



### IWT Challenge Fund Project Information

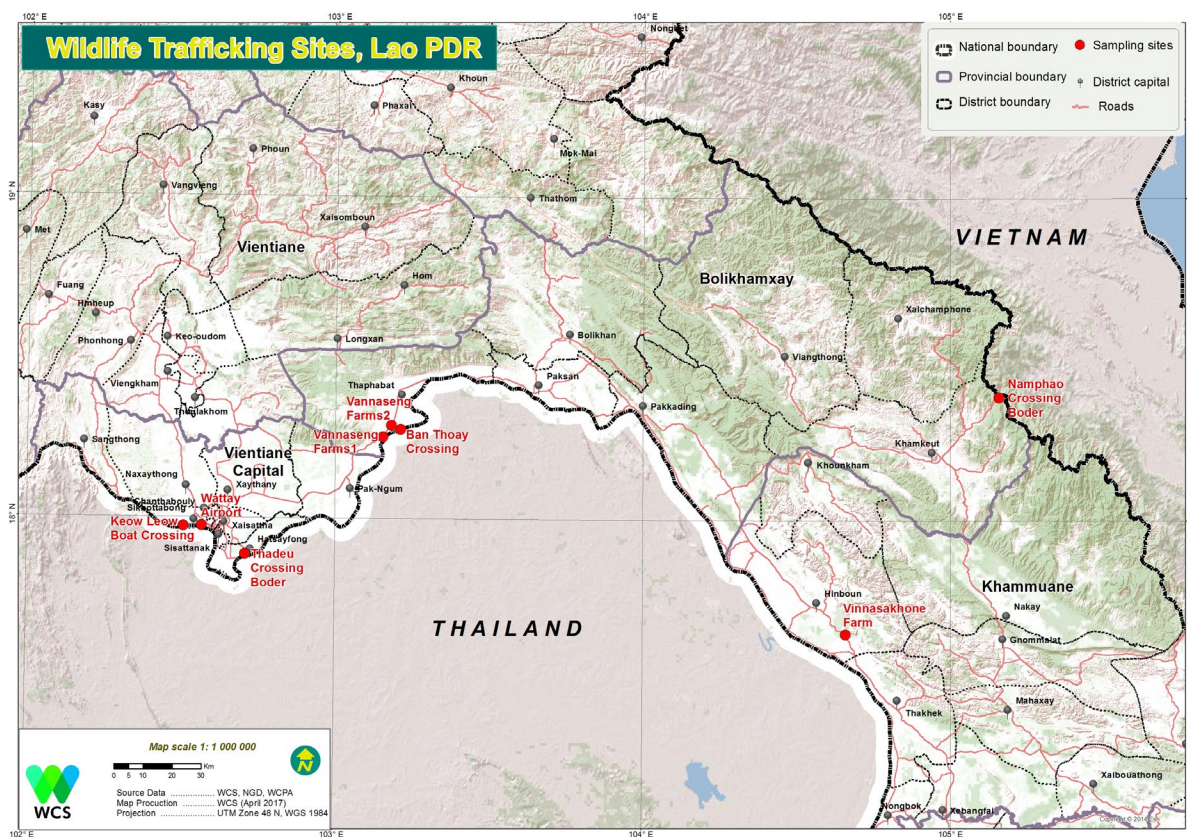
Project reference	IWT033
Project title	Leveraging Action to Disrupt Wildlife Trafficking Networks in Lao PDR
Country(ies)	Laos
Contract holder institution	Lead Organisation: Wildlife Conservation Society
Partner institution(s)	Collaborator(s): Department of Forest Inspection (DoFI), Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MoAF)
Total IWT grant value	£288,028
Start/end dates of project	1 April 2016 – 31 March 2018
Project leader's name	Christopher Holmes
Project Website/Blog/Social Media	<a href="https://programs.wcs.org/laos">https://programs.wcs.org/laos</a>
Report author(s) and date	Chrisgel Ryan Ang Cruz, 28 June 2018

## 1. Project Summary

Weak governance and a perception of wildlife trafficking as a low-level violation have led to corruption at the highest levels within Lao, preventing traffickers of high-value wildlife from being brought to justice. This has a strongly negative impact on governance and security, through encouraging corruption, proliferation of other crimes and reducing overall rule of law. Immunity from enforcement has led to some of Asia's most prolific wildlife trafficking companies building global supply networks, two of which in 2014 reported massive trade volumes of protected wildlife on official documents, including 22,000kg elephant ivory, 7,000kg tiger and lion bones, 130,000kg freshwater tortoise and turtle, and 4,000kg of rhino horn. Lao PDR's lack of action in responding to this massive scale of illegal activity has seen increasing attention from Governments.

There are encouraging signs however that the Lao Government is starting to respond. In August 2015, the Prime Minister issued an Instruction to all key Ministries on strengthening CITES compliance, specifically including directions to investigate and ensure major wildlife trafficking companies are compliant with national laws and CITES.

There is an unprecedented opportunity to engage key agencies in Lao PDR to build upon this government momentum and encourage effective enforcement to deter major wildlife trafficking businesses from operating in Lao PDR, Vietnam and China. The location of the project is concentrated in key identified trafficking sites and networks operating in Lao PDR, including the route into Vietnam through the Nam Phao International Border Crossing. Wildlife trafficking hubs in Vientiane Capital, Vang Vieng, and Luang Prabang have also been assessed under the project.



With an overall outcome that wildlife trafficking be recognized as a political and developmental threat by the Lao Government, and a broad coalition of government agencies are participating in domestic and international efforts to dismantle trans-boundary wildlife trafficking syndicates operating within Lao PDR, the project aimed to generate political support, leverage greater accountability of government and provide actionable intelligence to law enforcement agencies to put Asia's most prolific wildlife trafficking companies out of business. It generated incentives, through an informed and active constituency within influential agencies in government; pressured the media and international organisations, by guiding external attention from influential countries; and provided actionable intelligence to enable an effective policy and law enforcement response to illegal wildlife trade in Lao PDR. The project was implemented through the Department of Forest Inspection (DOFI), built upon existing WCS and Government of Laos (GoL) work to address wildlife trafficking and catalyse multi-agency elimination of wildlife trafficking.

## 2. Project Partnerships

The main project implementation partner is DOFI, which was created in 2008 to inspect and investigate suspected violations of the Forestry Law, the Wildlife and Aquatic Law, the National Penal Code and other subsidiary laws. To achieve its mandate, DOFI must cooperate with other departments that have a responsibility for forest and wildlife management, environmental conservation and governance processes, for example, with the Police, Customs, Army, Ministry of Industry and Commerce, and Ministry of Justice. In August 2014, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) issued *MAF Decision No. 2657 (2014)* appointing the Lao PDR Wildlife Enforcement Network (Lao-WEN) Coordination Unit, with coordination leadership and secretariat under DOFI. This was subsequently updated in 2016 with *MAF Decision No. 2391 (2016)*, with a new MAF Decision still in the process of development to further update the composition and mandate of Lao-WEN.

