



**Biodiversity Challenge Funds Projects  
Darwin Initiative, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, and Darwin Plus  
Half Year Report**

<b>Project reference</b>	IWTEV007
<b>Project title</b>	Building evidence to reduce demand for wildlife products in Peru
<b>Country</b>	Peru
<b>Lead partner</b>	World Animal Protection
<b>Partners</b>	SPDA (Peruvian Society for Environmental Law); Regional Management of Forest Development and Wildlife (GRDFFS); Wildlife Conservation Society Peru (WCS); Practical Action
<b>Project leader</b>	Dr Neil D’Cruze
<b>Report date and number</b>	Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund HYR2
<b>Project website/blog/social media</b>	<a href="#">Tradition and trinkets: Illegal Wildlife Trade is devastating Peru’s wildlife   World Animal Protection</a>

**Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – Sept) against the agreed project implementation timetable**

**Output 1: By 2024, baselines, and experimental evidence exists on campaign messaging (on negative legal, economic, public health, animal welfare, and conservation impacts) and key messages are composed and tested which will be most effective in reducing urban consumer demand for illegally traded species at Belén Market, Iquitos, Peru**



Following completion of our national level online consumer attitude survey in December 2022, we implemented a local level consumer survey in residential areas near to Belén Market between January and April 2023 via our local partner, IIAP (Activity 1.6). The survey aimed to likewise assess what proportion of the local population currently purchases wildlife for personal use, and whether information campaigns could reduce demand for these products. We derived 265 full responses from householders in Belén (exceeding our target of 200 participants); 77.5% of participants were female, reflecting the fact that (according to local partners) female household members are typically the primary shoppers at Belén.

Our findings revealed widespread (although infrequent) consumption of wildlife-origin products among our respondents, in particular bushmeat (which 75.1% had purchased but of which only 3% did so frequently) and chelonian eggs (58.1%, with <1% doing so frequently). Percentages of respondents purchasing wildlife-origin pets (14.7%), decorative, craft and fashion, or good luck/ spiritual artefacts made from wild animal parts (6.8%), and wild animal-origin remedies (7.9%) were comparatively lower.

In response to statements designed to reveal respondents’ attitudes towards negative impacts of the capture for sale of wildlife, over 90% of respondents held negative views of both animal welfare and conservation impacts, with lower proportions expressing negative views of issues surrounding zoonotic disease risks and illegality. In response, 51.3% of respondents stated they would be less likely to buy wildlife-origin products in the future. These results are similar to those derived from our national level online consumer survey, in which respondents shown information relating to zoonotic disease risks and risks to local species’ conservation were approximately half as likely to select high likelihoods of purchase of these products as those shown neutral, control information.

Our findings indicate that the consumption of wildlife-origin products, particularly bushmeat, is currently normalized in Belén, but that demand reduction campaigns may be effective by making the negative consequences of such consumption salient to the population. However, there are some differences between national and local consumers that may be important to consider when designing and implementing human behaviour change campaigns. For example, a far higher proportion of urban consumers at the national level have owned or purchased a wild animal pet (39.9%) or wildlife-origin products of medicinal, spiritual, or decorative purposes (41.5%), compared to at the local level (14.7%). Whereas in contrast, a higher proportion of urban consumers at the local level consume bushmeat (75.1%) compared to those at the national level (63.1%). Furthermore, information relating to zoonotic disease risks and risks to local species' conservation is likely to be more effective at lowering consumption rates of wildlife among shoppers at the national level, than information on legality and animal welfare. Whereas messages about the negative consequences of local demand for wildlife on animals' welfare and the possibility of local extinctions are most likely to resonate with consumers at the local level, and zoonotic disease risks are considered less problematic than risks to animal welfare.

The findings of both surveys have been written up as two scientific articles and are currently under review with the journals *Global Ecology and Conservation* (local level survey) and *Biological Conservation* (national level online survey). See Annex 1 for extracted figures from the local level consumer survey.

**Output 2: By 2024, government authorities and other key stakeholders are committed to implementing measures to find legal, sustainable, alternative livelihoods, with a key focus on promoting gender equality, for wildlife vendors as part of the new Belén Market project**

Following some necessary changes to activities, we are on track to deliver Output 2. As per our Change Request, approved on 28.09.23, a vendor attitude survey has been designed (Activity 2.2) and is currently with local partners, SPDA and Practical Action (new partner contract signed 31.05.23) for their review and input. The aim of the survey is to understand how vendors at Belén operate at the market, the products that they sell (wildlife and non-wildlife), their level of livelihood dependency, attitudes towards product viability now and in the future, and their vision for change (including what support they might need for their livelihoods to become safe, humane, and sustainable). A service contract was signed by IIAP on 2 October 2023, to recruit local researchers to implement the vendor attitude survey. IIAP has also provided feedback on the questionnaire and will be validating it with vendors in the coming weeks. The survey will be applied to 100 vendors and will be conducted during November 2023.

