



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



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

<b>Project reference:</b>	<b>IWT017</b>
<b>Project title:</b>	Tackling Illegal Wildlife Trade in Mongolia through Improved Law Enforcement
<b>Country(ies):</b>	Mongolia
<b>Lead organisation:</b>	Zoological Society of London
<b>Collaborator(s):</b>	Ministry of Environment and Tourism of Mongolia, National Police Agency of Mongolia, Mongolian General Authority for Custom, General Agency Special Inspection of Mongolia, Steppe Forward NGO, Legal Atlas, IRIM and National University of Mongolia.
<b>Project leader:</b>	<i>Dr Gitanjali Bhattacharya</i>
<b>Report date and number (e.g. HYR1):</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> October 2017, (HYR3)
<b>Project website/blog/social media etc:</b>	<a href="https://www.zsl.org/conservation/threats/illegal-wildlife-trade-crisis/illegal-wildlife-trade-in-mongolia">https://www.zsl.org/conservation/threats/illegal-wildlife-trade-crisis/illegal-wildlife-trade-in-mongolia</a>

### **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).**

The project has made good progress over the past 6 months and is on track to meet its milestones for outputs 1 and 2. Technical and Financial Change Requests relating to outputs 3 and 4 were submitted on 30 October 2017 and the project is positioned to meet these revised targets, subject to the revisions being approved.

#### **Output 1**

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

The Silent Steppe II report is complete and was handed over in July for final government review by officials from the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) and others. Due to the recent change to the Mongolian government and the length of the report (currently over 250 pages), the government review process has required more time than anticipated. The project's earlier efforts to engage with a wide network of government stakeholders, to reduce exposure to risks from government staff turnover, has ensured that this delay is minimised. The rapid evaluation survey is underway to assess changes to knowledge and attitudes since the initial extensive household and market surveys. The rapid survey will include 1,056 twenty-minute interviews covering a representative sample of 6 of Mongolia's 21 provinces and all the districts of Ulaanbaatar. Data collection should be completed in November 2017.

#### **Output 2**

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

The guidebook of 'Illegally Traded Wildlife in Mongolia', covering the 98 most commonly traded species; and the associated law enforcement training manual, including information on the 22 most commonly traded species and vital law enforcement documents and guidance, have been

reviewed and published. A 'Training of trainers' course on IWT was conducted for 43 police officers representing all Mongolia's provinces and Ulaanbaatar's districts; 5 wildlife crime investigators from the Eco-crime Unit; and lectures from the University of Law Enforcement. The training programme covered species identification, the legal framework, law enforcement techniques and knowledge sharing. A video of the training was also produced in collaboration with the Police Training Centre, and distributed to regional training centers. Each attendant received the IWT training package to enable trainers to repeat the IWT training independently in their local provinces. Post-training assessment showed that the average participant's uptake was 92.5%. The IWT training for Customs officers is planned for November 2017, and two training workshops on IWT standard data management, and the use of the IWT mobile application are planned for January 2018. The IWT mobile application has been developed as a value addition to the project with funding support from the UK Embassy in Mongolia; more detail is provided below.

### **Output 3**

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

The detail of the legal review will be included in the published Silent Steppe II report (described above). Progress on the value addition of the online legal platform, which will present this information interactively, is described below. The project will make recommendations for IWT legal amendments to MET in the next 6 months. As well as addressing gaps and contradictions these recommendations will note the need to base the legal framework on robust species information such as the regional IUCN Red Lists which ZSL has helped develop, and will cover the need to make ring-fencing of funds from hunting fines and permits possible (see Output 4). The Technical Change Request, submitted on 30 October 2017, explains the need for project revisions regarding fully implementing amendments to fines and their reporting.

IWT-related SMS-messages have been delivered to between 681,500 and 771,600 Mobicom users, aged 18-60, every month from June to September 2017. The SMS-messages included behaviour change messages, advice on species' legal status, fines and IWT hotline information. Following the SMS-messages containing hotline information police officials reported that the number of calls received increased significantly. Within two weeks 2 illegal hunting cases were detected and 11 cases were transferred to local police for further investigation. In addition to the SMS messages, a contract to produce a short animated IWT video in both English and Mongolian has been signed and initial meetings have taken place.

### **Output 4**

Following extensive consultation with the National and Provincial Governments it has been determined that it is not currently possible, under Mongolia law, for funds from IWT fines or hunting permits to be ring-fenced for community conservation activities. The National IWT Committee, established under the project, is taking forward the project's recommendation that legal amendments be made to allow this ring-fencing of funds, and will submit this to government along with the recommendations for other legal amendments. The Technical Change Request, submitted on 30 October 2017, therefore requests that output 4 be revised to: '*A qualified trainer in the sustainable use of natural resources is present in every province to provide community training workshops*'. Associated activities are primed to begin as soon as confirmation of change acceptance is received.

### **Project Value Additions**

The project has enhanced its impact through securing supplementary funding from the UK embassy in Mongolia to strengthen key outputs of agency coordination and building staff capacity; and partnering with Legal Atlas to produce an online legal platform. Firstly activity 2.6 has been enhanced to include the development of a standardized, central, online and publicly available IWT database. The database will be developed and hosted by MET's Environmental Data Center. Secondly, a mobile IWT application providing information for frontline officers is being developed for launch in December 2017. Thirdly, the legal platform is now in BETA testing with functionality to showcase legal frameworks on different topics and allow for basic comparisons between countries. (The attached Response to AR2R Feedback provides more detail on mechanisms to update the legal tool beyond the project timeframe as requested).

**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.**

Fully implementing legal amendments and the ring fencing of funds from hunting fines and permits have proved to be undeliverable in the project timeframe. The Technical Change Request, submitted on 30 October 2017, requests revisions which will support the same substantive impacts as these original activities, via different means.

**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

Formal change request submitted: Yes

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?**

**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@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 e.g. Subject: IWT001 Half Year Report.**