DOFI actions have helped catalyse important policy documents during the project. In August 2015, it facilitated the issuance of *Government Office Declaration No. 1364 (2015)* which instructs multiple agencies to take action to ensure compliance with CITES, monitor and report on companies engaged in illegal wildlife trade, and inspect and ensure compliance of farms that rear and transit wildlife. After the Hanoi Conference on IWT in November 2016, the Prime Minister issued *Prime Minister Announcement No. 1990 (2016)* on follow-up actions from

outcomes of the Conference. On 30 March 2018, MAF approved the Lao-WEN *National Wildlife Crime Response Strategy Plan until 2025* through *MAF Decision No. 0654 (2018)*. Initiated and to be implemented through DOFI, the Strategy Plan provides the framework and guidance protocol for government agencies under Lao-WEN in implementing and coordinating their mandates in responding to wildlife crime.

A secondary partner is the Department of Forest Resource Management (DFRM) which was responsible for CITES policy and coordination in Lao PDR as the CITES Management Authority (MA). Institutional changes from April to August 2017 have resulted in the DFRM moving from the Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment (MoNRE) to the Wildlife and Aquatic Management Division of the Department of Forestry (DoF) under MAF. Under *MAF Decision No. 3822* in August 2018, the DoF has been designated as the CITES MA of Lao PDR, and now leads the development of policies and activities focusing on CITES implementation in Lao PDR. The institutional change from DFRM to DoF initially resulted in confusion and a lack of adequate staffing and capacity for activities relating to CITES implementation and reporting. This however progressed into cooperative efforts to harness high-level CITES policy direction and coordination across government partners towards improving GoL compliance to CITES. In response to international pressure and recommendations from the 69<sup>th</sup> CITES Standing Committee Meeting, DoF, in cooperation with DOFI action, facilitated a series of policy responses in Lao PDR to address CITES compliance and to spur better law enforcement responses to illegal wildlife trade, i.e. *Prime Minister Notification No. 64 (2018)* tasking the development of important decrees and regulations to strengthen Lao PDR's implementation of CITES; *Prime Minister Decision No. 18 (2018)* establishing the CITES Steering Committee followed by *MAF Decision No. 1137 (2018)* establishing the CITES Implementing and Secretariat Committee in Lao PDR; and *Prime Minister Order No. 05 (2018)* on Strengthening Management and Inspection of Prohibited Wild Fauna and Flora.

On 1 July 2016, the project helped WCS to sign a 5-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with DOFI until 2021, to stop illegal wildlife trade in Lao PDR. This ensures the continuation of the project goals through the official partnership with DOFI after project completion. Under the MoU, all programme activities have been jointly planned and coordinated through monthly implementation meetings and discussions between WCS and DOFI. This also includes consultation and discussions with DOFI in the preparation of the report, including collection of information and means of verification under the project. The project facilitated establishing a stronger working relationship between WCS and DoF as regards technical support and assistance towards increasing capacities in the CITES MA on CITES implementation and coordination.

### 3. Project Achievements

#### 3.1 Outputs

The project has completely achieved its Outputs. Refer to **Annex 2** on Report of Progress and Achievements for detailed description of progress and activities undertaken, and relevant Annexes to substantiate comments.

On Output 1, the project has produced intelligence products on at least three major wildlife trafficking syndicates operating in Lao PDR. These products have been disseminated strategically to trusted channels within the Lao Government, to the UK and US embassies, to Interpol and the CITES Secretariat, and through workshops and trainings with DOFI and Lao-WEN agencies. WCS, DOFI, and consultancies under the project have conducted information gathering missions and field investigations on major wildlife trafficking networks relating to tiger farms and trafficking and ivory and related wildlife trade in Lao PDR, delivering at least 356 records and source documents on wildlife trafficking networks and activities in Lao PDR that have been inputted to the WCS Global Wildlife Intelligence Database for analysis. This has allowed WCS to produce a total of 65 intelligence products by the end of 2017, and continued to produce an additional 8 intelligence products by March 2018. Intelligence products include information reports, intelligence briefings, dossiers of companies and individuals, and link diagrams on companies and individuals linked to tiger farms and tiger trafficking within Lao PDR and to Vietnam, ivory trade and trafficking in Lao PDR linked to trafficking to Vietnam and China, and live elephant trade. At least 40 of these have been provided and shared in

confidence to government partners, diplomatic missions, and international organisations, to influence policy and law enforcement responses from the Lao Government on IWT.

On Output 2, the project has been able to leverage collective efforts from influential countries, international IWT events, and international media to establish an informed and active environment around Lao PDR and advocate for policy and law enforcement measures and responses to IWT. From 2016 to March 2018, both international and local media have been activated to increase reports on both Lao PDR's role in wildlife trafficking but also on the growing efforts by the Lao Government to respond to wildlife trafficking. From 2016 to May 2018, at least 58 media articles reported relate to wildlife seizures implicating the role of Lao PDR in IWT. At least 41 media articles reported on wildlife trafficking networks and syndicates in Lao PDR. Local Lao media outlets reported at least 9 media articles. From 2017 to May 2018, at least 9 media articles have reported on the Lao Government's law enforcement response to IWT. The Lao Government has also actively and constructively participated in 4 global IWT events: (1) 67<sup>th</sup> CITES Standing Committee Meeting in South Africa; (2) 17<sup>th</sup> CITES Conference of the Parties in South Africa; (3) IWT Conference in Hanoi, Vietnam; and (4) 69<sup>th</sup> CITES Standing Committee Meeting in Switzerland. In these IWT events, the Lao delegation has announced its continued commitment to address IWT by: (1) phasing-out tiger farms in Lao PDR; (2) implementation of CITES and tackling IWT in Lao PDR; and (3) implementing recommendations from the Standing Committee on CITES compliance. These commitments have catalysed a series of policy and law enforcement responses to IWT in Lao PDR. From 2016 to March 2018, diplomatic missions, donor countries, and neighbouring countries initiated at least 12 actions to support and advocate policy and law enforcement responses from the Lao Government on IWT issues. These actions comprise of: (1) official letters from diplomatic missions to key Ministries in Lao PDR for policy responses; (2) commitment of funding and support to specific government departments to increase law enforcement responses; (3) policy recommendations to ensure that the Lao Government is complying with CITES commitments; (4) Regional and bilateral actions by neighbouring countries (Thailand, Vietnam, and China) to enhance cooperation and joint efforts on CITES and wildlife law enforcement; and (4) reports and sanctions implicating the Lao Government on IWT (US State Department END Act Report and US Treasury Sanctions).

On Output 3, the project helped develop an informed, supportive, and active constituency within the Lao Government, which resulted in several policy responses by the Lao Government on IWT. At least 13 statements, legal documents and actions were achieved and delivered by the Lao Government from 2016 to March 2018. At least 3 more statements, legal documents and actions have been supported after the project from April to June 2018. These include: policy and regulatory documents from the Prime Minister, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, DOFI, Lao Government delegation to IWT events, Ministry of Post and Telecommunications, and the National Assembly. These policy and regulatory documents are expected to improve the legal environment, and strengthen the law enforcement response and multi-agency coordination on CITES and IWT issues in Lao PDR. These have also facilitated the conduct of preliminary audit of tiger farm facilities in April and May 2018, to lead to the continued commitment from the Lao Government to conduct a full audit.

