

# Conservation my lucky ass – do you have skin in the game?



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# Man killers in Africa

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**Basic right #1**  
**Right to life**

# Human-elephant conflict



**Basic right #2**  
**Determine one's own future**



# Ownership rights

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**Basic right #3**  
**Equality**

<https://www.evergreentours.com.au/>

# Competing ideologies in conservation

Exclusionary,  
'westernised' approach

Rights and protection of  
animals

Inclusive human-rights-  
based approach

Rights and opinions of  
citizens

CITES



# Basic human rights



## International law principles

- Right to life
- Right to determine one's own future



## South African Constitution

- Right to equality
- Right to dignity



## Constitutional rights & environment

- Right to **justifiable** development and use of natural resources
- Right to safe and healthy environment



# Human-elephant conflict

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# National norms and standards for management of elephants in SA

## Good aspects:

- Acknowledges issue of ecological impacts and importance
- Incorporates “adaptive management”
- Now provides explicit experimental and learning opportunities

## Key points of critique:

- **Elephant-centric** (no guidance on elephant impacts on humans)
- No guidance on human impacts on elephants
- No specific guidance on sustainable use
- Public participation mentioned once (very specific context)
- No mention of benefits / beneficiation / compensation etc.



# Skin in the game?

Strategy and policy failures may be associated with few influencers having constitutional accountability or experiencing the cost of living with elephants

Performance of the Norms and Standards against governance criteria		
Recognizing rights	Participatory	Partial
	Consensus	?
	Inclusive	No
	Equitable	No
Lawful	Rule of law	?
Responsible enabling	Accountable	?
	Transparent	?
	Responsive	No
	Practical	No
Desired outcome	Effectiveness	No



[www.elephantwhispers.co.za](http://www.elephantwhispers.co.za)

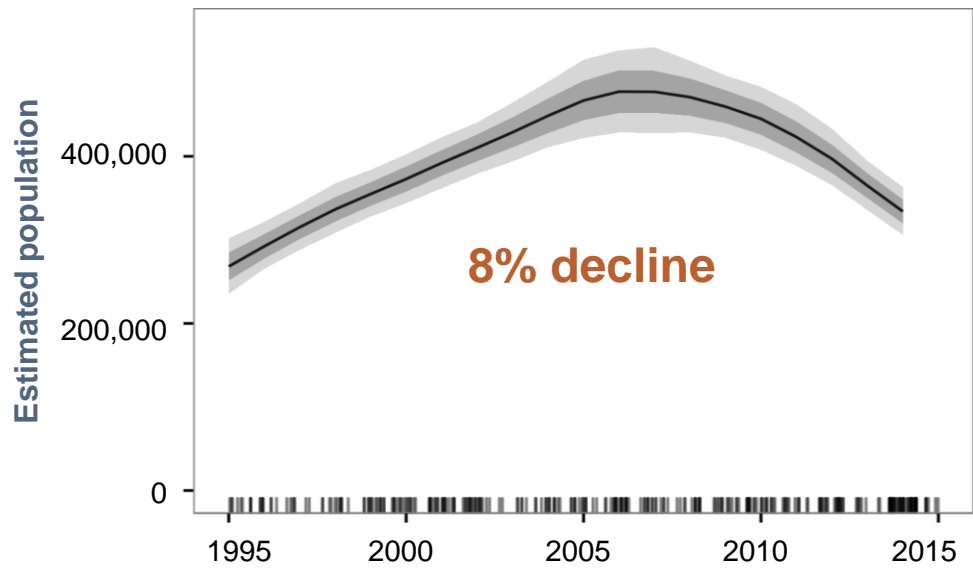
# What about the trees?



