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115TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 4819

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 18, 2018

Received; read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

_____ (legislative day, _____), _____

Reported by Mr. CORKER, without amendment

AN ACT

To promote inclusive economic growth through conservation and biodiversity programs that facilitate transboundary cooperation, improve natural resource management, and build local capacity to protect and preserve threatened wildlife species in the greater Okavango River Basin of southern Africa.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Defending Economic
3 Livelihoods and Threatened Animals Act” or the
4 “DELTA Act”.

5 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

6 Congress finds the following:

7 (1) The greater Okavango River Basin, which
8 ranges from the highland plateau of Angola to
9 northeastern Namibia and northern Botswana, and
10 also provides critical natural resources that sustain
11 wildlife in Zambia and Zimbabwe, is the largest
12 freshwater watershed in southern Africa.

13 (2) The greater Okavango River Basin is the
14 main source of water and livelihoods for over 1 mil-
15 lion people, and the effective management and pro-
16 tection of this critical watershed will help advance
17 important conservation and economic growth objec-
18 tives for Angola, Botswana, Namibia, local commu-
19 nities, and the broader region.

20 (3) The greater Okavango River Basin is home
21 to the largest remaining elephant population in the
22 world, as well as other threatened wildlife species.

23 (4) Poaching and trafficking of threatened wild-
24 life species in the greater Okavango River Basin has
25 increased in recent years, and has the potential to
26 undermine regional stability by disrupting local gov-

1 ernance and management of resources, and sup-
2 planting key economic opportunities for community
3 members.

4 (5) Governments in the region have taken im-
5 portant steps to coordinate through existing con-
6 servation frameworks to combat trafficking, ensure
7 responsible resource management, support local live-
8 lihoods, and protect threatened wildlife species.

9 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

10 It is the sense of Congress that it is in the interest
11 of the United States to engage, as appropriate, with the
12 Governments of Angola, Botswana, Namibia, and neigh-
13 boring countries, and in partnership with donors, regional
14 organizations, nongovernmental organizations, local com-
15 munities, and the private sector, to advance conservation
16 efforts and promote economic growth and stability in the
17 greater Okavango River Basin and neighboring water-
18 sheds and conservation areas.

19 **SEC. 4. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

20 It is the policy of the United States to promote inclu-
21 sive economic growth through conservation and biodiver-
22 sity programs that facilitate transboundary cooperation,
23 improve water and natural resource management, and
24 build local capacity to protect and preserve threatened

1 wildlife species in the greater Okavango River Basin and
2 neighboring watersheds and conservation areas.

3 **SEC. 5. STRATEGY.**

4 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary and the Adminis-
5 trator, in coordination with the heads of other relevant
6 Federal agencies, shall seek, as appropriate, to work with
7 the Governments of Angola, Botswana, Namibia, and
8 neighboring countries, and in partnership with donors, re-
9 gional organizations, nongovernmental organizations, local
10 communities, and the private sector, to develop a strategy
11 to—

12 (1) create and advance a cooperative framework
13 to promote responsible natural resource, water, and
14 wildlife management practices in the greater
15 Okavango River Basin;

16 (2) protect traditional migration routes of ele-
17 phants and other threatened wildlife species;

18 (3) combat wildlife poaching and trafficking;

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

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

23 (b) **ELEMENTS.**—The strategy established pursuant
24 to subsection (a) shall—

1 (1) promote cooperative and responsible water,
2 natural resource, and wildlife management policies
3 and practices within and among the countries of An-
4 gola, Botswana, and Namibia, with a particular
5 focus on the greater Okavango River Basin and the
6 critical headwaters located in Angola;

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

10 (3) combat wildlife poaching and trafficking in
11 Angola, Botswana, Namibia, and those areas of
12 Zambia and Zimbabwe that border Angola, Bot-
13 swana, or Namibia, including within regional and
14 national parks and reserves, by building the capacity
15 of the governments of such countries, local law en-
16 forcement, community leaders, and park rangers to
17 detect, disrupt, and prosecute poachers and traf-
18 fickers;

19 (4) promote conservation as a foundation for
20 inclusive economic growth and development within a
21 comprehensive assistance strategy that places An-
22 gola, Botswana, and Namibia on a trajectory toward
23 graduation from the need for United States foreign
24 assistance;

1 (5) identify opportunities and mechanisms to le-
2 verage regional organizations, nongovernmental or-
3 ganizations, and public-private partnerships to con-
4 tribute to support the implementation of the strat-
5 egy;

6 (6) establish monitoring and evaluation mecha-
7 nisms, including measurable goals, objectives, and
8 benchmarks of success, that are included in grants,
9 contracts, and cooperative agreements to ensure the
10 effective use of United States foreign assistance; and

11 (7) coordinate with and build the capacity of re-
12 gional conservation frameworks in order to advance
13 regional conservation objectives.