### **3.2 Outcome**

The Lao Government has recognized wildlife trafficking as a political and development threat. This is evidenced by the series of policy and growing law enforcement responses that the Lao Government has taken to address IWT issues in Lao PDR. Broader government participation on efforts to combat wildlife trafficking has also been activated in Lao PDR. While the Lao-WEN has been in existence since 2014, it was during and after the project that stronger political will from the Prime Minister has made CITES policy and wildlife law enforcement responses as having political importance and the joint responsibilities of different Ministries and line agencies within the Lao Government. Law enforcement on the other hand remains weak, but the reported increase in enforcement actions on high-profile wildlife-related offenses since 2016 demonstrates the growing influence of this political and developmental recognition of wildlife trafficking to translate into on-the-ground law enforcement actions.

The following law enforcement actions have been reported by DOFI and DCNEC: at least 5 profile cases on ivory have been intercepted and addressed by seizures and confiscation; at

least 3 profile cases relating to ivory and bears are being investigated; at least 2 profile cases on rhino horn trafficking and tiger trafficking have been referred for prosecution; and at least 1 profile case on rhino horn trafficking has received a court sentence for 2 arrested Chinese traffickers.

Government participation in responding to IWT issues in Lao PDR has increased to more than two agencies. Aside from DOF and DOFI as the established government agencies to respond to CITES issues, policy responses from the Prime Minister have tasked several Ministries and line agencies as having responsibilities in supporting the implementation of CITES and addressing IWT issues.

**3.3 Impact: achievement of positive impact on illegal wildlife trade and poverty alleviation**

Project Impact: Reduced opportunities for corruption and the degradation of criminal networks trafficking endangered wildlife through Lao PDR.

In and outside Lao PDR, the project has impacted on political will and increased accountability in tackling wildlife trafficking through Lao PDR. This has helped catalyse high-level political command and a broad coalition of government agencies in domestic and international efforts to dismantle major trans-boundary wildlife trafficking syndicates operating within Lao PDR. The project also has activated local and international countries, aid agencies, and media as important actors in driving support and leverage to assist the Lao Government in tackling IWT. Multi-agency government efforts and activated non-government interventions in Lao PDR increase transparency and accountability to address the issue head-on. By dismantling major trafficking syndicates and networks, putting efforts removing key illegal actors in the trade, and pushing for stronger deterrence to wildlife crime participation, these will contribute to reducing the volume of trade of wildlife passing through Lao PDR, thus helping in the recovery of wild populations.

Increased political will and high-level interest to address the problem has been achieved towards the end of the project and still continuing after the project. Consistent monitoring and close partnerships with government can help sustain this will and interest and translate them into stronger policy and law enforcement responses.

**4. Monitoring of assumptions**

Outcome Level Assumptions
<p>Assumption 1:</p> <p><b>WCS has established itself as a credible, loyal and trusted partner in Laos in the field of wildlife conservation and IWT. To implement this project, this collaboration with individuals within local and central law enforcement agencies must continue</b></p> <p>WCS Lao PDR IWT program is growing along with cooperation and commitment from government partners. WCS is a member of the Law Enforcement Technical Advisers Group and WG 15.7, which is made up of Government, diplomatic communities, donors and INGO's. DOFI and the CITES MA has continued to collaborate with WCS for technical support and assistance on CITES and IWT issues in Lao PDR.</p>
<p>Assumption 2:</p> <p><b>Continued national commitment to CITES convention and ASEAN by Laos</b></p> <p>The Lao Government attended the CITES COP 17 and SC 67. All CITES secretariat recommendations were accepted and the delegation also made a commitment to phase out tiger farms in the region. Progress is also continuing with the NIAP. This is the strongest commitment Lao PDR has demonstrated to date. The Lao Government also hosted in March 2018 the ASEAN Working Group on CITES and Wildlife Law Enforcement. It has also continued to participate in relevant ASEAN meetings, and openly collaborate with countries in ASEAN.</p>
Assumption 3:



## Capacity-building efforts of UNODC, World Bank and USG continue

Regional donor funding for IWT has never been stronger. UNODC is continuing capacity building programs in Lao PDR and the region. World Bank is continuing to fund LENS 2 capacity building programs and there is increased funding through INL, USAID and USFWS.

### Output Level Assumptions

Assumption 1:

#### **WCS and partners continue to not be restricted in gathering data independently and from government sources on individuals and companies trafficking wildlife in Laos**

WCS has been able to conduct field surveys and investigations in Lao PDR independently and with DOFI. While certain government source documents are restricted, through the partnership between WCS and DOFI, WCS has been able to obtain limited access to government source documents.

Assumption 2:

#### **For the duration of this project, IWT remains high on the political agenda for UK, US, Germany, EU, World Bank, and ASEAN**

The UK, US, Germany, EU, World Bank, and ASEAN have IWT as an important political and security issue.

Assumption 3:

#### **The Lao National Assembly and other government agencies continue to show an interest in Environmental issues and are active in lobbying the Executive branch of Government**

Through the Prime Minister Order No. 05 (2018), government agencies in Lao PDR have been ordered to strictly comply in relation to IWT and CITES issues. DOFI and CITES MA have consistently demonstrated their commitment to their mandate on forestry and wildlife issues. The National Assembly of Lao PDR is a member of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly, which has issued a Resolution on supporting policy and legislative efforts to combat wildlife trafficking.

## 5. Project support to the IWT Challenge Fund Objectives and commitments under the London Declaration and Kasane Statement

The project significantly and directly contributed to the IWT Challenge Fund Objective to strengthen law enforcement and the role of the criminal justice system.

- As a direct result of this project, law enforcement agencies were provided with intelligence and strategies to assist them with law enforcement operations and planning.
- The use of international media to highlight Lao PDR's role in wildlife trafficking and activating influential countries to take influencing actions with the Lao Government contributed to increasing awareness and recognition by the Lao Government on this issue and the need that it takes more serious and concerted actions to address IWT in Lao PDR.
- Training and capacity building strategies and activities, conducted with co-financing, have provided agencies with improved capacity and competency to conduct investigations to lead to successful prosecutions. Support was also provided for key government officials to attend provincial meetings on IWT to foster better cooperation and commitment between the provinces.
- Financial and technical support was provided to the CITES MA and MONRE to attend the 67<sup>th</sup> CITES Standing Committee Meeting and the 17<sup>th</sup> CITES Conference of the Parties so that the Lao Government could respond effectively and make commitments to combat IWT within Lao PDR and across its borders. Support was also provided to

DOFI in preparing and participating in the IWT Conference in Hanoi, and to DOFI and MAF in attending the 69<sup>th</sup> CITES Standing Committee Meeting.

- Desktop computers were provided to key provinces that are known as wildlife trading hotspots. The computers were given to designated officials to enable improved coordination and communication between provincial officials and WCS.
- WCS staff also accompanied central and provincial staff from DOFI to inspect provincial markets in Bolikhamxay and Khammouane. Technical support was also provided for central and provincial staff from DOFI to inspect ivory-trading hubs in Vientiane, Vang Vieng, and Luang Prabang. Lessons in species and ivory identification and field inspections were provided, and information on trade was collected. Locals and Chinese ivory traders were educated and provided warning notices on relevant laws and prohibitions relating to IWT
- Reports from DOFI and DCNEC in 2017 and 2018 have revealed that wildlife law enforcement in Lao PDR is now being taken seriously, in that, more follow-up steps are being taken that detected illegal wildlife trade should not only result in seizures and confiscations but also lead to better investigations leading to referrals to the Prosecutor's Office for prosecution. As of May 2018, at least 3 profile cases on ivory and bear trade are being investigated, at least 2 profile cases on rhino horn and tiger trafficking have been referred to the Prosecutor's Office, and 2 Chinese suspects in 1 profile case on rhino horn trafficking has received a court sentence for imprisonment and fine.