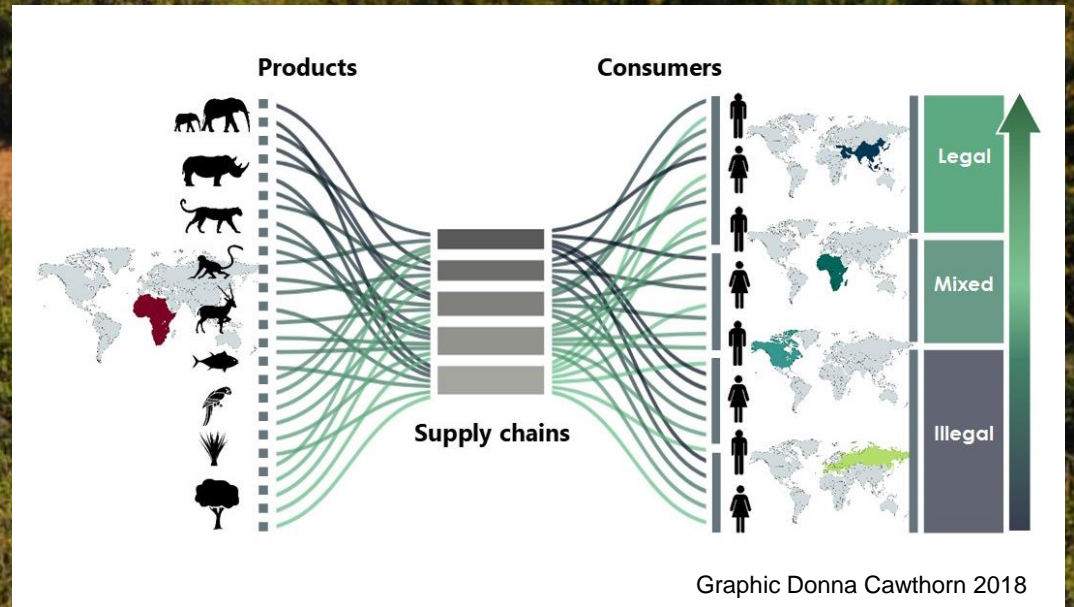
 PLOS ONE

## Savanna elephant numbers are only a quarter of their expected values

Ashley S. Robson<sup>1</sup>, Morgan J. Trimble<sup>1</sup>, Andrew Purdon<sup>1</sup>, Kim D. Young-Overton<sup>1</sup>,  
Stuart L. Pimm<sup>2</sup>, Rudi J. van Aarde<sup>1\*</sup>



Chase et al. 2016. Continent wide survey reveals massive decline in African savanna elephants. *PeerJ*. DOI 10.7717/peerj.2354



Graphic Donna Cawthorn 2018



# Need for trade-offs

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- Persistence of elephants
- Mitigating ecological impacts
- Minimising conflict with people
- Maximising benefits for people and ecosystems
- Being compassionate while doing above



# Links between biodiversity and human dignity



“The affirmation of [inherent] human dignity as a foundational value of the constitutional order ...” (Chaskalson, 2000)

## Legal framework for human dignity

- **Caveat:** Human rights seen as foreign constructs
- **Constitutive act**
  - Sovereignty
  - Independence
- **International Cooperation:** UN Declaration of human rights

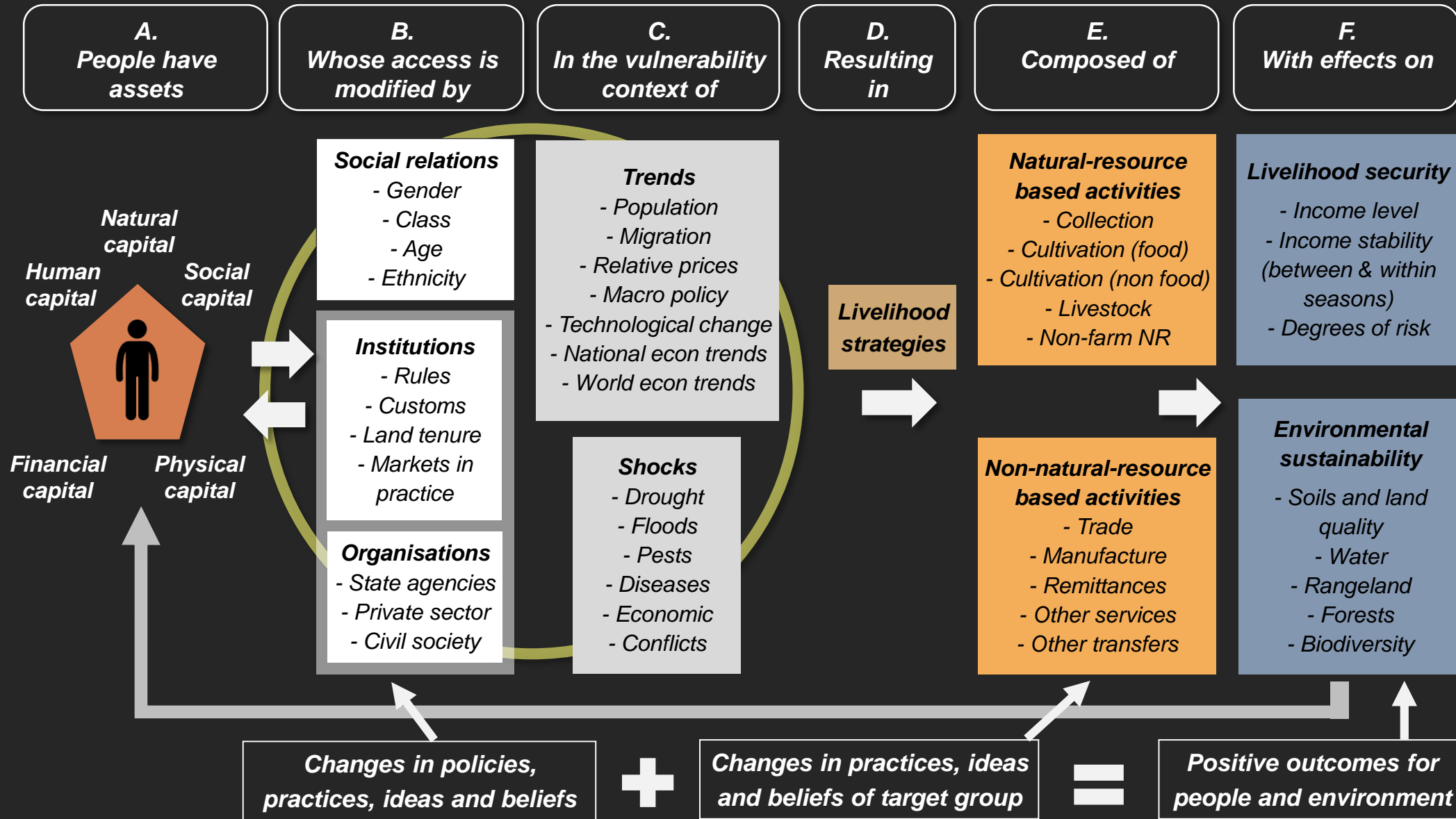
## ACHPR (a5)