14 **SEC. 6. UNITED STATES SUPPORT.**

15 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary and the Adminis-
16 trator, in coordination with the heads of other relevant
17 Federal agencies, are authorized to prioritize and advance
18 ongoing efforts to—

19 (1) promote inclusive economic growth and de-
20 velopment through responsible water and natural re-
21 source management and wildlife protection activities
22 in the greater Okavango River Basin;

23 (2) provide technical assistance to governments
24 and local communities in Angola, Botswana, and
25 Namibia to create a policy-enabling environment for

1 such responsible water and natural resource man-
2 agement and wildlife protection activities; and

3 (3) build the capacity of local law enforcement,
4 park rangers, and community leaders to combat
5 wildlife poaching and trafficking;

6 (b) COORDINATION AND INTEGRATION WITH RE-
7 GIONAL CONSERVATION FRAMEWORKS.—The Secretary
8 and the Administrator, in coordination with the heads of
9 other relevant Federal agencies, shall coordinate assist-
10 ance provided by Department of State, the United States
11 Agency for International Development, and such other rel-
12 evant Federal agencies with existing regional conservation
13 frameworks in order to ensure regional integration of con-
14 servation, wildlife trafficking, and water management ini-
15 tiatives, to prevent duplication of efforts, and to advance
16 regional conservation objectives.

17 (c) COORDINATION WITH PRIVATE SECTOR.—The
18 Secretary and the Administrator, in coordination with the
19 heads of other relevant Federal agencies, are authorized
20 to work with the private sector and nongovernmental orga-
21 nizations to leverage public and private capital to promote
22 responsible resource management, combat wildlife poach-
23 ing and trafficking, and support inclusive economic growth
24 and local livelihoods in the greater Okavango River Basin.

1 (d) MONITORING AND EVALUATION.—The Secretary
2 and the Administrator shall establish monitoring and eval-
3 uation mechanisms, to include measurable goals, objec-
4 tives, and benchmarks, to ensure the effective use of
5 United States foreign assistance to achieve the objectives
6 of this section.

7 **SEC. 7. REPORT.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the
9 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary and the
10 Administrator, in coordination with the heads of other rel-
11 evant Federal agencies, shall submit to the appropriate
12 congressional committees a report on the implementation
13 of this Act.

14 (b) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The report re-
15 quired under subsection (a) shall include a description of
16 the strategy required by section 5, including—

17 (1) the monitoring and evaluation plans and in-
18 dicators used to measure performance under the
19 strategy;

20 (2) any legislative impediments to meeting the
21 objectives of such strategy;

22 (3) the extent to which Angola, Botswana, and
23 Namibia have demonstrated a commitment and will-
24 ingness to cooperate to advance efforts described in
25 section 5(b);

1 (4) progress made to date in meeting the objec-
2 tives of such strategy;

3 (5) efforts to coordinate, deconflict, and stream-
4 line conservation programs in order to maximize re-
5 source effectiveness;

6 (6) the extent to which Angola, Botswana, and
7 Namibia and other government in the region are in-
8 vesting resources to advance conservation initiatives;
9 and

10 (7) the extent to which other funding sources,
11 including through private sector investment and
12 other investment by Angola, Botswana, and Na-
13 mibia, have been identified to advance conservation
14 initiatives.

15 **SEC. 8. DEFINITIONS.**

16 In this Act:

17 (1) **ADMINISTRATOR.**—The term “Adminis-
18 trator” means the Administrator of the United
19 States Agency for International Development.

20 (2) **APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-**
21 **TEES.**—The term “appropriate congressional com-
22 mittees” means—

23 (A) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and
24 the Committee on Appropriations of the House
25 of Representatives; and

1 (B) the Committee on Foreign Relations
2 and the Committee on Appropriations of the
3 Senate.

4 (3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
5 the Secretary of State.