the IWT-security discourse largely neglects these issues, and consequently measures resulting from a security approach are unlikely to target these problems.

Furthermore, there is a risk that African governments could invoke security arguments in order to enforce stricter legislation against its own people, appropriate territory or in other ways increase their own power. Massé and Lunstrum show that security arguments can be used as reasons to displace local communities from protected areas, hence representing a new practice that they entitle "accumulation by securitization" (2016). Lunstrum and Ybarra (2018) argue that security considerations are increasingly used as justifications for displacing local residents. In these examples, the IWT-security discourse's threat to national security, along with a Radical Other identity of the poachers serve to justify appropriation of territory. If this proves to be a repeating pattern, many weak and marginalized groups risk becoming victims of the securitization consequences.

In conclusion, there is a risk that the securitization creates acceptance for emergency measures, which tend to involve militarising anti-poaching efforts or declaring a "war on poaching". However, these types of anti-poaching are problematic because they risk making people feel that their security and/or livelihood are threatened. If so, these practices are unlikely to have the desired effect. Although perhaps efficient in the short term, militarisation risks creating negative long-term effects by turning local people against conservation. Additionally, it has little effect on the underlying causes of poaching and illegal wildlife trade.

**4.5.2. Outsourcing African self-determination?**

*4.5.2.1. Environmental NGOs*

There is little doubt that wildlife is important to many African countries. In the Kenyan constitution of 2010 wildlife is described as a "national asset to be managed for the benefit of the people and for future generations". The increased attention and funding that might come in the wake of securitization might be positive. However, it has already been pointed out above how environmental NGOs are heavily represented in the expert groups that deliver reports to Western politicians, while Africans are not. There is a risk that securitization and the resulting practices lead to loss of self-determination for African states as a consequence of increased involvement of foreign public and private actors.

A securitization risks transferring further power to Western-based NGOs, which are already well represented in African conservation. According to Richard Leakey, a former head of Kenya Wildlife Service, the organisation is so dependent on funding from international NGOs that it gives the donors "considerable influence" on policy and in setting the agenda for Kenyan conservation (1990, p. 16 and p.124-125, quoted in Somerville, 2016, p.194). As a result, "the NGOs had developed a sense of ownership over Kenyan conservation, increasing alienation of many Kenyans from the whole system" (Somerville, 2016 p.194).

One such example is the non-profit organisation African Parks. They currently manage national parks and protected areas in Benin, Central African Republic, Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi, Mozambique, the Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Zambia, and according to themselves "takes on the complete responsibility for the rehabilitation and long-term management of national parks in partnership with governments and local communities" (African Parks, n.d., b). Although rangers and staff are recruited locally, and ecotourism is promoted, Somerville points out that this still "represent a further out-sourcing of responsibility for conservation and the distancing of local communities from a sense of ownership and control" (2016, p.209). It could be argued that an organisation funded by foreign states[6] wanting to "take on the complete responsibility" of local natural resources is patronizing and potentially violating national autonomy and integrity.

### 4.5.2.2. State actors

The urgency of the securitization threat presentation and the associated emergency measures also comes with a risk of being used as a convenient excuse for military involvement of foreign states in Africa. This might be particularly relevant in the case of the U.S. Critics argue that the U.S. AUMF Act (Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Terrorist) passed in the aftermath of 9/11 "has applied the authorization to any situation in which the trigger phrases Al-Qaeda, ISIS, or Islamic terrorism are included" (Blevins, 2017). With the poacher-terrorist-narrative being central to the threat presentation, there is a risk that the securitization can negatively impact African self-determination by legitimating increased military involvement by foreign states on African soil.

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[6] The EU, the Dutch national lottery and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are among the contributors (African Parks, 2018).

