

Illegal Wildlife Trade: Half Year Report

(due 31 October)

Project Ref No IWT017

Project Title Tackling Illegal Wildlife Trade in Mongolia through Improved Law Enforcement

Country(ies) Mongolia

Lead Organisation Zoological Society of London

Collaborator(s) Mongolian Ministry of Environment, Mongolian State Police, Mongolian Customs Office, Mongolian State Inspection Agency, Wildlife Conservation Society

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Report date and number (eg HYR1) 31st October 2015, (HYR1)

Project website

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 project has made good progress over the past 6 months and is on track to meet its milestones for Year 1.

Output 1

Current status of Illegal Wildlife Trade in Mongolia is defined as accurately as possible using proven and comparable methods.

The following activities have been completed

Household survey design: complete

In partnership with WCS the project has developed novel methods using an Unmatched Pair Technique designed specifically to gain sensitive information from interviewees while avoiding direct questions that may lead to incorrect answers given through fear of conviction of illegal activities. The survey will also include general demographic information which will be used for targeted social marketing.

The methods include 4,010 surveys from 13 provinces throughout Mongolia select for 1) have the highest human population density, 2) biggest markets and wildlife trade, 3) wildlife abundance and habitat, 4) close to international borders with high movements (train stations, border posts); 5) for economic impact and industry development.

Market survey design: complete

The survey design divides Mongolia into 5 broad regions. We targeted 12 provinces and Ulaanbaatar as these major provinces representing volume of hunting, abundance of hunters and wildlife trade and products used in Mongolia based on data from the most recent surveys in 2005. In total 1100 surveys are included in the methods.

Output 2

Effective, well-trained border and enforcement staff team in place

Collation of existing IWT institutional training materials: complete

Through a series of meetings (see Appendix 1) ZSL has collected all existing training materials from relevant law enforcement agencies. This library of information is being used to develop more effective materials based on suggestions and information about the current use and shortfalls of existing materials.

Training materials produced for police, border agency and MEGD staff: ongoing

Based on review of existing training material, additional training material is being written up by the project team.

Agency task force establishment has been reviewed. Based on feedback from partners who have previously set up Agency task forces and the Ministry of Environment and Green Development, ZSL is adapting the Task forces based on a comprehensive review of the limitations of the previously established task force success (see section 2a).

Output 3

Legal framework established, facilitating an increase in IWT crime convictions.

Review existing legislation relating to IWT: complete. This review has led to suggested changes in the project activities relating to Output 3 described in section 2a

A log frame clearly indicating the legal processes in relation to IWT cases is under construction.

ZSL is actively engaging with the Mongolian Ministry of Environment, Green Development and Tourism to develop potential amendments to existing laws where there are gaps relating to IWT. This process is developing through a series of meetings between ZSL and MEGDT

ZSL is in the process of engaging with WWF Mongolia who are also developing a hotline to report wildlife crime with funding until the end of 2016. ZSL will continue to fund and strengthen this existing hotline facility. Therefore the project will allow for an existing hotline to continue and develop rather than for a second identical hotline to be produced. This has been discussed positively with WWF and the Mongolian Police and now needs further planning and a formal agreement to be established with WWF Mongolia. ZSL will provide support in the set up as necessary and will engage actively with all national partners to publicize this hotline and encourage the reporting of wildlife crime.

Work with MEGDT to ensure fines offset market incentives is ongoing. Initially the Ministry of Justice was planned to be involved, however through discussions with MEGDT it is clear that MEGDT would like to take the lead on this activity at the national level.

A social marketing campaign supported by a corporate partnership with MobiCom, the largest telecom provider in Mongolia has been undertaken. With the support of the British Embassy in Ulaanbaatar, the project has secured support from MobiCom to engage in innovative ways with target groups, not only through MobiCom but also through its subsidiary companies. During 1st and 2nd qtr of project year two our team will work closely with MobiCom to implement these initiatives.

Approaches to local administrative bodies were discussed in meetings with MEGDT and have been included in the MoU to garner support from central government in directing funds from fines to Local Protected Areas and the NGOs that Manage them.

Output 4

There were plans to set up a beneficiary committee for effective allocation of funding from convictions. Discussions with MEGDT have now dictated that there will not be a need to establish an additional committee for this. The establishment of a committee of senior officials from government agencies already associated with implementation of the IWT project are well positioned to lead on matters relating to IWT. A draft of suggested committee members has been produced and the establishment of the committee will be implemented in the 4th quarter of year one.

General project developments

Project Publicity

Bloomberg TV, Mongolia - 25th September 2015

Project staff in Mongolia were interviewed during a 10 minute special in which staff discussed the issue of IWT in Mongolia highlighting ZSL's involvement in mitigating IWT which has been made possible by funding by DEFRA and UK Aid.

A good working relationship has been established with all project partners. Project staff are in place. The project team ensures that the UK Embassy in Ulaanbaatar is kept regularly updated on the project and have received valuable support from the UK Embassy.

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.

Output 1

Following discussions with WCS and MEGDT, improved survey methods have been developed for the household and market surveys taking into account the growing awareness amongst the public that much of their hunting and wildlife trade activities are illegal. The project is developing a novel approach and has spent more time on survey design development than initially planned as a result of research and time spent in piloting new techniques to conduct these surveys. This will not affect the overall outcome or outputs of the project but will push survey times back to a suitable time of the year when household and market surveys can be conducted (given harsh winter temperatures and peak hunting/trading seasons).

Output 2

Based on review of the limited success of existing multi-agency task forces put in place by WCS, it has been agreed with MEGDT that a senior level committee to enforce the implementation of existing legislation being currently overlooked by law enforcement agencies.

Output 3

The planned review of the legislation revealed recent (2014-2015) legislative changes to the law relating to IWT in Mongolia; furthermore the timescale under which these changes were put into effect took so long that it may be beyond the scope of the project to implement new legislation. However, draft changes will still be submitted to MEGDT and other relevant government agencies as part of the project.

The wildlife crime reporting hotline activities under Output 3 should be amended due to WWF's implementation of a Hotline. ZSL met with the WWF team in Mongolia to suggest a continuation or handover of the hotline once the WWF project funding has come to a natural close. This suggestion was welcomed by WWF. ZSL will provide support and publicize the hotline as planned under this project.

General

Government departmental and staff changes on a broad scale have slowed the process of developing working relations through the signing of contracts and MoUs. Political instability was highlighted in the original proposal as a likely threat and although it has not severely threatened

the continuation of the project, it has and may continue to slow down official processes relating to government departments and state run bodies.

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 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@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 eg Subject: 001 IWT Half Year Report**