

## Illegal Wildlife Trade: Half Year Report

(due 31<sup>st</sup> October 2014)

<b>Project Ref No:</b>	IWT-03
<b>Project Title</b>	Breaking the chain: combatting the illegal trade in ploughshare tortoises
<b>Country(ies)</b>	Madagascar; Indonesia, Malaysia
<b>Lead Organisation</b>	Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust
<b>Collaborator(s)</b>	Madagascar National Parks, TRAFFIC International, Alliance Voahary Gasy, Madagasikara Voakajy, Turtle Conservancy, UK Border Force, Wildlife Conservation Society, Government of Madagascar.
<b>Project Leader</b>	Andrew Terry
<b>Report date and number (eg HYR1)</b>	2014HYR1
<b>Project website</b>	<i>tbc</i>

### 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).

The activities for this period are summarised below following the outputs identified in the proposal.

#### **Output 0: General project management activities**

The aims for this period were to recruit a programme coordinator and ensure the effective management and reporting of the project. Our decision has been to look within the lead organisation and focus an existing Malagasy staff member. Therefore the project coordinator will be Hasina Randriamanampisoa. Hasina has over 20 years' experience working with conservation and in particular conflict associated with natural resources. He has also become Durrell's lead officer associated with the poaching issue and understands the political and community context of the work. Therefore we think he is well placed and the best candidate to lead this project on the ground.

The launch meeting between partners was held on 24<sup>th</sup> June in Antananarivo and while the Turtle Conservancy and Wildlife Conservation Society were not able to attend, there were representatives from all other partners and TRAFFIC were able to send their new coordinator in Madagascar and a representative from SE Asia. The partners shared information on existing activities and the situation in the field. There are some new activities that will be associated with the project and allow it to have a greater impact. These are outlined in the following sections.

The second partners' meeting was held in Antananarivo on 28<sup>th</sup> October to review progress at the start of the project and plan the second semester's activities. This report is the main output of that meeting, although a separate set of minutes and actions have been prepared and circulated to all partners.

#### **Output 1: Improve the coverage and efficiency of community-park ranger patrols in Baly Bay National Park (BBNP)**

In the first period, the aim was to implement a new patrol monitoring system called SMART, which is part of a global movement to enhance anti-poaching efforts and is being widely used in

Africa and SE Asia. It has also been adopted in Madagascar. WCS is leading on the delivery of SMART and training. The first training session was held with 21 staff from Madagascar National Parks (MNP), Ministry of Environment and Durrell, as well as 23 village patrol members. A separated report on the training is being prepared by WCS and will be included in the annual report to IWT. But in the first stage the training installed the software, took staff through the use of the system and training patrols on how to collect data, which currently remains paper-based, but will move to electronic collection in due course. Over the next three months MNP and Durrell will assess its feasibility, identifying potential risks and weaknesses in the system, using MNP data, and then ideally implement it for all patrols by 2015. Also patrols will now be prepared in the SMART format.

Local patrols monitored daily the six core zones. The three smaller sites are walked within a day, but the three larger sites take up to five days to visit all parts. From April to September, 17 alert-calls were made to Durrell and MNP about infractions, 8 from Sada which is clearly still being targeted by smugglers. 1 person was arrested for being in Sada but infractions inside Sada have been seen even since his arrest.

Tortoise counts were made in April, in four of the five (there is a sixth population which is made up of reintroduced animals) wild populations. 39 large animals were found. April is already getting late for tortoise activity (they are inactive in the winter months when there is no food or water) and tortoise surveys will not start again until the beginning of 2015.

### **Output 2: Identify the role of local community members in poaching.**

The aim for this period was to start the community-based research and data collection. To achieve this, Madagasikara Voakajy (Mavoa), who lead this Output, have started their trial work and visited 17 villages in September to better understand the local cultural context. They held meetings with community members in six of these villages and left smuggling logbooks (ways for community members to anonymously logging any knowledge or sightings of illegal activities) in each of these villages and then placed another two in the town of Soalala, which is seen as the first staging point for poached animals to be collected together before being moved on.

They found that unlike, other areas they work in, there are a number of social norms and factors that need to be considered that will shape the final methodology and research design that will be implemented in November.

### **Output 3: Understand the trade chain between Madagascar and SE Asia and foster greater international collaboration**

TRAFFIC SE Asia are currently in the process of recruiting an Indonesian national to lead their investigative work into tortoise smuggling from Madagascar. But in the meantime TRAFFIC has initiated investigations into the trade and trade networks involved in Indonesia and Malaysia. Trade routes, airlines involved and dealers have been identified, with data being entered into TRAFFIC's wildlife crime database for analysis and use. In Indonesia, key informants have already been established, and plans for more informants in strategic locations will be further established in the near future. All of these efforts have led to an increasingly clear understanding of the trade chains from Madagascar to key countries in Southeast Asia. It has become clear that in addition to Malaysia and Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand are also important countries involved in these trade chains. Of particular interest and concern, one large-scale dealer in Jakarta, Indonesia, has been identified and found to have more than 25 adult Ploughshare Tortoises and numerous juveniles. Efforts to monitor the activities of this particular individual have been increased, in collaboration with key enforcement agencies, especially Quarantine, in Jakarta.

