

Illegal Wildlife Trade: Half Year Report

Project Ref No	IWT022
Project Title	Disrupting Ivory Trafficking Conduits with Coordinated Law Enforcement in Malawi
Country(ies)	Zambia; Malawi
Lead Organisation	IFAW
Collaborator(s)	Mike Labuschagne & Jonny Vaughan (Lilongwe Wildlife Trust)
Project Leader	<i>Jason Bell</i>
Report date and number (eg HYR1)	<i>31 October 2017; HYR2</i>
Project website	

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September 2017) 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).

Progress for the period April to September 2017:

After the CENS were established in Year 1 between April and Sept 2017 we have been sustaining them, offering them some mentoring, monitoring and evaluating their performance and ensuring that they receive payment for their excellent work. Elephant poaching is now very rare in both Vwaza and Kasungu (only one in Vwaza in 2017 and none in Kasungu) so their efforts seem to be one of several successful interventions in the area.

WCIU operations continue to provide high level of support to CENS, working relentlessly on information gathering and feeding information through to the relevant authorities.

The WCIU has made 67 arrests in the first 9 months of 2017. Twenty five arrests in the first 3 months of the year and 42 arrests from 1 April to 30 September 2017.

Associated with the 67 arrests in the first 9 months of this year were 22 seizures of elephant ivory totalling 240 kg of ivory, representing about 30 dead elephants. In addition, 7 leopard skins and 4 rhino horns were also seized during this period.

Of the 67 arrests made by the WCIU in the first 9 months of the year 31 suspects have already been found guilty by the courts. The highlight being an 18 year jail sentence handed down to a rhino poacher and trader. Only 3 suspects have had charges withdrawn against them – for various reasons - and the cases against the remaining 33 arrested suspects continuing.

Cross-border wildlife crime is also a significant problem, with poachers and traffickers often moving with ease across country borders. Our project aimed to improve the coordination between national law enforcement agencies, while at the same time achieving concrete results in interdicting wildlife criminals.

In a series of operations over a 10 day period in late August and early September 2017 in the key Malawi/Zambia border zone a total of 25 arrests were made including 7 separate ivory seizures and two pangolin seizures. These results are in **addition** to those outlined above.

Clarification of Queries Raised in Annual Report Review:

No.2 - Date of establishment of WCIU:

We can confirm that the WCIU was prepared and ready for operations in February 2016 but was not officially mandated and fully operational until we received all our co-finance which came from IWTCF in April 2016.

No.3 - Sustainability and legacy:

There are number of important elements to be highlighted, relating to sustainability and legacy, to clarify steps being taken to ensure sustainability after the project end date.

The practical success of this project (ie. Number and quality of arrests, vital information gathered, intelligence processed and effective sentencing handed down by Courts) provides a strong motivation for local stakeholders (ex. Law enforcement, DNPW, park management and CENs) to maintain this work once our project is complete. By building capacity within these institutions and communities, we are driving society led changes, initiating institutional change from within government.

The introduction of Community Enforcement Networks for the first time in Malawi has also demonstrated a workable community solution to wildlife crime that can be replicated in other protected areas throughout the country. Ongoing mentorship of the CENS and working closely with the WCIU all paves the way towards continued sustainability.

An important component of on the ground training has also included training the trainers, to help ensure the long term ability of law enforcement agencies to sustain the methods successfully used in this project, once again building capacity from within.

It is important to highlight the fact that funding received through this grant is supporting Malawian based entities, LWT, DNPW, MPS and CENS. The expertise provided by the project will therefore remain in Malawi and will be carried forward – LWT will lead in helping to take forward the WCIU after the project, along with the continued support of IFAW.

A positive development towards sustainability of the project is that further funding has been secured through USAID and INL, which will greatly assist in building upon the successes of this project and provide opportunities in continuing to work towards a sustainable solution for all parties concerned.

From a legal standpoint and the work being undertaken through the efforts of the WCIU, in a common law legal system the case law that is built up over time offers a great chance of impact permanence if arrests can be sustained, with the system becoming more self-regulatory.

The project has attracted in-country media attention since inception, helping to build broader awareness and thus the legacy of the project.

Output 1

A dedicated, trained and resourced multi-agency Wildlife Crime Investigation Unit (WCIU) will enable the Malawian government to undertake coordinated and specialised wildlife crime investigations to then effectively report, track, trace, arrest and prosecute elephant poachers and ivory traffickers. This will disrupt and dismantle organised wildlife crime syndicates operating in Malawi and across border in South-East Tanzania, Northern Mozambique and Eastern Zambia.

