

Illegal Wildlife Trade: Half Year Report

(due 31st October 2016)

Project Ref No.	IWT 02
Project Title:	Cutting Out the Middleman: Combatting Wildlife Trafficking in Vietnam
Country(ies)	Vietnam (and Vietnamese diplomatic missions, migrant worker associations, and private businesses in Mozambique, Tanzania, Kenya and South Africa).
Lead Organisation	WCS Vietnam
Collaborator(s)	CITES MA Vietnam; National Environmental Police (Southern Office)
Project Leader	Scott Robertson
Report date and number (eg HYR1)	31 st October, 2016; HYR3
Project website	None

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – Sept) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up to end September).

Output 1: Vietnamese journalists and local civil society groups are informed and supportive of international wildlife trade issues.

Activity 1.1. During this reporting period, our media tracking collated 588 articles covering illegal wildlife trade, especially seizures and prosecutions of crime cases in the local and international online media (221 Vietnam news & 367 international news). 299 articles showed positive views (supportive to law enforcement and conservation efforts) accounts for 51%; 60 (10%) articles provided balance views; 223 (38%) had no clear views; and 6 showed negative views accounting for 3%. WCS usually writes a feedback email and/or letter to provide more updated and correct information when finding any discrepancies in information dissemination.

Activity 1.2. We continued sharing selected news, articles and press releases that highlight enforcement progress via WCS mailing lists and Facebook WCS Vietnam. We continuously kept over 200 local journalists informed of our evidence-based stories and briefs which were translated into Vietnamese as well, such as “Why it makes sense to burn ivory stockpiles” (June 2016), “Report: Vietnam Among World’s Biggest Illegal Ivory Markets” (July 2016) and the Guardian articles named “The crime family at the centre of Asia’s animal trafficking network” and “Revealed: the criminals making millions from illegal wildlife trafficking” and the New York Times’ article titled “Laos Promises to Phase Out Tiger Farms” posted on New York Times (September 2016).

Activity 1.3.



Output 2. Local civil society and law enforcement agencies identify and begin to address the priority barriers to the prosecution and punishment of transnational wildlife trafficking cases and the key actions required to address these issues.

Activity 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4: completed in 2015 and detailed in the last annual report.

Output 3. Vietnamese diplomatic missions, migrant worker associations and trading and tourism companies in and relating to key African ivory and rhino horn source/transit states are informed of the risks, punishments and scaled up law enforcement efforts and political commitment to tackling this in both Africa and Asia

Activity 3.1. completed in early May 2015 and covered in the last annual report.

Activity 3.2. starting from previous reporting period, we make full use of the partnership developed with Viettel Global especially Viettel desk in Tanzania and Mozambique and Vietnam embassies in those countries to reach an agreement on the implementation of crime prevention outreach campaigns (alert SMS for Vietnamese communities in Africa and orientation for Viettel staff departing to Africa). Detailed implementation plan has been under discussion. More will be detailed in the next reporting phase.

Output 4. Formal and informal inter-agency forums are functioning and the relevant law enforcement agencies are regularly sharing information through briefings and cooperating on planning and developing strategies to tackle rhino horn, elephant ivory and big cat trafficking crimes.

Activity 4.1. & 4.3. WCS and Viet Nam CITES MA co-hosted an annual Viet Nam Wildlife Enforcement Network (VN-WEN) meeting on June 24, 2016 in Vinh city, Nghe An. Seniors and key officers from VN-WEN member agencies attended the meeting to review the implementation of previous year activities and proposed an activity plan for new year time (July 2016 - June 2017). The representative from Supreme People's Procuracy (SPP) - a new official VN-WEN member presented SPP's guideline to the Ministry of Public Security, provincial courts and procuracies to review and facilitate the prosecution of all the pending rhino horn and elephant ivory criminal cases. It was a great effort of the SPP to enhance the prosecution and conviction of serious wildlife crime cases in Viet Nam before the 2015 revised Penal Code officially comes into effect. WCS have been working with Viet Nam SPP to follow up and facilitate the implementation of their guideline to prosecute the pending rhino horn and ivory cases before the new 2015 Penal Code is effective. The VN-WEN meeting was followed by a field mission to Cau Treo border area (Viet Nam and Lao PDR border) to have a meeting with Cau Treo Customs Sub-department and to understand the situation of illegal trans-border trade including wildlife trade in the area.

Moreover, as following up suggestions from the last year's VN-WEN meetings, WCS approached the Department of Crime Statistics and Information Technology, Supreme People's Procuracy to collect seized/prosecuted cases relating to 5 key species (rhino, elephant, pangolin, turtle and tigers) from 2013-2015 nation-wide especially with provincial statistics from key hotspots. We have been working with them to develop work-plan, data collection form and its guideline. The form and guideline after being approved by SPP will be delivered to the Provincial Procuracies for gathering data. The work-plan has been submitted to leaders of the Supreme People's Procuracy for approval before implementation.