The project also contributed to the IWT Challenge Fund Objective to reduce demand for the products of the illegal wildlife trade. While it is too early to say whether law enforcement actions the Lao Government has increased efforts on have resulted in reduced demand for wildlife products, the project delivered awareness-raising and private sector engagement activities that facilitated important steps in eventually reducing demand for IWT products:

- By working with an international media and communications consultant, awareness campaign designs have been produced in the English, Lao, and Chinese languages, with messages focusing on the prohibition and negative consequences of engaging in illegal wildlife trade. On this, WCS and DOFI engaged with private sector contractors managing the Luang Prabang and Vientiane airports, to agree on installing campaign messages in strategic locations in the airports. Production of the campaign materials are still being carried out after the project for installation in Luang Prabang airport in July 2018, and potentially in Wattay airport in Vientiane in the near future.
- Technical and financial support was provided in assisting DOFI to organize a bilateral dialogue between Lao-WEN and the Chinese embassy to engage the Chinese business community in Lao PDR to participate in and support efforts by the Lao Government to address illegal trade in ivory and other prohibited wildlife products. The Chinese embassy, representatives from the 2 biggest Chinese Chambers of Commerce in Lao PDR, and the China Southern Airlines representative in Vientiane signed a joint pledge and delivered statements of commitment on this endeavour.

The project supported delivery of outcomes and outputs to the commitments made in the London Declaration (IX, X, XIV, XV, XVII), Kasane Statement (5, 7), and the Hanoi Statement.

## **6. Impact on species in focus**

The project focussed on the following species: African elephant, Pangolin (Asian/African), Rhino, and Hard-shelled turtles. In project implementation, the project also delivered on activities relating to Tigers. The achieved recognition and growing policy and law enforcement responses by the Lao Government in degrading criminal networks trafficking endangered wildlife through Lao PDR has contributed to the conservation of the species in focus. Increased political attention and cooperation from neighbouring countries have also contributed to ensuring that transiting of wildlife from source countries through Lao PDR will be intercepted. This has disrupted activities by wildlife traffickers by increasing risks to trafficking by wildlife trafficking syndicates and networks in Lao PDR.

Official government documents revealed that in 2014, two of the major companies were given quotas to traffic into Lao PDR and out into Vietnam the following amounts of focus wildlife – 430,000kg of pangolins, 290,000kg of ivory, 4,000kg of rhino horn, and 210,000kg of turtles. Increased awareness and political will in complying with CITES commitments has led to a series of policy responses by the Lao Government to strengthen its CITES institutional framework and a subsequent order in May 2018, through Prime Minister Order No. 05 (2018), ordering strict compliance on the prohibition in relation to IWT. The improving political climate, international pressure, and gains in law enforcement have all resulted in the quotas being revoked and wildlife trading companies coming under increased scrutiny. It is expected that this will result in less demand and hunting pressure in source locations.

## **7. Project support to poverty alleviation**

An expected beneficiary of the work under the project will be resource-dependent communities in Lao PDR and other low-income, source countries in Africa and Asia. Elephants and rhinos in particular are economically important to African source countries. They provide a direct source of GDP through tourism and support subsistence livelihoods through maintaining a healthy resource base. The massive declines in African Elephants has the potential to impact on wildlife tourism, which is a principal revenue-earner for many of these countries and as such a key contributor to the African continent's socio-economic development. For example, in 2015, tourism in Tanzania accounted for 17% of GDP, with a total contribution of \$2.5 bn, supporting more than 2 million jobs. Effective action against African ivory trafficking in Asia, that includes dismantling major wildlife trafficking syndicates such as those operating in Laos, will contribute towards overall efforts to maintain populations of African Elephants and the tourism industry that is dependent on them.

Poaching and illegal trafficking of ivory, rhinoceros horn, tigers, and other biodiversity affects not only wildlife but also entire ecosystems, effectively depriving local communities of their livelihoods. Removal of criminal networks driving illegal wildlife trade will have concomitant benefits, including a reduction in other criminal activities (illegal logging, land-grabbing), which are driven by the same criminal networks and have significant impacts on local people. Locally, a reduction in commercial wildlife off-take driven by these companies will also increase the amount of bush meat available for local communities still dependant on bush meat for subsistence.

In this regard, it is reasonable to estimate that more than 3,000 households will benefit from reduced wildlife trafficking and improved law enforcement, however, due to the dispersed nature of wildlife trafficking syndicates, and the communities and wildlife they affect, it is difficult to anticipate and determine the exact number of indirect beneficiaries, and challenging to undertake studies that directly evidence this benefit from the project interventions.

## **8. Consideration of gender equality issues**

Our primary project partner, DOFI, is an equal opportunity employer and is actively encouraging the participation of women in technical work related to the department's mandate. In 2016 a woman in Law Enforcement Initiative was introduced centrally where 6 women were provided the opportunity to gain experience in forest inspection and enforcement. This initiative has been recommended to be expanded to provincial levels. Previous programs undertaken by DOFI and WCS have demonstrated the important role women have in conducting community liaison, inspections of illegal wildlife trade hotspots, offender management, as well as administration roles and we will continue to promote these roles throughout this work. Women have been represented at all trainings and workshops provided by WCS.

## **9. Lessons learnt**

The following lessons have been identified:

- The formulation of contracts and terms of reference for contractors was more complex than anticipated and should have commenced well in advance of the planned activities. This will not be a factor in year 2 and future projects as templates have been designed.
- Many of the activities were slow to commence due to a delay in the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with government partners. A five-year MOU has been signed so will not be an issue for the foreseeable future.



- The use of investigative journalists is an effective method of collecting information that can be used to understand criminal networks and modus operandi. Media outlets to bring international attention to the trade in Lao PDR and pressure the government to take action can also use information gained.
- Engaging with the Chinese embassy in Vientiane requires establishing trust and confidence and collaborating with WCS-China provided the opportunity for WCS to engage with the Chinese embassy, which has a strong influence and capacity to mobilise Chinese business communities in Lao PDR.

## **9.1 Monitoring and evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluating of the project was performed by measuring:

- The information known on criminal networks at the start of the project to what is understood at the end of the project.
- The number of intelligence products produced on individuals and companies, and the number of intelligence products strategically disseminated and shared to partners
- The number of media reports on Laos's involvement in illegal wildlife trade compared to previous years through media scanning. Media reports have also been segregated on the number of media reports reporting on wildlife trafficking syndicates, media reports on Lao government responses; and media reports from local media outlets.
- Law enforcement actions were collected from reports provided by DOFI and DCNEC, and cross-referenced with media reports on Lao Government law enforcement responses
- The improvement in political will to address IWT was measured through actions and documents from the Lao Government indicating policy and law enforcement response to IWT. These actions and documents have been tracked based on the partnership and engagement with DOFI and DOF.

The M&E system used for the project was practical and useful, not only as a way of monitoring progress for the project but also in providing awareness and capacity with government partners on the significance of the information collected to demonstrate policy and law enforcement willingness in Lao PDR.