*4.5.2.3. Private actors*

Private security companies, often referred to as Private military companies (PMCs) are also increasingly employed to deal with the threat of poaching and IWT. According to Nil Kalron, who is a former Israeli commando, one of the authors of the controversial Elephant Action League report and currently Chief Executive of the private security company Maisha Consulting Ltd., the private sector can be a great asset for protecting wildlife: "...in our technological age, the private sector has all the tools to lead from behind, push technology to greater limits, and offer the best strategic minds to the environmental battlefield" (Kalron, 2015). This corresponds well with the line of thinking found in U.S. and EU documents as well as more general arguments about enhanced efficiency because of involvement of the private sector (Vatn, 2018).

Nonetheless, critics argue that this privatization merely serves to create new ways of accumulating capital rather than benefitting local people living with wildlife (Massé and Lunstrum, 2016; Vatn, 2018). According to Leander (2008), the acceptance of private security companies taking over military tasks can be seen as an example of symbolic violence because the focus on security removes attention from other areas such as local benefits and development.

In the case of poaching and IWT, the securitization has led to an increased presence of private security and mercenary companies that were previously employed in Iraq and Afghanistan (Paterson, 2018). This has become so common that anti-poaching operations are sometimes referred to as a retirement option for veterans (White, 2014) Additionally, an increasing number of organisations with varying profiles have started to offer "anti-poaching experiences" in Africa. A quick google search on "anti-poaching volunteer" reveals over 360 000 hits, including encouragements to "join the green army", "anti-poaching and wildlife management gap year" and the FAQ "14 things you need to know about being an anti-poaching ranger in Africa" (Google.no, 2018). With varying degrees of professionalism, ranging from gap year to "second career" options for ex-militaries from Afghanistan, what most have in common is a presentation of "white saviours as manhunters on the dark continent" coupled with a security logic (McClanahan and Wall, 2016). Given the history of the African continent, I believe that such stories of "white saviours" are dubious at best, and even more problematic when coupled with militarised practices such as in this case.

Unfortunately, it is not uncommon that the revenue from wildlife is collected by external actors, e.g. central governments, private companies or foreign investors. An example is the Peace Parks Foundation, which have come to exert an increasingly large influence on conservation and land-use policies in many trans frontier areas. According to Büscher (2013), they "have biodiversity as their watchword, but are based on the support of global business elites that see massive tourism opportunities beckoning". If profits from wildlife are drained from local communities, it will have negative consequences for both people and nature. Living with wildlife is not as idyllic as it is sometimes presented, and local communities are the ones who suffer the costs of living with animals such as elephants which regularly leads to loss of food crops and even human life. It is therefore crucial that local populations are the ones who receive the benefits from conservation, including compensation for losses incurred by wildlife, job opportunities and revenue from tourism or trophy hunting.

A final problematic consequence of the securitization is that the increasing introduction of private actors involves a business-like and importantly *depoliticized* approach to conservation and anti-poaching. In addition to the risk of taking away power and control from African governments and/or local communities, these actors will be far less accountable to the people affected by their practices. According to Vatn, privatization takes different forms in the global South and North, with the global South facing "the kind of privatizations and marketizations that thrive on weak institutions, lack of capital and the fact that people are poor" (2018, p.176). This entails that the entrance of private actors risks moving power, responsibility and benefits further away from the ones who must live with wildlife.

With the securitization potentially introducing many new actors, it is crucial to pay attention to the effects on the resulting changes in conservation policies and power relations. In particular, care must be taken to avoid neglecting the interests of local people for the benefit of private companies and foreign or national elites. This is not only ethically important but essential for the long-term success of anti-poaching and conservation. Local communities receiving significant, tangible benefits from conservation are likely to be more tolerant towards living with wildlife (see e.g. Vedeld et al, 2012). Top-down approaches resulting from a securitization are probably less beneficial than solutions made by and for the people who are most affected by the policies. According to the Tanzanian Minister of Natural Resources, "the poaching problem requires an African solution", which should concentrate on awareness-raising and on promoting local people's livelihoods (UNDP, 2014).