Every individual shall have the right to the respect of the dignity inherent in a human being and to the recognition of his legal status

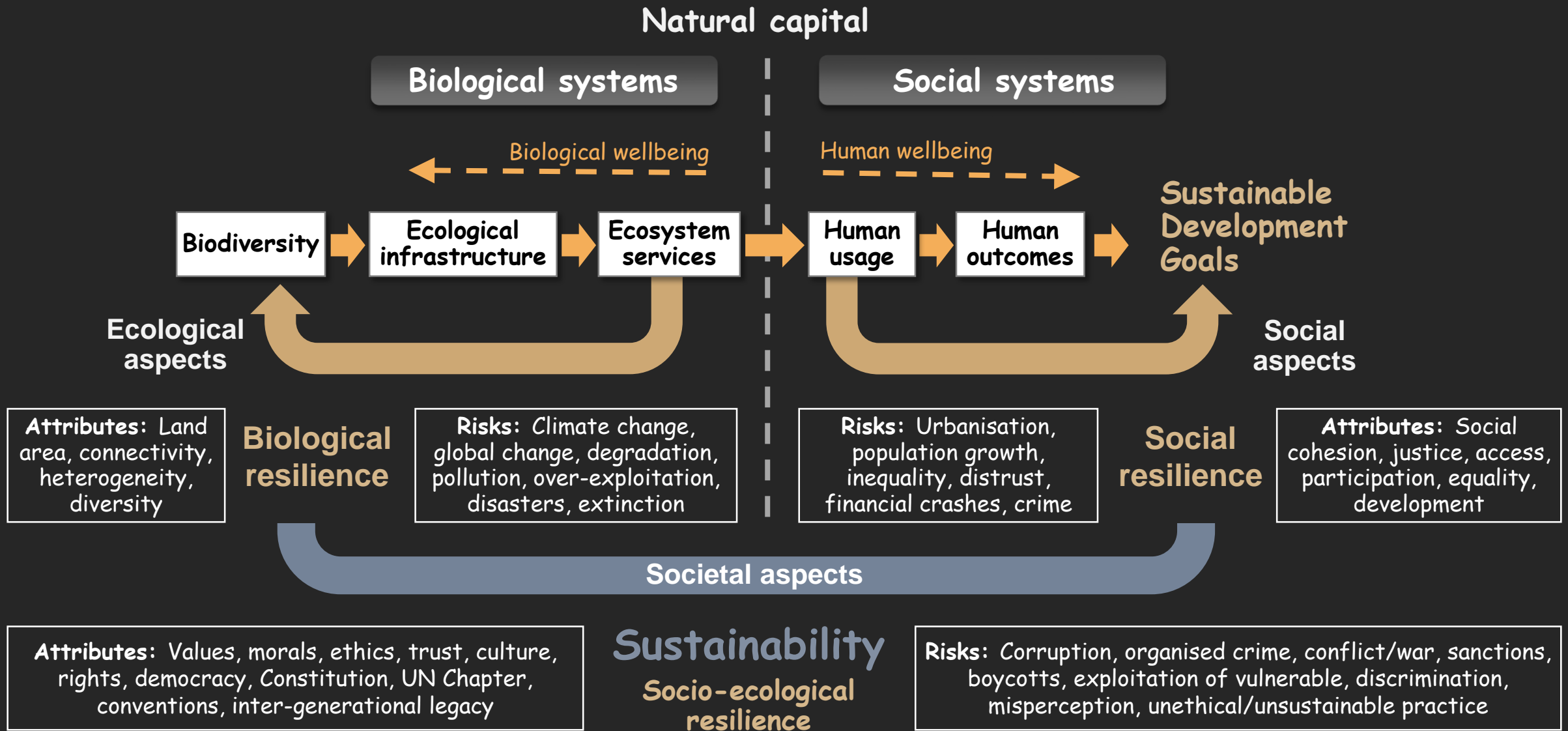
No exploitation, degradation, slavery, slave trade, torture, cruel, inhuman, degrading punishment, degrading treatment



