

IUCN Status of African Elephant

March 29, 2021

In News: The African forest elephant is now listed as Critically Endangered and the African savanna elephant as Endangered on the IUCN Red List.

New Assessments by the International Union for Conservation of Nature Underscore

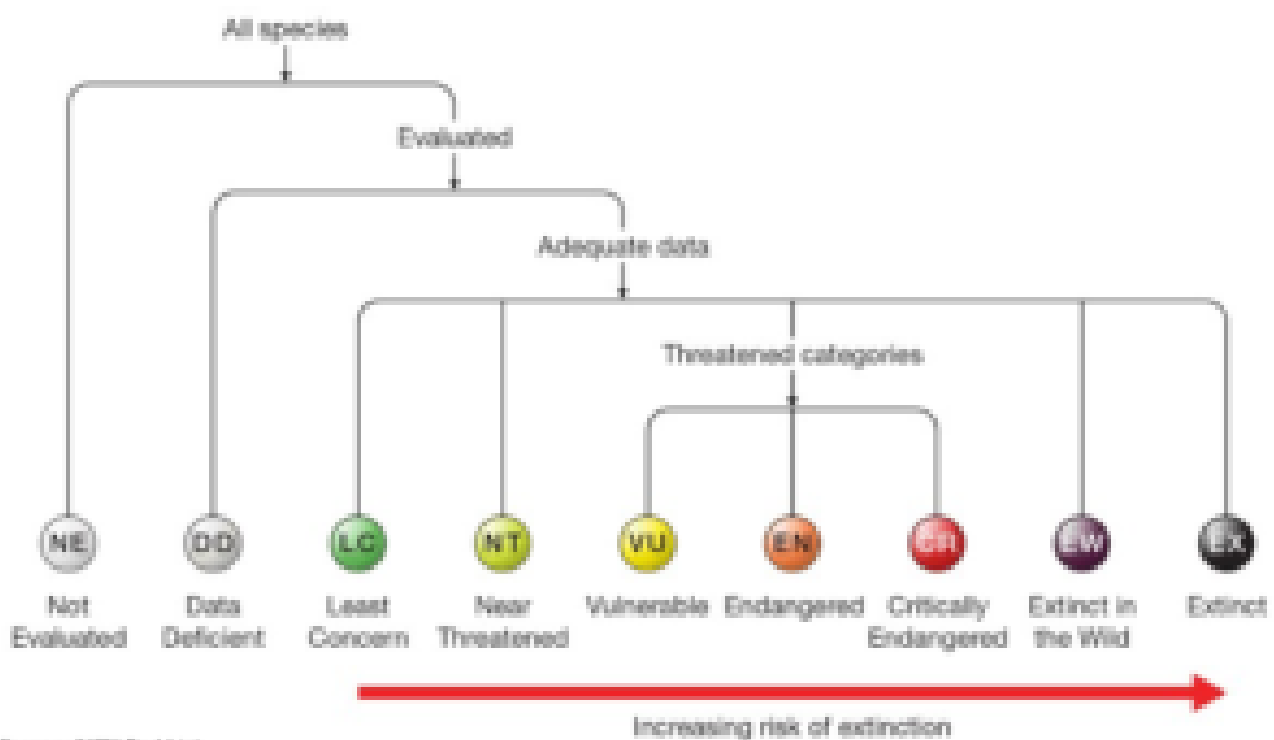
- The persistent pressures faced by the two species of elephants in Africa due to poaching for ivory and human encroachment.
- The Savanna elephant was “endangered” and the much smaller, lighter forest elephant was “critically endangered” .
- Previously IUCN had treated both elephants together which it considered as “vulnerable” .
- The IUCN data showed that the populations of Africa’s savanna elephants decreased by at least 60% over the last 50 years.
- Number of forest elephants found mostly in Central Africa had fallen by 86% over 31 years.
- Combined, around 415,000 two species of elephants in Africa remain.
- Despite the overall decline, some populations of forest elephants were rebounding due to successful conservation measures such as those taken by Gabon and Republic of Congo.
- In 2000, scientists recategorized the African elephant species into two distinct species, the larger being the **African savanna elephant** and the smaller being the **African forest elephant**.

Note: IUCN’s latest assessment – assessed 134,425 species of

plants, fungi and animals of which more than a quarter are threatened with extinction.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature(IUCN)

- **Founded in 1948**, day IUCN the largest professional global conservation network.
- **Headquartered:** Gland, Switzerland.
- **Membership:** IUCN has more than 1,200 member organizations including 200+ government and 900+ non-government organizations.
- The IUCN Red List Categories define the extinction risk of species assessed. Nine categories extend from NE (Not Evaluated) to EX (Extinct). Critically Endangered (CR), Endangered (EN) and Vulnerable (VU) species are considered to be threatened with extinction.



Source: IUCN Red List

Difference Between Asian and African Elephants

- Asian and African elephants can be differentiated most easily by their ears, their head shape, and their tusks.
- African elephants have much larger ears that look sort of like the continent of Africa, while Asian elephants

have smaller, round ears.

- African elephants have rounded heads, while Asian elephants have a twin-domed head, which means there's a divot line running up the head.
- Both male and female African elephants can have tusks, but only male Asian elephants can grow them.