

# The Ivory Trade

**[pullquote]Even though there has been a global ban on trading ivory since 1989, elephants and rhinoceroses are still being slaughtered for their tusks.[/pullquote]**

**NPR's Weekend Edition Sunday (February 9, 2014) included a segment describing France crushing confiscated ivory. Trading in ivory is illegal. But then we got this Fox Butterfield[1] moment (near the 1:20 mark):**

**News flash and a little economics: the animals that produced ivory currently being bought and sold on the black market are already dead. Destroying that ivory will not bring them back to life. It will, however, decrease the supply of ivory, drive up the price, and ... encourage more poaching.**

---

**[1] Fox Butterfield was a reporter. He has gained fame courtesy of the Wall Street Journal's James Taranto. His claim to fame is creating headlines which fail to recognize an underlying fundamental relationships. For example, "Crime rates fall despite higher rates of incarceration."**