Activity 1.4: Undertaking WCIU operations – investigations, arrests and convictions:

During recent deployments of students undertaking practical exercises, as part of Investigations and Intelligence training in order to hone their skills, the students arrested a total of 22

suspects. The most common offence was related to the illegal killing of elephants and the illegal trade in ivory. Ten suspects arrested by students were charged with these offences. In addition, five illegally possessed firearms, used in illegal hunting were seized and two live pangolins were rescued from poachers/traders.

The methods taught to the students and the type of support provided to them proved to be very successful. For ten relatively inexperienced officers to make 22 arrests in only about five full working days is a remarkable achievement.

In addition, Malawian officers, trained and funded by IFAW, arrested three Zambians involved in the illegal wildlife trade in Kasungu National Park, during this same 10 day period. Details of these successes are also reflected in Table 1.

Activities 1.5: On the job mentoring of WCIU by IFAW in country team:

On the job mentoring of the WCIU continues to be a constant, ongoing, daily activity with the successful completion of Investigations & Intelligence training having taken place in September 2017.

All stated aims of the training was achieved, these were as follows:

- Enhance teamwork between the WCIU and its closest partners and associates;
- Introduce/refresh newly appointed officers and the basic knowledge of investigations;
- Ensure that the team has the necessary skills and equipment to take and record fingerprints of all those arrested and charged with wildlife related offences;
- Improve the students informant management skills;
- Expose and/or refresh the team to appropriate and useful technology;
- Conduct practical operations

Long term capacity building is of paramount importance in ensuring continued success on the ground in terms of wildlife crime law enforcement – such long term commitments to capacity building produce solid results.

Activity 1.6: Annual refresher training for WCIU for IFAW:

Detailed in Activity 1.5 above – annual refresher training was successfully completed on 6th September 2017.

Activity 1.7: Monitoring and evaluation of WCIU performance:

The monitoring and evaluation of WCIU performance is closely linked to the mentoring function detailed in Activity 1.5 above.

Indicator 1: New multi-agency Wildlife Crime Investigation Unit (WCIU) established and operational within DNPW in 2016, 2017 and 2018 with 8 dedicated officers from DNPW (baseline 2015 = 0 officers); 1 dedicated officer from MRA (baseline 2015 = 0 officers); and, 1 dedicated officer from MPS (baseline 2015 = 0 officers).

Achieved

Indicator 2: Wildlife crime investigation training provided to the selectively recruited WCIU officers. 6 weeks of training provided to WCIU officers in 2016 (baseline 2015 = 0) and two weeks of training to WCIU officers in 2017 (baseline 2015 = 0).

Achieved

Indicator 3: National multi-agency wildlife crime investigation operations undertaken in Malawi

between 2016 and 2018. 60 wildlife crime investigations/operations in 2016 and 60 investigations/operations in 2017. (baseline 2014 = 28 investigations/operations).

Achieved

Indicator 4: WCIU arrests leading to convictions for elephant poaching and/or unlawful possession and/or trade of ivory. 42 arrests and 31 convictions in 2016 and 50 arrests and 45 convictions in 2017. (baseline 2014 = 28 arrests and 14 convictions)

Achieved

Indicator 5: WCIU regional, cross border investigations leading to arrests and convictions for elephant poaching and/or unlawful possession and/or trade of ivory. 2 cross-border regional cases for Malawi-Tanzania and Malawi-Zambia in 2016 and 4 in 2017 (baseline 2015 = 1); 1 cross-border regional case for Malawi-Mozambique in 2016 and 2 in 2017 (baseline 2015 = 0).

Significantly exceeded target

Output 2

Empowered, trained and resourced Community Enforcement Networks (CENS) around two protected areas/elephant populations, will directly engage local communities in DNPW wildlife law enforcement effort and make communities more able to deter and report serious wildlife crimes in Malawi.

Activity 2.5: Resourcing (inc equipping) of CENS:

Complete – CENs trained and resourced.

Activity 2.6: Undertaking CEN operations:

Ongoing – we continue to successfully engage, manage and monitor all CEN members who, in turn, continue to provide reports of serious wildlife crime - this information is used by the WCIU in the arrest and prosecution of elephant poachers and ivory traffickers.

Activity 2.7: Monthly reporting to WCIU by CENS

As per above.