Substantial progress has also been made for Activities 2.3 to 2.7. We have held regular meetings with the authorities of Belén Market resulting in successful outreach to the vendors. Through Practical Action and their local liaison, we have engaged with individual vendors as well as a vendor's association. We used insights from this engagement to determine that a survey (rather than a workshop) was the best course of action as a first stage approach to understanding their challenges, as many vendors were reluctant to participate in a full workshop (due to a reported fatigue from other recent similar processes). The vendor's association has agreed to support our efforts to promote the survey among their members. They will also motivate them to be part of the smaller sample (approximately 15 people) that will join a face-to-face workshop in Q1 2024, which will be designed based on the vendor survey results.

On 1 September 2023, a workshop was held for journalists in Iquitos to raise their awareness of the negative impacts of Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT), and the importance of media to help tackle it (Activity 2.8). The workshop was designed to promote investigative journalism to report on crimes related to this illicit activity, and its impacts on the economy, health, animal welfare, and biodiversity conservation in the Loreto region. This workshop was aimed at journalists in the local area, as they play a critical role in generating and disseminating knowledge about alternatives to IWT and increasing public awareness of its negative impacts through their professional practice. Alexa Vélez, general editor of *Mongabay Latam*, and Pilar López, multimedia coordinator of the Peruvian newspaper *La República*, attended and gave presentations during the workshop. In addition, local government leaders, such as the Director of the Secretariat of Animal Health and the Regional Manager of Forestry and Wildlife Development, also participated in the event.

Assessment questionnaires were designed and conducted to assess the journalists' knowledge level of the different topics related to IWT pre and post the workshop, how well the workshop met expectations, and the type of IWT topics the journalists are most likely to report on in the future (Activity 2.9). We are currently analysing the data from the questionnaires, the findings of which will be used to measure the impact of the workshop. Participants also completed an evaluation of the workshop; over 90% of them agreed that the workshop fulfilled their expectations, and all agreed that the content was relevant for them and could be applied to their professional practice.

Media monitoring (Activity 2.10) has been carried out on a regular basis throughout January and August 2023. SPDA has subsequently produced an analysis report based on the collated articles related to IWT published between January and August 2023 in the Peruvian and regional press (news, specials, and

reports). The analysis was presented at the journalist workshop and will be published in SPDA's online newsletter. Key findings show that 50% of all the news items collated focus on punitive cases without delving into important associated issues such as public health, animal welfare, zoonosis, and illegality. In addition, the frequency of publication of media products on IWT is low, except during months which have related events such as "World Wildlife Day" (3rd March).

As a result, a set of recommendations has been proposed, including; increasing the frequency of publication of journalistic pieces on IWT issues, approached from a variety of current and "evergreen" perspectives to maintain public interest (not only on punitive cases that become normalised on a daily basis), and the importance of further research and analysis for journalists to increase their understanding of how IWT often interlinks with other crimes (e.g. money laundering, illicit enrichment, and corruption).

**Output 3: By 2024, commitment by local private sector (restaurants, tourism, businesses related to traditional medicine) in Belén district, Iquitos, Peru to lead by example in preventing wildlife trafficking and illegal wildlife product consumption.**

We have made substantial progress and are on schedule to deliver Output 3. Several meetings took place between January and September 2023 with the Regional Management of Forestry and Wildlife Development office in Loreto that is supporting us in mapping the private sector stakeholders. The design of campaign materials that will accompany the commitment is also currently under development.

**2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.**

Our original project plan proposed the development of sustainable livelihood workshops for 100 market vendors. However, our partner, Practical Action, faced some resistance from vendors to the premise of a face-to-face workshop. A number of vendors indicated that this reluctance was due to 'fatigue' from previous processes with other organisations (information that was not available to us prior to our initial engagement with the vendors) and that more dialogue is required before they will commit to attending a workshop. To keep the project on track and ensure the delivery of the Project Outcome, we are now replacing the original workshop with a face-to-face survey to 100 vendors, a format that the vendors have indicated they would be receptive to. The survey will then be followed by a workshop for a smaller sample of approximately 15 vendors with whom we can explore the survey results in more depth. The new format also considers information that market vendors have shared on their availability, working hours, and the convenience of location, to ensure that the workshop can be organised in a way that is more practical for them to attend. This change, accepted via a Change Request on 28.09.23, meant amendments to the timetable and log frame, however this does not affect the budget.

It is also important to note that the political situation in Peru has not yet stabilised. In July, the interim President announced that she will not be calling a general election in 2024 as initially promised last year, consequently protests have restarted in various locations in the country. So far, these protests have not affected Loreto. The situation does not appear to be as complicated as it was at the beginning of this year but is still volatile and, along with our local partners, we continue to closely monitor the situation to ensure the smooth implementation of the project.

**3. Have any of these issues been discussed with NIRAS and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?**

Discussed with NIRAS: Yes/

Formal Change Request submitted: Yes/

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes/

Change request reference if known:

**4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023)**

**Actual spend:** £ [REDACTED]

**4b. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g. more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this financial year (ending 31 March 2024)?**

**No**

Estimated underspend:

N/A