## **9.2 Actions taken in response to annual report reviews**

All issues identified in annual report feedback have been addressed/summarized in other parts of the Final Report, and in the detailed progress and achievements in Annex 2. Feedback provided on community-based patrolling in hotspot areas and possibility of introducing performance-based payments have been discussed with partners in DOFI, LETAG, and the WWG15.7. WCS provides technical support for the management of the Nam-Et Phou Louey National Protected Area where community-based patrolling and eco-tourism activities are being implemented.

## **10. Other comments on achievements not covered elsewhere**

No other comments

## **11. Sustainability and legacy**

The project has been able to leverage various actions and engagements in order to encourage and make sustainable necessary policy responses from the Lao Government. The project has supported and facilitated a series of political and policy developments leading to a high-level politically supported structure among Ministries and their line agencies in addressing CITES and IWT issues in Lao PDR. This is through the CITES Steering Committee and the issuance of Prime Minister Order No. 05 (2018) to re-activate the roles of Lao-WEN agencies to have better and more effective law enforcement responses to combat wildlife trafficking. The Lao Government, through efforts done by DOFI, DCNEC, and the Customs Department, has already initialled law enforcement actions on wildlife crime cases with referrals to the prosecutors, and sustaining these efforts will facilitate building better confidence and political support for DOFI and related law enforcement agencies in better tackling the issue.

The recently issued Prime Minister Order provides the political model for government agencies to proceed with law enforcement responses. WCS is continuing to implement with DOFI and DoF its 5-year Memorandum of Understanding to combat illegal wildlife trade in Lao PDR. This will also ensure that achievements and progress reached during the project are sustained, maintained, continued and scaled-up. Under this partnership with DOFI, WCS will sustain technical assistance and share information on illegal wildlife trade to the Lao Government, to assist in strengthening law enforcement interventions. Bilateral and trilateral events with neighbouring countries in Southeast Asia and China have provided lessons and opportunities for the Lao Government to strengthen its policy and law enforcement efforts. WCS will provide continued technical support to the Lao Government in organising follow-up bilateral cooperative dialogues at the national and provincial levels with China, Vietnam, and Thailand. In addition, future activities will build on the bilateral dialogue and commitments made by the Chinese embassy and the Chinese business community in Lao PDR on combatting illegal ivory and wildlife trade.

## **12. IWT Challenge Fund Identity**

All official events and activities funded by this award provided recognition to the IWT Challenge Fund in official banners posted for the duration of events organized. The donor has also been acknowledged in media releases made during the project. The IWT Challenge Fund funding was recognised in the planning and development of the 5-year MoU between WCS and DOFI, and subsequent activities conducted under the MoU and the project. Considering however that in certain aspects of the project implementation and activities (e.g. actionable intelligence products, activated media and journalist articles on IWT) where there may be strong government sensitivity on the issues, explicit references to the IWT Challenge Fund were removed.

## **13. OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements of your project during the (300-400 words maximum). This section may be used for publicity purposes**

In **Lao PDR**, WCS facilitated a bilateral meeting on 30 March 2018 between the Lao Government, represented by the Department of Forest Inspection (DOFI) with government agencies under the Lao Wildlife Enforcement Network (Lao-WEN), and the China Embassy in Vientiane, with business leaders and representatives from the Chinese business community in Lao PDR to enhance understanding and observance of the law and regulations against illegal wildlife trade and to build better cooperation to take action to counter wildlife trafficking. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Thongphan Ratanalangsy, Deputy Director General of the Department of Forest Inspection (DoFI). Mr. Li Nengbin, Secretary of **Economic and Commercial Counsellor's Office with the China Embassy**, co-chaired the meeting and gave a key message in the meeting. The Economic and Commercial Counsellor's Office is the most directly influential Chinese government agency to the Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Chinese-funded enterprises in Laos. All chambers of commerce and Chinese-funded enterprises investing in Laos maintain close communication and are required to register with this office.

*"We are aware that there is Chinese involvement in the illegal wildlife trade in Laos. We hope that law enforcement agencies of Laos will deal with the situation and suspects in accordance with the law. We also hope that the Chinese living in Laos obey local laws. This is the first meeting in Laos aimed at Chinese living in Laos, to promote awareness of laws regarding illegal wildlife trade and activity. We appreciate the efforts done by the various departments of Laos. We also hope to further cooperate with relevant departments of Laos, provide service to Chinese in Laos and help them with the awareness of laws and regulations of Laos for the prevention of illegal and criminal acts.*

*The embassy of the People's Republic of China in Laos welcomes and encourages all Chinese chambers of commerce and Chinese enterprises together with Chinese media to communicate the wildlife conservation concept to broader Chinese community in Laos, to raise the awareness of Laotian law and regulations and to support the wildlife conservation in Laos and globally." Li Nengbin, China Embassy*

The China embassy and participating business leaders from the China Hunan Chamber of Commerce, China General Chamber of Commerce and China Southern Airlines in Lao PDR signed a joint statement and pledge of support on Lao and Chinese government efforts to protect biodiversity and combat illegal wildlife trade.

I agree for the IWT Secretariat to publish the content of this section (please leave this line in to indicate your agreement to use any material you provide here)

## 14. Finance and administration

### 14.1 Project expenditure

Project spend (indicative)	2016/17 Grant (£)	2016/17 actual IWT Costs (£)	2017/18 Grant (£)	2017/18 actual IWT Costs (£)	Total Original Grant (£)	Total actual Costs (£)	Comments (please explain significant variances)
Staff costs (see below)							
Consultancy costs							
Overhead Costs							
Travel and subsistence							
Operating Costs							
Capital items (see below)							
Monitoring & Evaluation Costs							
Others (see below)							
Audit Costs							
<b>TOTAL</b>							

<b>Staff employed (Name and position)</b>	<b>Cost (£)</b>
Michael Brocklehurst /Chrisgel Ryan Cruz – Technical Advisor	
Vu Anh Minh – Intelligence Officer	
Santi Saypanya – Deputy Director	
Thanhvar Phouththamangxay – Project Coordinator	
Anoudeth Phonxaysavath – Project Officer	
Bounthavy Phommachanh – Government Liaison Officer	
Thippaphone Phouangvichith – Finance Manager	
Thippachan Philavong – Accounting Manager	
Adithphon – Accountant	
Bouavanh Sinphaset – Administration Officer	
Soudalath Phasavath – Office Manager	
Palina Souliyadeth – HR and Procurement Officer	
Soukdavanh – Officer Driver	
Phouvang – Office Cleaner	
Sithone/Soukvanhkham – Office guards	
<b>TOTAL</b>	

<b>Capital items – description</b> <i>Please detail what items were purchased with fund money, and where these will remain once the project finishes</i>	<b>Capital items – cost (£)</b>
Vehicle car (TOYOTA HILUX REVO)	
<b>TOTAL</b>	

<b>Other items – description</b> <i>Please provide a detailed breakdown for any single item over £1000</i>	<b>Other items – cost (£)</b>
Intelligence software license Translation services Bank Fees English language training Vehicle GPS tracker Vehicle part (max liner) Notebook computers IT equipment	
<b>TOTAL</b>	



## 14.2 Additional funds or in-kind contributions secured

Source of funding for project lifetime	Total (£)
N/A	
<b>TOTAL</b>	

Source of funding for additional work after project lifetime	Total (£)
N/A	
<b>TOTAL</b>	