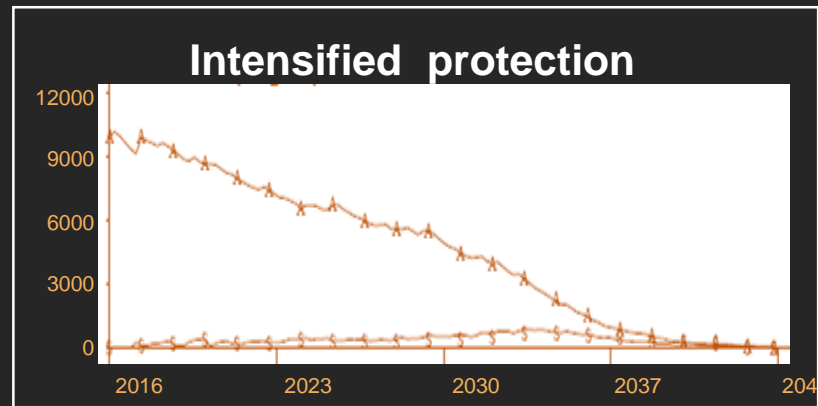
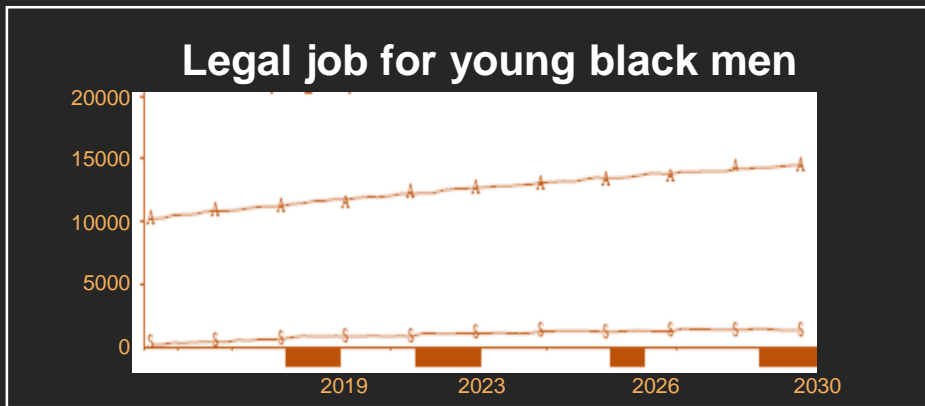
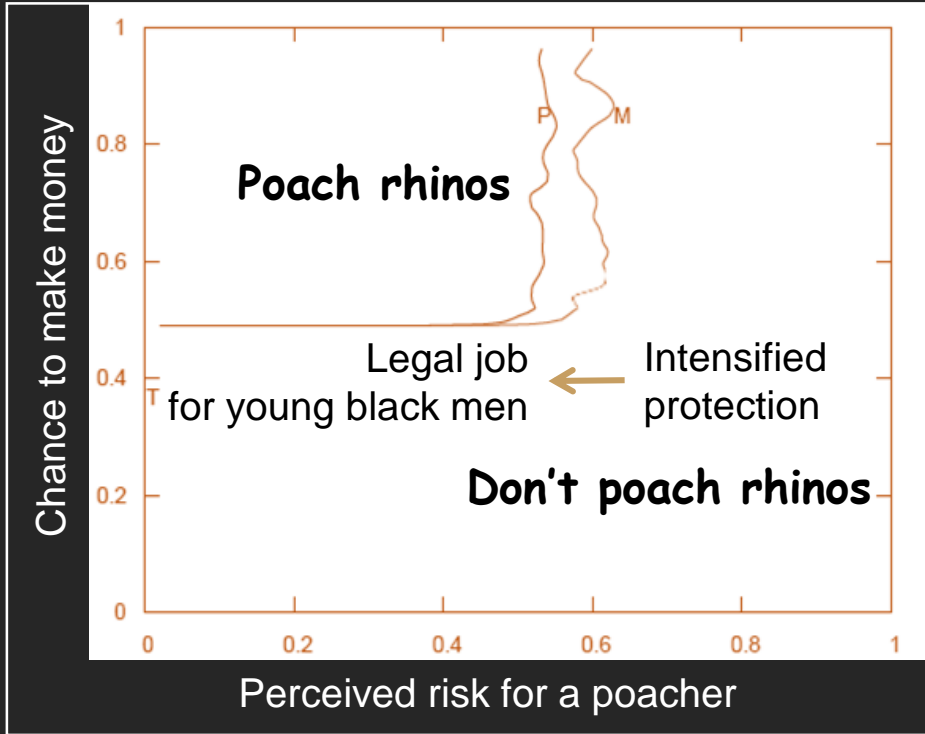
# What is a sustainable livelihood?



