



# A MODEL MATRIARCH

Founder of Knot on My Planet, model, actress, and activist  
Doutzen Kroes speaks to the owner of one of the biggest  
modeling agencies in the world, DNA Models, about their  
shared passion and determination to save the elephants.

*By* DAVID BONNOUVRIER  
*All photography by* NATHANIEL GOLDBERG







DAVID BONNOUVRIER: *Can you briefly describe what Knot On My Planet (KOMP) is and how it works with Save the Elephants, the Wildlife Conservation Network, the Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation, and the Elephant Crisis Fund?*

DOUTZEN KROES: KOMP is a campaign that brings fashion brands and influencers together around cause-marketing projects to raise funds and awareness for the Elephant Crisis Fund (ECF). The ECF is a joint initiative of Save the Elephants and the Wildlife Conservation Network—in partnership with the Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation—aimed at funding the best ideas from organizations on the ground to stop the killing of elephants and the trafficking and demand for their ivory. It’s the most effective means to end the ivory crisis, because it sends 100 percent of donations to over 150 vetted projects.

DB: *What’s the significance of the name Knot On My Planet?*

DK: KOMP pays homage to the age-old act of tying a knot to remember something, whether it is a task, a soldier, or a cause, and connecting it to fashion, where knots have become incorporated in everyday designs. We bring it back to elephants, who are known for their uncanny ability to remember (hence the saying “An elephant never forgets”), and we will never forget elephants. #KnotOnMyPlanet has become a unifying rallying cry for leading companies in the fashion industry to use their creativity to raise awareness about the ivory crisis and the funds needed for the ECF to end it.

DB: *The elephant crisis has escalated so severely—up to 30,000 elephants are killed each year for their tusks. These crimes are geographically limited to Africa—how does KOMP engage the world to recognize this as a global crisis?*

DK: The ECF supports anti-poaching, anti-trafficking, and demand-reduction projects throughout Africa and

ivory-consuming nations. Although the slaughter of elephants happens within Africa, anti-trafficking and demand reduction are global issues, with strong ties to Asia. At KOMP we raise money for the ECF to support the best anti-poaching and anti-trafficking projects, while also spreading awareness. As the fashion industry is one of the most visible on a global scale, we feel we’re in a great position to make the elephants’ voice heard globally.

DB: *Do you think there is a special connection between the fashion industry and wildlife conservation, particularly with elephants?*

DK: Yes, and this is a conversation every consumer wants their favorite brands to have. The fashion industry is in a unique position to change the way we feel about what a luxury item is. Elephants have been within the industry’s visual language for decades, and now it’s the time for fashion to give back to them.

DB: *Prominent people like Raf Simons, Marc Jacobs, Robin Wright, members of Pearl Jam, Candice Swanepoel, Cara Delevingne, and Adriana Lima have been involved with the campaign and raised awareness. What is it like having them involved?*

DK: It meant so much to have their support. We were taken aback by the amount of people who helped us with the first campaign—I think we got over 1.5 billion social media impressions. Their involvement was crucial in helping us broaden our audience and launch KnotOnMyPlanet.

DB: *You’ve mentioned that when you traveled to Kenya, you connected with the elephant population so strongly that you were inspired to get involved right away. Can you describe some of those emotions?*

DK: Seeing elephants in the wild took my breath away. We saw them interacting with each other, and they were just like our own family—it was the moment I realized I wanted to do whatever I could to help the plight of the elephants.



*“When the demand for ivory is gone, the slaughter of elephants will stop.”*

*Watch and learn more about the plight of the elephants. Scan the QR code to watch the full video.*











DB: *You brought your two young children on the trip to Kenya. Why was it important to you for them to be with you?*

DK: I wanted them to experience elephants in the wild. Even though they are too young to understand poaching, I still want them to have an appreciation for them, seeing them in their own habitat.

DB: *What is the ultimate goal of #KnotOnMyPlanet?*

DK: To help secure a future for elephants.

DB: *Knot On My Planet has partnered with established companies such as Tiffany&Co. (Tiffany Save the Wild Collection) and Kotn (custom elephant T-shirt), and 100 percent of proceeds from both products go to the ECF. What other companies would you like KnotOnMyPlanet to partner with?*

*“Seeing elephants  
in the wild took  
my breath away.”*

DK: Ultimately, we’d love to see every major fashion brand join this KOMP coalition, and in doing so, set themselves apart for their corporate social responsibility and creativity. We are about to launch another luxury brand partnership and other initiatives in the fall, and we’re challenging everyone else to join and go even farther! One of our goals is to create a collaboration between some of the most iconic designers and a global retailer.

DB: *In addition to donating to the ECF, how can people get involved?*

DK: By spreading awareness and educating people on the effect of the ivory trade. When the demand for ivory is gone, the slaughter of elephants will stop. This could be as simple as a child’s school project or individuals posting on their own social channels.

*knotonmyplanet.org*