### 4.5.3. Risk of overshadowing other aspects

A final potential negative consequence is the risk of a security focus becoming so dominant that other problems are ignored. One such example is corruption, which as previously discussed often involve powerful actors that are not affected by securitized approaches (Felbab-Brown, 2015; Somerville, 2016). Another is resource extraction, such as gold mining, which can lead to influx of a variety of criminal elements of different kinds, including people associated with criminal networks that partake in the illegal wildlife trade (Carmody, 2016; Somerville, 2016). Humle et al (2014) argue that "funding for conservation enforcement would be better spent on tried and tested approaches, which are less glamorous but have a proven record of success. This includes increasing park staff numbers, resources and training, developing intelligence networks to catch poachers in the act and identify corrupt officials and strengthening the judicial system". Unfortunately, many of these approaches seem to be considered too slow or complicated to fit the inherent urgency of security.

Perhaps the most problematic aspect of a security framing is the lack of attention to root causes to poaching. The IWT-security-discourse's image of poachers being part of powerful networks often stands in stark contrast with reality. When Runhovde interviewed police officers in Uganda, she found that "many offenders are relatively powerless, economically vulnerable individuals, hunting and gathering forest resources out of necessity" (2017b, p.18). According to Ofir Drori of the EAGLE Network, the actual poachers are always easily replaceable. But chasing poachers in the field, he says, is the easy thing to do because going after the big traffickers requires dealing with the underlying problem of corruption (Vaughan, 2016). The security framing has a strong focus on the level of the poacher, while more powerful actors are largely disregarded. This corresponds to the findings of Tumusiime, Vedeld and Gombya-Ssembajjwe (2011) who investigated a protected area in Uganda, which found that the individuals who are subject to practices of increased law enforcement are often already regularly threatened and harassed by park authorities or local police.

According to MIKE analyses, the strongest indicator of high levels of elephant poaching is high infant mortality, which can be predicted by proportion of people living in extreme poverty (SADC, 2015, p.8). Between 2010 and June 2016, 46% of the funding for conservation supported protected area management, while 19% went to law enforcement including intelligence-led operations and transnational coordination, 15% for sustainable use and alternative livelihoods, 8% for policy and legislation, 6% for research and assessment,

and 6% for communication and awareness raising (Secretariat of the Hanoi Conference on Illegal Wildlife Trade, 2016). Looking at these numbers, there are few indications that initiatives for livelihood support have resources to spare for increasing law enforcement.

In conclusion, if the security perspectives become dominant there will likely be lack of attention to many important, underlying causes of poaching and IWT. To quote Felbab-Brown (2015): "Without routing out this pervasive corruption and breaking the economic incentives of local communities to participate in or tolerate poaching, the bush wars will be lost, no matter how heavy the rangers' equipment". Unfortunately, during the era of securitization it seems reasonable to assume that most of the funding for conservation and anti-poaching will continue to be spent on management and law enforcement, rather than slower but equally (or more) important issues such as local participation, empowerment and poverty alleviation.

### 4.5.4. Increased attention, funding and collaboration

According to Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, "When considering securitizing moves such as "environmental security" or a "war on crime" one has to weigh the always problematic side effects of applying a mind-set of security against the possible advantages of focus, attention, and mobilization " (1998, p.29). Consequently, despite the potentially problematic consequences discussed above, it is not evident that a securitization is negative. On the contrary, the opposite might even be the case.

In the case of poaching and IWT, positive effects can include increased attention, focus and possibly funding. After all, awareness of a problem, as well as willingness and resources to do something about it, is always essential to come up with a solution. Another progressive development which might result from the securitization is the engagement of many different professionals which were previously not involved in conservation. As poaching and IWT is a multi-faceted and highly complex problem, it is not unlikely that coordinating rangers, policemen, intelligence officers, border patrols, politicians and biologists can be positive and even necessary in order to implement efficient solutions.

One of the major objections against securitization concerns the special nature of "security", meaning that the security focus is so dominant that it will suppress attention to all other approaches and force existing practicing to adhere to a security logic. However, Trombetta argues to the contrary that this "securityness of security" can in fact be modified when

exposed to different contexts (2011). This viewpoint is also shared by Huysmans (2002), who argues that the introduction of new actors and principles to the realm of security can in fact influence, or even change, existing security practices. For poaching and IWT this could mean that conservation practices inhabit an "environmental logics" that might affect security practices as much as the other way around. This could entail that the emerging security approaches will be able to coexist with other, existing approaches with a different focus such as local empowerment and economic development. If this turns out to be the case, the introduction of security might result in positive effects both in terms of species survival and the role of wildlife crime in threat finance.