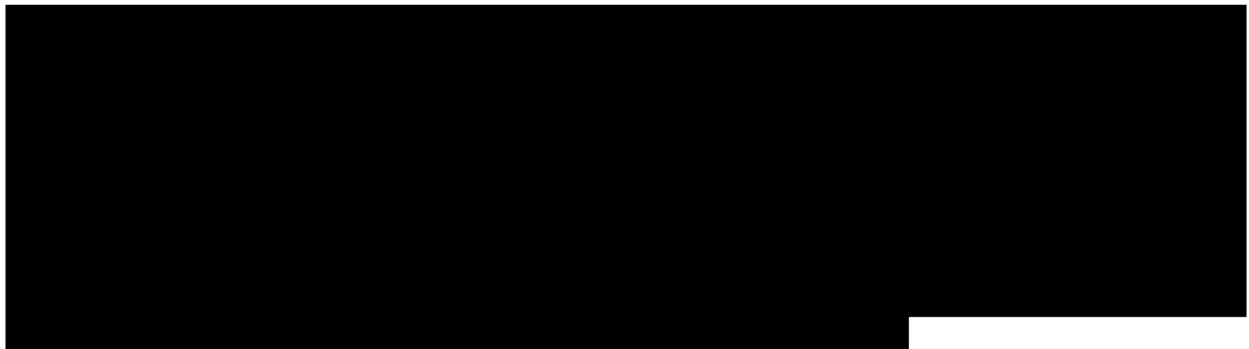
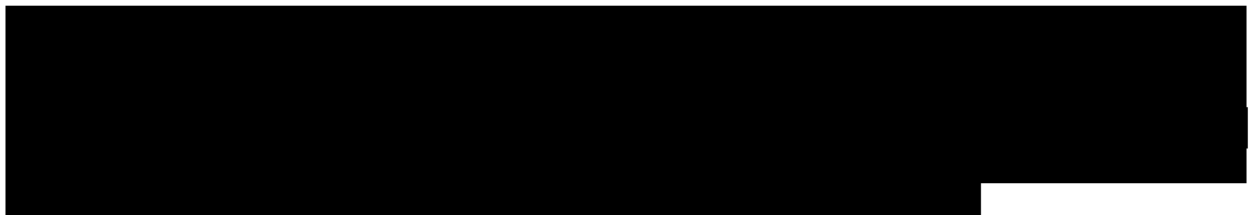
Activity 4.2. WCS organized different meetings with Department of Foreign Relations of Ministry of Public Security, Department of International Cooperation of Supreme People's Procuracy on Vietnam – Mozambique cooperation in wildlife crime prevention including how to implement the training program for Mozambique police in Vietnam, the deployment of police attaché in Mozambique and development of Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) in criminal matters between Vietnam and Mozambique. In lights of the upcoming IWT conference in Ha Noi in November 2016, WCS Viet Nam will cooperate with WCS Mozambique to follow up with our local Government partners to following up on these.

Output 5. Frontline police, customs, forest rangers and prosecutors start utilising intelligence analysis software and applying professional investigative techniques to

gather and manage information on wildlife crimes

Activity 5.1. completed in August 2015 and detailed in the last reporting period.

Activity 5.2. At the time of writing this report, WCS cooperated with Centre for Criminology Research and Criminal Investigation of the People's Police Academy to organize a three-day Intelligence training for the environment police in Ho Chi Minh city from October 18 to 20, 2016. Twenty six environmental police officers from key districts of Ho Chi Minh city and Southern office of National Environmental Police actively involved in the training to learn new skills in collecting reliable information, managing database and analyzing wildlife intelligence to support their law enforcement work against wildlife crimes. Demonstration and practicum exercise with i2-IBM program to identify wildlife crime networks was also integrated into the training program and received a great impression on the participants at the training. As a part of the training, field practicum on species identification at Sai Gon zoo gave participants opportunities to get new knowledge and skills to identify the wildlife species that commonly traded illegally in the Southern provinces of Viet Nam. Moreover, in collaboration with Forest Protection Department Zone IV, WCS leveraged support from USFWS to co-finance a wildlife crime law enforcement training program for 29 officers and managers of Forest Protection Department and Border Army in Dak Nong, Binh Phuoc, Dak Lak, Lam Dong, Gia Lai, Kon Tum and Hochiminh law enforcement agencies in four days from September 13-16, in Dalat City, Lam Dong province. The training covered important topics such as wildlife protection legislation review, investigation methods and crackdown planning, and species identification as well. After the training, the trainees are expected to have more effective joint investigations and crackdowns of wildlife crimes in the area.



Activity 5.6. As agreed in the last VN WEN meeting in June, WCS would collaborate with Viet Nam CITE MA to conduct a training on CITES Implementation for VN-WEN member agencies. We agreed to schedule the training in late November 2016 after the Ha Noi IWT Conference.

2a. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments 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.

On the one hand, the delay in the effectiveness of the revised 2015 Penal Code which was scheduled to come into effect on July 1st 2016 gave more time for law enforcement to solve

pending rhino and ivory trade cases as briefly prescribed in the above mentioned activity 4.1. But on the other hand, the stricter punishment proposed in the 2015 revised Penal Code will not be in effective for deterrent of wildlife trafficking soon as we expected. The current punishment for illegal wildlife trade is only 7-year imprisonment at maximum. WCS is working with Viet Nam SPP to follow up and facilitate their official guideline to all provincial police, procuracies and courts nationwide to review and prosecute pending rhino horn and ivory cases before the new 2015 Penal Code is effective.

2b. Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with LTS: No

Formal change request submitted: No

Received confirmation of change acceptance N/A

3a. Do you currently expect to have any significant (eg more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?

Yes No Estimated underspend: £

3b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully as it is unlikely that any requests to carry forward funds will be approved this year. Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project and would like to talk to someone about the options available this year, please indicate below when you think you might be in a position to do this and what the reasons might be:

4. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to IWT challenge Fund management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

No

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also be raised with LTS International through a Change Request.** Please send your **completed report by email** to Joanne Gordon at IWT-Fund@ltsi.co.uk. The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message eg Subject: 001 IWT Half Year Report**