



## Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund Half Year Report



(due 31<sup>st</sup> October 2017)

**Project Ref No: XXIWT012**

**Project Title: Citizen-Ranger Wildlife Protection Program (CRWPP) in Kyrgyzstan**

**Country(ies): Kyrgyzstan**

**Lead Organisation: Snow Leopard Trust (SLT)**

**Collaborator(s): Snow Leopard Foundation Kyrgyzstan (SLFK); State Agency on Environmental Protection and Forestry of the Kyrgyz Republic; INTERPOL**

**Project Leader: Dr. Charudutt Mishra**

**Report date and number (eg HYR1): 31 October, 2017; HY YR3**

**Project website: [www.snowleopard.org](http://www.snowleopard.org) and <http://www.snowleopard.org/blog>**

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

### **1.5 Reminders about CRWPP program shared with communities and rangers.**

We aimed to send letters to the regional and district Protected Area offices to remind them of the CRWPP program. Towards that, we asked the Protected Area Department to send a letter to regional and district Protected Area offices. Per our request, they sent an email with information about CRWPP to all 23 Protected Area offices.

We also plan to send program fliers to local governments around PAs to have them share with communities. The draft of the flier is almost ready; it is awaiting an updated map of all PAs in the country to show 3 newly created national parks. This is very important since we need to stress that the program applies to ALL national parks and reserves in the country. In the meantime, our partners at SLFK have phoned all the PA Directors to identify number of villages and village centres around PAs, so that we can better estimate printing and mailing needs.

While talking to the PA Directors, SLFK was told that most of the PA Directors are informed well about the CRWPP program, except those who are newly appointed. Also, the PA Department has been re-organized: it is now part of the Central Office of State Agency for Environmental Protection and Forestry (SAEPF), whereas before it was under a sub-office called Department of Development of Forest Ecosystems and Protected Areas. They are still in physical transition. While this transition does not affect the MoU that enables this program, which is with SAEPF, it does affect collaborative logistics. We are waiting for the transition to be complete before contacting the PA Department to finalize the flier. The head of the PA Department is new also. SLFK met with the new Director on 23 October and provided him information on CRWPP. He provided his confirmation and confidence for the upcoming training (activity 2.2).

### **2.2 Trainings held**

A 5-day training was held April 24-29, 2017 by project partners, SLFK and Interpol. This training built off an earlier workshop held in October 2016. To reiterate, the point of these trainings is to improve rangers' ability to apprehend and file cases against perpetrators of wildlife crime. Towards that, Interpol reports show the most important factor is to build ranger skills in crime scene investigation (CSI). Over the long-term, trainers within Kyrgyzstan will need to be able to provide and support this training in the future to continue enabling skills of rangers in CSI across the country. Therefore, while in the first year of this grant we directly trained rangers on CSI, in the second year we focused on 'training trainers.' This is part of our goal to 'institutionalize capacity building' of frontline staff. In October 2016, we began training wildlife officials as trainers, and in April 2017 the focus was to have them apply knowledge by enacting

training scenarios. We had 12 ‘trainers’ and 14 frontline rangers attend the April session in Bishkek. Our corps of fresh ‘trainers’ practiced leading frontline ranger staff through CSI techniques, while Interpol supervised.

Towards Output 2 Indicator 2, (*68 rangers wildlife managers and associated personnel trained by 2018*), we have now trained 50 people (trainers and rangers).

Another training session, led by Interpol, is planned for 31 October – 2 November 2017. This will continue the progress from YR2, and will be an extended learning course for the 13 trainers. Special attention will be paid to topics including ‘interviewing techniques.’

*Annex 1-List of expected attendees for Oct-Nov training 2017*

### **2.3 Training feedback collected**

Feedback was collected from the April 2017 trainings. We have begun reviewing the feedback forms, and preliminary impressions are that the content was useful and that attendees are interested in more Interpol training courses. We will translate the forms, analyse results, and share with our next reporting.

### **Additional Information**

Related to Output 2, we are working with Interpol to hold a National Environmental Security Seminar on November 3, 2017. NESS brings together national experts and decision makers responsible for environmental compliance and enforcement to forge a multiagency cooperative and coordinated approach to combating environmental crime. At this moment, we have confirmation for the participation of:

1. State Agency for Environmental Protection and Forestry under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic;
2. State Inspectorate for Environmental and Technical Safety under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic;
3. Border Guard Service of the Kyrgyz Republic;
4. Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic;
5. Customs Service of the Kyrgyz Republic

We are awaiting confirmation from Interpol local office. We have also sent invitations to specially protected natural areas and biodiversity conservation of Kyrgyz Republic, to the Department of Forest Ecosystem Development, the Forest Hunting Department, and GIS Department.

The NESS is designed to lead to the formation of a National Environmental Security Steering Committee (NESSC), which will give guiding direction to the establishment of a National Environmental Security Task Force (NEST).

Finally, we have emerging news from the trap cameras, set out under this project as a test to see whether they can be a tool in catching illegal activity. Two hidden trap cameras set out in a new Protected Area called Shamshy recently recorded 2 poachers in the area. Shamshy rangers and the Protected Area Department are currently conducting an investigation. More information is pending, but thus far this proves promising for the use of cameras towards combatting wildlife crime.

**2a. 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.**

We have not encountered any significant problems or development issues. Under Activity 2.2., the training planned for 31 October is slightly later than in past years, due to scheduling, and we are therefore submitting a concomitant change request to our timeframe table.

**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:	YES –submitted with this report
Received confirmation of change acceptance	NO

**3a. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g. 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.** 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, please submit a rebudget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a rebudget, so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes if necessary.

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

We are grateful for your support of this project, and have no issues to raise at this time.

**If you were asked to provide a response to this year’s annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document. Additionally, if you were funded under R3 and asked to provide further information by your first half year report, please attach your response as a separate document.**

**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 Victoria Pinion at [IWT-Fund@itsi.co.uk](mailto:IWT-Fund@itsi.co.uk). The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message e.g. Subject: IWT001 Half Year Report.**