# Chapter 5: Conclusion and recommendations

This thesis has investigated how and why poaching and IWT in Africa was securitized. It has shown that the current global security discourse is characterized by a double referent object, where both biodiversity and international security are presented as existentially threatened. Environmental NGOs served as the initial securitizing actors, quickly followed by the United States which took on a leading role and succeeded in gaining acceptance for the threat presentation from an enabling audience of global elites.

I have explained the successful securitization by pointing to five factors that enabled the acceptance of the threat presentation. First, evidence suggests that the threat to species survival has escalated at the same time as growing Western fears of (Islamic) armed groups. The threat presentation was therefore partially rooted in real world circumstances. In addition, the threat presentation fitted well with U.S. strategic goals and identity as a security state in the post-9/11-context. The role of Africa and African governments in global politics is also likely to have facilitated the threat presentation; as an "other" presented as incapable of effective governance and in need of outside help, but also as an agent with governing elites which to a large degree welcomed a security framing that could be used to further their own interests. Furthermore, as actors that are considered both legitimate and linguistically competent on conservation issues environmental NGOs initiated the securitization process and continue to exert significant influence on African conservation and anti-poaching practices. Finally, the growing number of private actors within security, technology and nature conservation also had vested interests in establishing and maintaining a successful security discourse. All in all, I believe that securitization theory proved to be a useful approach for analysing how and why poaching and IWT has turned to security.

Securitization theory implies that a successful securitization can legitimate emergency measures, and the final chapter discussed the potential consequences of the securitization. Concerns about extreme and militarised anti-poaching practices are many, and there are indications that security concerns can potentially be used as an excuse for implementing controversial policies such as shoot-to-kill or dispossession of land and other resources on security grounds, all of which could negatively impact groups that are already weak and marginalized. Although the effects of a securitization on African self-determination is still unknown, the potential risk of giving away power and sovereignty to global environmental

NGOs, foreign states or private businesses should be acknowledged. Furthermore, the alleged inherent capability of "security" to dominate other concerns, and the capacity of security approaches to co-exist with other conservation strategies was also reflected upon. Finally, positive aspects of a securitization were also highlighted and discussed. A complex problem such as poaching and IWT is likely to require both attention, funding and involvement from many competent actors if good solutions are to be found. Consequently, a securitization might have positive consequences, in particular if the security logic manages to co-exist with, rather than dominate, alternative approaches to poaching and IWT.

It is easy to agree that the threat presentation of the IWT-security discourse lacks nuance and sometimes also evidence. Furthermore, the issues of demand, corruption and organized crime are all largely ignored by the security discourse and consequently hardly affected by the measures resulting from securitized approaches. A security focus risks legitimizing extreme measures that could easily violate human rights and disrupt local livelihoods, which in the long term are likely to have negative impacts on conservation efforts. It also risks furthering the interests of powerful actors while promoting drastic, but inefficient solutions. Because the security approach pays so little attention to the underlying causes of poaching and IWT, it is not likely to constitute a wise long-term strategy.

As securitization can potentially be problematic for one or more of the reasons mentioned above, I don't believe a security framing is a good fit for African wildlife conservation. Still, the consequences of the securitization should not be exaggerated. Even if the IWT-security-discourse and the associated threat presentation might be a recent development, military or paramilitary approaches are far from new in African conservation. Although problematic, instead of a completely new development they might rather be said to represent a "renaissance" (Shaw and Rademeyer, 2016). Additionally, the issue of poaching and IWT is important but hardly the most urgent matter that African countries have to deal with. In the example of South Africa there is a large focus on security and "war" on poachers among a core group of environmental actors, but this is not reflected in the priorities of the wider government. In 2015, the IWT-security-discourse was wide-spread globally, but South African economic priorities can hardly be said to reflect an urgent, dual threat: only 5 % of the Environmental Ministry's budget went to South African National Parks (ibid.). Consequently, despite their sensational aspects, the impact of the security turn should not be overemphasized.