## 14.3 Value for Money

WCS makes long-term, on-the-ground commitments that aim to sustain initiatives and activities, through established partnerships in-country and applying the contextual knowledge and lessons learned to plan culturally-appropriate and feasible projects. Through the project, WCS has established a long-term partnership with the Lao Government through DOFI as a direct partner under a 5-year MoU on wildlife law enforcement, and with DoF as a secondary partner on CITES implementation issues, that extends beyond the lifetime of the project and ensures continuity and follow-up of actions achieved. Activities have been implemented and through collective efforts by government, diplomatic, and non-government partners in Lao PDR, policy and law enforcement responses have been activated towards the end of the project, and even sustained after the project. Policy documents issued through Prime Minister decrees and decisions and government announcements and commitments have ensured a long-term process to sustain government action and responses to IWT issues in Lao PDR. Capacity-building activities to combat wildlife trafficking coupled with robust knowledge and information sharing on wildlife trafficking syndicates and activities delivered to a multi-agency government law enforcement coordination mechanism (Lao-WEN) have facilitated increased and more meaningful actions on the ground, during the project, and after the project.

## Annex 1 Project's original (or most recently approved) logframe, including indicators, means of verification and assumptions.

**Note: Insert your full logframe. If your logframe was changed since your application and was approved by a Change Request the newest approved version should be inserted here, otherwise insert application logframe.**

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
<b>Impact:</b> Reduced opportunities for corruption and the degradation of criminal networks trafficking endangered wildlife through Laos.			
<b>Outcome:</b> Wildlife trafficking is recognized as a political and developmental threat by the Government of Laos, and a broad coalition of government agencies are participating in domestic and international efforts to dismantle trans-boundary wildlife trafficking syndicates operating within Laos.	<p>1. By 2018, effective enforcement action has led to the prosecution and conviction of at least 2 key individuals within identified major IWT networks operating in Laos that to date have been immune from any law enforcement action.</p> <p>2. By 2018, the number of government agencies leading IWT responses (including issuing action plans, legal actions, and investigations) extends from two at present (i.e. DoFI and CITES MA), to at least five (including National Assembly, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Government Inspectorate)</p>	<p>1. Law enforcement agency reports, CITES MA reports to Standing Committee/Secretariat</p> <p>2. Official media releases, meeting minutes or proceedings from National Assembly, MoFA, GI</p>	<p>1. WCS has established itself as a credible, loyal and trusted partner in Laos in the field of wildlife conservation and IWT. To implement this project, this collaboration with individuals within local and central law enforcement agencies must continue.</p> <p>2. Continued national commitment to CITES Convention and ASEAN by Laos</p> <p>3. Capacity-building efforts of UNODC, World Bank and USG continue.</p>
<b>Outputs:</b> 1. Compelling actionable intelligence products (including nominal information, business details, corrupt relationships, and crime modus operandi) on three major wildlife trafficking syndicates operating in Laos	<p>1.1 By June 2017, 10 intelligence dossiers and products produced and disseminated to GoL and related agencies on the three major trafficking syndicates annually in 2016, 2017 (baseline = 0)</p> <p>1.2 By March 2018, 75 Records/Source documents inputted into the WCS Global Wildlife Intelligence Database relating to Laos (2015 Baseline: 30)</p>	1. WCS intelligence database	1. WCS and partners continue to not be restricted in gathering data independently and from government sources on individuals and companies trafficking wildlife in Laos
2. Influential countries (Vietnam, China, Thailand, US, UK, Germany, France), aid agencies (ADB, World Bank), and international media, are informed and active in advocating to GoL on	2.1 By December 2017, 20 media articles in international and domestic media on the identified major IWT networks operating in Laos in 2016, 2017 (Baseline in 2014 = 10, all for	2. WCS media scanning reports, CITES SC committee and WG reports, Meeting minutes from the Lao IWT Coordination Forum	2. For the duration of this project, IWT remains high on the political agenda for UK, US, Germany, EU, World Bank and ASEAN

<p>measures needed to enhance national response to IWT</p>	<p>Xaysavang, none for the other major trafficking companies)</p> <p>2.2 Laos actively and constructively participates in CITES SC and CoP in 2016 and 2017 responding in a meaningful way to existing decisions and commitments (Baseline = Lao suspended from CITES due to lack of compliance on reporting, and inactive in meetings)</p> <p>2.3 Five actions annually by diplomatic missions, donor agencies and neighbouring countries that advocate to GoL on required enhancements in national response to IWT</p>		
<p>3. As informed, supportive and active constituency is developed from the National Assembly, Government Inspectorate, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Public Security, Ministry of Finance</p>	<p>3.1 By March 2018, five statements, legal documents, or actions by National Assembly, MoFA, and GI on IWT responses (Baseline = 0)</p>	<p>3. Official statements, Legal gazette, national assembly proceedings, WCS media scanning reports</p>	<p>3. The Lao National Assembly and other government agencies continue to show an interest in Environmental issues and are active in lobbying the Executive branch of Government</p>
<p><b>Activities</b> (each activity is numbered according to the output that it will contribute towards, for example 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 are contributing to Output 1)</p> <p>1.1 Information-gathering surveys by WCS and partners in Lao</p> <p>1.2 Maintenance/licensing of WCS Intelligence management and analysis system, ensuring Lao program has access to global database on IWT</p> <p>1.3 Production and dissemination of intelligence products (including nominal information, business details, corrupt relationships, and crime modus operandi) on three major wildlife trafficking syndicates operating in Laos</p> <p>2.1 Develop an informed and active media network of domestic and foreign journalists (including media briefings, interviews, field trips, media analysis feedback reports)</p> <p>2.2 Tri-lateral dialogue on IWT enforcement collaboration between Laos, Vietnam, and China</p> <p>2.3 Technical and fiscal support to participation of key Lao government agencies at global IWT events (e.g. Standing Committee)</p> <p>2.4 Establish a regular IWT coordination forum to inform and activate bilateral donor agencies and diplomatic missions</p> <p>3.1 Technical assistance to DoFI and the CITES MA to implement actions towards compliance with national and international IWT commitments</p> <p>3.2 Briefings to National Assembly, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government Inspectorate on IWT issues and responses</p> <p>3.3 Multi-agency workshops to plan actions and disseminate information on responses to IWT</p>			