Activity 2.8: Weekly and Monthly monitoring and evaluation of CEN performance

On-going

Indicator 1: Two new Community Enforcement Networks (CENs) established and operational around Kasungu National Park and Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve in 2016, 2017 and 2018 with 30 dedicated local men and women with honorary wildlife officer status. (Baseline 2015 = 0).

Completed in 2016/17

Indicator 2: Wildlife crime investigation training provided to the selectively recruited CEN members. 2 weeks of training provided to CEN officers in 2016 (baseline 2015 = 0)

Completed in 2016/17

Indicator 3: Monthly wildlife crime data and reports submitted by CEN members to DNPW/LWT for use by WCIU. A total of 360 reports submitted in 2016 and 360 reports submitted in 2017 (Baseline 2015 = 0)

On track

Indicator 4: Number of elephants illegally killed in protected areas with adjacent CENs. A total of no more than 3 elephants illegally killed in Kasungu National Park and Vwaza Marsh Wildlife

Reserve in 2016 and 0 elephants illegally killed in these protected areas by end 2017. (Baseline 2015 = 3).

We can confirm that no elephants have been poached in Vwaza or Kasungu during April and Sept 2017.

Output 3

Two regional wildlife crime investigation unit workshops, hosted in Malawi by the WCIU, with attendees from Tanzania, Mozambique and Zambia, will enable the respective wildlife crime investigation officers to cooperate on cross-border investigations and information sharing more effectively.

Activity 3.1: International travel of project partners to Malawi in 2016 and 2017

Undertaken

Activity 3.2: Hosting of regional full day workshops in 2016 and 2017 by WCIU:

A regional workshop took place in Lilongwe, Malawi in March 2017 – all relevant parties were in attendance.

Activity 3.3: Allocation of cross-border cases to WCIU and partners in 2016 and 2017:

Over the past year wildlife investigation officers, working close to the Malawi – Zambia border area, have uncovered numerous other offences, including the illegal trade in human parts, narcotics, gold and gemstones, firearms and the illegal entry into either Zambia or Malawi by nationals of the neighbouring country in order to plan or commit criminals acts. Two Malawian nationals were arrested during an operation led by our students that seized illegal firearms and the remains of wildlife. This indicates that crime flows both ways across international borders in order to thwart law enforcement efforts.

Project partners continue to cooperate on cross border operations and exchange information on cases of mutual interest.

Activity 3.4: Monitoring and evaluation of success of regional workshops

Indicator 1: A regional wildlife crime investigation workshop hosted in Malawi by the WCIU in 2016 and 2017 with 2 officers from Mozambique, 2 officers from Tanzania and 2 officers from Zambia in 2016 and 2017. (Baseline 2015 -0).

Completed

Indicator 2: WCIU regional, cross border investigations leading to arrests and convictions for elephant poaching and/or unlawful possession and/or trade of ivory. 2 cross border regional cases for Malawi-Tanzania and Malawi-Zambia in 2016 and 4 in 2017 (baseline 2015 -1); 1 cross border regional case for Malawi-Mozambique in 2016 and 2 in 2017 (baseline 2015 – 0).

Achieved

Output 4

At least 135 impoverished local men and women within 30 households to receive a regular, increased, monthly income that will directly improve livelihoods and help alleviate local poverty, with another estimated 16,500 households to indirectly benefit and have improved well-being from increased eco-tourism revenue injected into local communities.

Activity 4.2: Monthly payments to CEN members based on performance:

Ongoing and on target

Activity 4.3: Weekly (DNPW) and Monthly (LWT) monitoring and evaluation of CEN performance:

Ongoing and on target – LWT and DNPW continue to visit CENs and collect feedback on a weekly and monthly basis.

Activity 4.5: Provision of tourism gate revenue for Kasungu National Park and Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve by DNPW in 2016 and 2017:

At the start of this project it was understood that government would be in a position to supply data as it relates to tourism revenue in working with concessions operating within the Park and Reserve. Due to circumstances beyond our control, this data has not been forthcoming and therefore would like to make a formal request to remove this Activity and related Indicator.

Indicator 1: 30 households have at least one member who will receive a regular monthly income from participation in a CEN. Baseline is 0.

Achieved

Indicator 2: The total amount of revenue generated by DNPW annually from tourism gate receipts. At least MK in 2016 and MK in 2017. (Baseline in 2009 = MK).

Data not available – due to circumstances beyond our control – request that this indicator be removed.

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.

None to report.

No significant under spend.

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?

None

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. 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**