# Sustainability links between social and biological resilience



# Providing jobs is better than shooting to kill

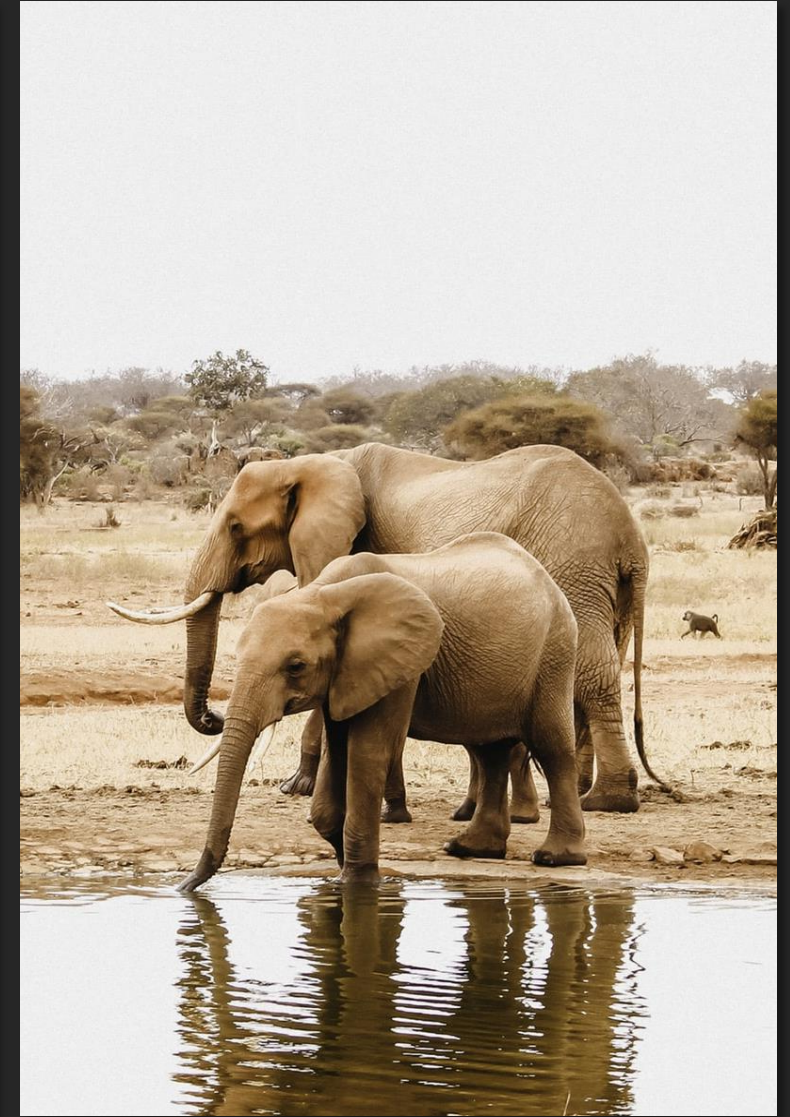




# Restoring human dignity



Conservation and related land uses should contribute to socio-ecological resilience that restore and maintain human dignity and rights



# Do you have skin in the game? It maybe a democratic responsibility

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