## Annex 2 Report of progress and achievements against final project logframe for the life of the project

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Progress and Achievements
<p><b>Impact</b></p> <p>Reduced opportunities for corruption and the degradation of criminal networks trafficking endangered wildlife through Laos.</p>		<p>The project has activated in and outside Lao PDR important influences that impact on political will and increased accountability in tackling wildlife trafficking through Lao PDR. These have helped catalyse high-level political command and a broad coalition of government agencies in domestic and international efforts to dismantle major trans-boundary wildlife trafficking syndicates operating within Lao PDR. These have also activated local and international countries, aid agencies, and media as important actors in driving support and leverage to assist the Lao Government in tackling IWT. Multi-agency government efforts and activated non-government interventions in Lao PDR increase transparency and accountability to address the issue head-on. By dismantling major trafficking syndicates and networks, putting efforts removing key illegal actors in the trade, and pushing for stronger deterrence to wildlife crime participation, these will contribute to reducing the volume of trade of wildlife passing through Lao PDR, thus helping in the recovery of wild populations.</p> <p>Increased political will and high-level interest to address the problem has been achieved towards the end of the project and still continuing after the project. Consistent monitoring and close partnerships with government can help sustain this will and interest and translate them into stronger policy and law enforcement responses.</p>
<p><b>Outcome</b> Wildlife trafficking is recognized as a political and developmental threat by the Government of Laos, and a broad coalition of government agencies are participating in domestic and international efforts to dismantle trans-boundary wildlife trafficking syndicates operating within Laos.</p>	<p>1. By 2018, effective enforcement action has led to the prosecution and conviction of at least 2 key individuals within identified major IWT networks operating in Laos that to date have been immune from any law enforcement action.</p> <p>2. By 2018, the number of government agencies leading IWT responses (including issuing action plans, legal actions, and investigations) extends from two at present (i.e. DoFI and CITES MA), to at least five (including National Assembly, Ministry of Foreign</p>	<p>Wildlife trafficking has been recognized as a political and development threat by the Lao Government. This is evidenced by the series of policy and growing law enforcement responses that the Lao Government has taken to address IWT issues in Lao PDR. Broader government participation on efforts to combat wildlife trafficking has also been activated in Lao PDR. While the Lao-WEN has been in existence since 2014, it is during and after the project that stronger political will from the Prime Minister has made CITES policy and wildlife law enforcement responses as the joint responsibilities of different Ministries and line agencies within the Lao Government.</p> <p><u>1. Enforcement actions relating to wildlife-related offenses and crimes have been increasing since 2016.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Media scanning on wildlife seizures in Lao PDR has increased from 2016 until March 2018: (1) in 2016, zero media reports on law enforcement actions in Lao PDR; (2) in 2017, at least 2 distinct media reports on bears and rhino horns; and (3) until March in 2018, at least 3 distinct media reports on tigers, red pandas, and live bird trade. Media</li> </ul>

	<p>Affairs, and Government Inspectorate)</p>	<p>links are attached in <b>ANNEX 3</b>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based on reports from DOFI, the Department of Combatting Natural Resource and Environmental Crime (DCNEC), and Customs Department, <u>5 profile cases on ivory</u> have been intercepted and addressed: (1) In September 2015, 48kgs (9 tusks) of ivory in 2 luggage were confiscated by the Customs Department at Wattay Vientiane International Airport, originating from Africa, with 1 Vietnamese suspect detained and investigated; (2) In December 2017, DOFI with Forest Inspection officers inspected 2 ivory shops in Luang Prabang and confiscated 8.1kg of ivory products (285 pieces); based on initial basic identification of the confiscated products, 1.2kg (53 pieces) have been identified as real ivory, 5.6kg (201 pieces) as bone, and 1.3kg (31 pieces) as plastic; provincial authorities in Luang Prabang have invited the shopowners for interrogation and further investigation; (3) In January 2018, DOFI inspection in Vientiane Capital resulted in the confiscation of 946 pieces of ivory (around 22.5 kg); (4) In March 2018, DOFI continued inspection of ivory shops in Luang Prabang, and it resulted in the confiscation of 221 suspected ivory products from 8 shops; and (5) In May 2018, based on information on ivory trade in Vangvieng in Vientiane province, DOFI proceeded with an inspection resulting in the confiscation of seven pieces of ivory productions, and follow-up investigations on three suspects involved in the illegal trade.</li> <li>• Based on reports from DOFI and DCNEC, in addition to 2 ivory cases being investigated, another profile case being investigated is on: (1) Illegal trade in bear paws in Oudomxay Province that happened in August 2017, with the DCNEC transferring the investigation to the Oudomxay environmental police division.</li> <li>• Based on reports from DOFI and DCNEC, <u>two profile cases have been referred for prosecution</u>: (1) Rhino horn trafficking case in June 2017 at the Wattay International Airport involving 2 Chinese suspects with 15kg of rhino horn; and (2) Tiger trafficking case involving 3 tigers intercepted by local authorities in January 2018 in Khammouane and Bolikhamxay, was submitted to the prosecutor by the Khammouane Provincial Office for Forest Inspection, on 17 January 2018, with DOFI and Khammouane POFI continuing investigations on the case, based on the recommendations from the Public Prosecutor</li> <li>• Based on a report from DCNEC, <u>one criminal case has received sentence from the court</u>: Rhino horn trafficking case in October 2017 at the Wattay International Airport where 2 Chinese suspects traveling from Singapore through Flight MT788 were arrested and 5 pieces of rhino horn totaling 11.10kg were confiscated. Customs Department</li> </ul>
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		<p>cooperated with the DCNEC for investigation and sent for prosecution on 13 December 2017. The court sentenced the suspects to 3 months and 20 days imprisonment and 800,000 LAK fine.</p> <p><u>2. Multi-agency government participation to respond to IWT issues in Lao PDR has increased to more than two agencies.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DOFI and DoF have been the established CITES authorities within the Lao Government, with DOFI as the focal agency for law enforcement, and DoF as the CITES Management Authority. Both departments are under the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.</li> <li>• Since 2014, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry established and appointed the composition of the Lao-WEN Coordination Unit, with DOFI as the lead and Secretariat agency, with representatives from DoF as CITES MA, DCNEC, Interpol National Central Bureau (NCB) Police Department, Customs Department, and the Office of the Public Prosecutor. This has been updated in 2016, and is in the process of updating in 2018.</li> <li>• The Ministry of Post and Telecommunications (MPT) has issued MPT Decision No. 168 (2017) on prohibited items in the postal service, covering prohibited wildlife parts and products, such as rhino horn elephant ivory, and tiger parts), as its regulatory IWT response.</li> <li>• Through the funding support from the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF), the Customs Department and the DCNEC have activated their important roles in providing strong law enforcement responses to wildlife trafficking in Lao PDR.</li> <li>• The Ministry of Science and Technology has been re-designated as the CITES Scientific Authority and is currently activating this responsibility to contribute to the Lao Government's policy response to IWT, by establishing the CITES SA Technical Committee composed of additional government agencies from: MAF, such as the National Agriculture and Forestry Research Institute (NAFRI) and the Department of Livestock and Fisheries; National University of Laos – Faculties of Forestry, Environmental Science, and Agriculture; and Ministry of Public Health – Traditional Medicine Institute.</li> <li>• Prime Minister Decision No. 18 (2018) established the CITES Steering Committee, and activated the high-level political roles of various Ministries on CITES oversight and implementation in Lao PDR. The Committee is composed of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Ministry of Public Security, Ministry of</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Output 1.</b> Compelling actionable intelligence products (including nominal information, business details, corrupt relationships, and crime modus operandi) on three major wildlife trafficking syndicates operating in Laos</p>	<p>1.1 By June 2017, 10 intelligence dossiers and products produced and disseminated to GoL and related agencies on the three major trafficking syndicates annually in 2016, 2017 (baseline = 0)</p> <p>1.2 By March 2018, 75 Records/Source documents inputted into the WCS Global Wildlife Intelligence Database relating to Laos (2015 Baseline: 30)</p>	<p>WCS has provided various intelligence products on wildlife trafficking networks and activities in Lao PDR to DOFI and other relevant government agencies in Lao PDR, and to diplomatic missions in Lao PDR in an effort to influence policy and law enforcement responses from the Lao Government on IWT. Products have been delivered as documents in confidence through trusted channels in government, through presentations in trainings and workshops for DOFI and Lao-WEN agencies, and through real-time law enforcement inspections and investigations by DOFI. WCS has also continued to work with project partners in gathering information through field surveys and investigations on wildlife trafficking networks in Lao PDR.</p> <p><u>1.1 Intelligence dossiers and products were produced and disseminated to the Lao Government and related agencies on major trafficking syndicates, networks, and activities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WCS has produced a total of 65 intelligence products by the end of 2017, and an additional of 8 intelligence products by March 2018.</li> <li>• Due to the sensitivity of information contained in most of the intelligence products, at least 40 of the intelligence products have been disseminated and shared in confidence to trusted government partners, diplomatic missions, and international organisations.</li> </ul> <p><u>1.2 Records and source documents on trafficking networks and activities in Lao PDR have been inputted into the WCS Global Wildlife Intelligence Database:</u></p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least 356 records and source documents on wildlife trafficking networks and activities in Lao PDR have been inputted to the WCS Global Wildlife Intelligence Database.</li> </ul>
<p>Activity 1.1 Information-gathering surveys by WCS and partners in Lao</p>		<p>Information gathering surveys were conducted on major wildlife trafficking syndicates, trade routes, entry and exit points, and ivory trading hotspots in hotels and stores. Field investigations focussed on: tiger farms and tiger trafficking in Khammouane and Bolikhamxay provinces, as well as in the Golden Triangle Special Economic Zone in Bokeo province; major wholesale traders, ivory markets, Chinese tour operators, and Chinese business export operations in Lao PDR. Surveys were conducted to catalogue and map Chinese trading in ivory and protected wildlife products in Luang Prabang, Vang Vieng, and Vientiane. Subsequent surveys in January 2018 were to monitor changes and updates on trading in ivory, tiger, rhino horn products, and other related wildlife in markets and fixed establishments in the Southern and Northern part of Lao PDR. Specific focus was done in Chinese-concentrated trade hubs in Vientiane, Vang Vieng, Luang Prabang, Oudomxay, Luang Namtha, and Bokeo provinces.</p> <p>WCS also provided mentoring and capacity building on field surveys and investigations on IWT by accompanying central and provincial staff from DOFI to inspect 19 provincial markets in Bolikhamxay and Khammouane provinces close to the Vietnam border.</p> <p>WCS also signed two consultancy agreements with Terms of Reference to gather information and update the situational analyses on wildlife trafficking networks in Lao PDR and provide updated and relevant intelligence on tiger trafficking syndicates operating in Bolikhamxay and Khammouane Provinces, through an international investigation agency and an international field investigator based in Lao PDR.</p> <p>Information from field investigation and surveys, as well as output from the consultancies have been inputted into the WCS intelligence system under Activity 1.2, which facilitated the analysis and development of intelligence products under Activity 1.3.</p>
<p>Activity 1.2. Maintenance/licensing of WCS Intelligence management and analysis system, ensuring Lao program has access to global database on IWT</p>		<p>The WCS IBM i2 regional intelligence management and analysis database has been installed and operational in the WCS Lao Program. An intelligence analyst has been employed to update and analyse intelligence and produce intelligence products for dissemination to law enforcement agencies.</p> <p>In March 2017, project staff attended a regional WCS training program in Bangkok to provide an opportunity to share information, discuss and plan joint initiatives such as bi-lateral events and collaborative investigations between Lao PDR, China, Vietnam, and Thailand. The training program also provided a platform for information being managed and analysed in the intelligence database to be linked to information collected and managed by other WCS</p>