Concerning the actual consequences of the securitization, they largely remain speculations at this stage. To what degree and how the securitization does in fact result in different realities on the ground remains unknown but should be investigated. Whether the securitization does in fact suppress participatory approaches, how private security companies are influencing anti-poaching policies, and to what extent security arguments are actually being used as an excuse for counter-insurgency or anti-terror interventions by foreign states or for dispossession or other violations against local communities by African states, remains to be seen. Future research should aim to answer these questions.

Regarding the debates over anti-poaching measures, one thing seems certain: it remains far easier to criticize their problematic consequences than to come up with alternative solutions. Without completely disregarding the data on affected species indicating that some are in fact severely impacted by poaching, it seems difficult to envision alternative solutions other than law enforcement that have sufficient effect here and now. Although anti-poaching efforts will always be merely a "band-aid" (Hübscle, 2017), they are probably going to be a necessary part of preventing poaching until the underlying issues are solved and effective and legitimate policies established. This does not entail that enforcement or anti-poaching is the only or best solution but leaving endangered wildlife unattended until more long-term solutions have had time to work seems both naive and risky. Although strengthened law enforcement currently seems unavoidable, it is essential that it is not considered a final solution but is accompanied by poverty-reducing measures as well as demand reduction efforts.

The issue of poverty reduction relates to a particular observation by the CS school. They believe that there is a paradox inherent to issues in the environmental sector: "in order to secure civilization from environmental threats, much of civilization has to be reformed drastically or even pulled down" (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, 1998, p.131). A rejection of the simplistic IWT-security-discourse shifts focus onto far greater and more complicated issues of corruption, crime and poverty. Dealing with these underlying problems will indeed require drastic changes, not only for Africa, but for social and economic relations in the world at large. As long as a redistribution of wealth, both globally and within Africa states, does not take place, it seems difficult to be very optimistic about the prospects of eliminating poaching and IWT. On the other hand, an elimination may not be necessary. Some believe that

sustainable use of wildlife could result in a situation that would generate sufficient benefits to encourage wildlife protection and curb threatening poaching levels (Jankulovska, Vedeld and Kaboggoza, 2003; Somerville, 2016; Stiles, 2013). Others believe that demand reduction is an achievable solution and highlight implementations of ivory trade bans in China and Hong Kong that has taken place this year (Schneider, 2008; BBC 2018a, BBC 2018b). Further research on the effects of these recent developments could hopefully provide some highly relevant answers.

Either way, given the sensational and simplistic narratives of the IWT-security-discourse, it is reasonable to approach it with caution. Most poachers are not terrorists. Securitization theory predicts that the consequences of a successful securitization can be dangerous, in particular because security arguments might open the door for exceptional measures. Despite being partially rooted in real concerns for species survival and links between poaching, threat finance and international security, there is likely to be a range of other, underlying motives for supporting a securitization. One should therefore carefully ensure that the resulting measures do not only serve the interests of the already powerful. To avoid a development where the interests of a few are furthered at the expense of many is particularly important in the case of conservation because wildlife and nature are inextricably linked to human livelihoods. It is essential to ensure that African natural resources are not destroyed by criminal organized networks. But it is equally important to make sure that wildlife and nature are managed to the benefit of those who live with it, rather than serve the interests of corrupt government officials, Western states, private businesses or environmental NGOs. Furthermore, although increasing law enforcement might be unavoidable, it is essential that it co-exists with measures aiming to tackle the underlying causes of poaching and IWT. It is also imperative that "security" is not used as an excuse to further marginalize or dispossess local people. Taking everything into account, and despite their flaws, approaches focusing on community-involvement and self-empowerment along with ensuring poverty reduction for local people are the only real solutions for a long-term conservation that is both effective and just.

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