In addition to information being collected via informants, open markets have also been surveyed in Jakarta, with all species of tortoises from Madagascar being recorded.

TRAFFIC is also working to collect and analyse all records of seizures of tortoises from Madagascar to aid in better understanding routes and hotspots, as well as enforcement effort.

Traffic SE Asia has communicated results of known smuggling events to the project. These will be submitted, as a short report, in November to the government authorities.

**Output 4: Improve law enforcement both regionally and nationally to break the trade chain.**

The main purpose for this period was to start working with regional judiciary representatives and to begin the training with Customs agents at the major ports of exit.

The process of developing the training for Customs agents has been more complicated than anticipated. This was due to the launch of the new government in Madagascar and then the replacement of the then head of the Civil Aviation Authority in Madagascar. After an initial informal meeting, the first planned meeting with airport authorities was cancelled and then rescheduled. However, since then Durrell and AVG mediated a meeting with the Ministry of Transport, which had representatives from a number of the agencies involved in the management of the airport. An explicit output of that meeting was agreement to have a workshop with all the different airport management bodies (Gendarmes, Police, Customs, ADEMA, Civil Aviation Authority, and Ministry of Environment) and to have training from UK Border Force Agents.

A formal request was sent by Madagascar Customs through the UK ambassador, Tim Smart, to the UK Government, asking for partner support from the UK Border Force, which is the requirement for Border Force to be able to engage in training activities in another country.

Durrell's Head of Field Programmes and Madagascar Programme Director, have met with the Border Force Team in the UK to discuss the training needs and outline the basic plan for the training, which is now scheduled to take place in the first quarter of 2015.

Separately Alliance Voahary Gasy (AVG) has started a process of risk mapping associated with the management of the National Park and smuggling, around Baly Bay. This is a consultative process that was carried out with community members and is being conducted with researchers from the University of Michigan. This represents an extension to the work originally proposed for this project, and will provide much useful information concerning the routes and means of smuggling from the field to export. The mapping work began in October and preliminary outputs will be included in the annual report.

Discussions with the authorities over having a district Dina (local law) were held in June, during celebrations for World Environment Day, when all the villages around the park were in Soalala. Unfortunately a draft proposal was lost when the Courts office in Mahajanga burnt down. It is now planned to discuss again these ideas in November during the festivities planned around the Angonoka Festival.

**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.**

With respect to work associated with the Malagasy airport authorities, the project was held back by changes within the administration and the new government. The CAA has identified their priorities to be aeroplane security, but the Ministry of Transport has supported the proposal to improve airport management and they agreed to host a workshop in October to discuss both security and smuggling issues.

Within the field there are challenges associated with the funding availability for the management of Baly Bay National Park, which is outside the control of this project. The park budget for village patrols has not been confirmed for the remainder of 2014 and 2015. Currently Durrell is financing patrols within the core zones, but patrols around the periphery of the park have been stopped since July 2014. Durrell and MNP will be developing the 2015 budget in October, and discussing how to ensure the appropriate financing for the patrols.

Also it was clear during the SMART training that Madagascar National Parks (MNP) is currently using two management programmes for patrols work, MIST and SMART. SMART is currently developed as the successor to MIST and there are errors within the MIST software that cannot be corrected. Using the two systems will represent a duplication of effort that will be detrimental to the effective management of the project. To address this issue, the partners will re-discuss with the MNP central office over using just SMART.

A broader risk to the region and the project is the development of the iron ore mine near BBNP by WISCO. The company aims to build a port off the coast of the National Park and run an access road through the Park to extract the ore. Currently MNP have refused permission for this, and now some of the residents of Soalala (the nearest town to the park) are saying that the park is blocking the development of the zone. It is also apparent that developments with the mining project are speeding up as the company is seeking permits to carry out the impact assessments for the mining operation. Durrell is working with both project partners, (e.g. MNP, AVG and WCS) and other organisations to develop a clear strategy to engage the company and tackle the threat, but this remains a clear risk to the long-term future of the area and one that the project partners are tracking closely.

Separately and at an international level, it has become unclear whether having shown initial interest, the Thai Government is willing to sign an accord with the Madagascan government over how to tackle the smuggling of wildlife from Madagascar to SE Asia. However there is an existing agreement between the Customs agencies of the two countries and collaboration between these agencies may prove to be the most effective way of ensuring efforts to reduce smuggling are pursued at an international level.

**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: Yes/No

Formal change request submitted: Yes/No

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes/No

**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?**

**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](mailto: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**