	<p>country programs.</p> <p>In 2016, 170 records and source documents were inputted into the WCS intelligence database. In 2017, 173 records and source documents were inputted. Until March 2018, 13 records have been inputted. Records and source documents include references to persons, groups, events, communications, vehicles, reports, and documents relating to wildlife trafficking networks and activities in Lao PDR.</p> <p>At least seven companies and 24 individuals have been identified, including expansion of tiger farms in Lao PDR. Reviews of international seizures of wildlife linking to Lao PDR were also done resulting in improved understanding of the international context of wildlife trafficking and the importance of leveraging regional and international opportunities with influential countries to model best practices on policies and law enforcement responses in Lao PDR.</p>
<p>Activity 1.3. Production and dissemination of intelligence products (including nominal information, business details, corrupt relationships, and crime modus operandi) on three major wildlife trafficking syndicates operating in Laos</p>	<p>WCS has produced and disseminated intelligence products to project partner DOFI and related government agencies in Lao PDR, and to relevant diplomatic missions in Lao PDR, and Interpol. Intelligence products include situational analyses on wildlife trafficking networks, information dossiers on major wildlife trafficking organisations and individuals, investigation reports and updates, and links analysis on the wildlife trafficking networks. Information from field surveys and investigations were also presented to wildlife enforcement officials in Lao PDR as basis for planning and preparations for law enforcement and awareness-raising campaigns in major wildlife trade hubs.</p> <p>A total of 73 intelligence products have been produced during the project (from 2016 to March 2018) – which identify important information on major wildlife trafficking networks and operations in Lao PDR relating to tigers, elephant and ivory, rhino horn, and other prohibited wildlife products.</p> <p>In 2016, 18 intelligence products were produced and disseminated. The products include situational analysis, dossiers on major wildlife trafficking organisation and individuals, and investigation reports on ivory and wildlife trading hotspots, and geo-intelligence reports on borders and entry/exit points.</p> <p>In 2017, 47 intelligence products were produced. These include 16 information reports, 7 intelligence briefings to DOFI and media investigators, 9 information dossiers on wildlife trafficking organisations and individuals, and 15 link diagrams on wildlife trafficking networks in Lao PDR.</p> <p>Until March 2018, 8 intelligence products have been produced, which include 4 information reports, 1 intelligence briefing, 1 dossier, and 2 link diagrams relating to tiger, ivory and live elephants trafficking in Lao PDR. WCS has been producing and providing relevant intelligence products and presentations to government partner DOFI, US and UK embassies, Interpol, the CITES Secretariat, and other international investigation organisations, based on</p>

		updates and new information entered into and analysed in the WCS intelligence database.
<p><b>Output 2.</b> Influential countries (Vietnam, China, Thailand, US, UK, Germany, France), aid agencies (ADB, World Bank), and international media, are informed and active in advocating to GoL on measures needed to enhance national response to IWT</p>	<p>2.1 By December 2017, 20 media articles in international and domestic media on the identified major IWT networks operating in Laos in 2016, 2017 (Baseline in 2014 = 10, all for Xaysavang, none for the other major trafficking companies)</p> <p>2.2 Laos actively and constructively participates in CITES SC and CoP in 2016 and 2017 responding in a meaningful way to existing decisions and commitments (Baseline = Lao suspended from CITES due to lack of compliance on reporting, and inactive in meetings)</p> <p>2.3 Five actions annually by diplomatic missions, donor agencies and neighbouring countries that advocate to GoL on required enhancements in national response to IWT</p>	<p>The project has leveraged the role of the international community through influential countries such as the US, UK, China, Thailand, and Vietnam, aid agencies such as World Bank, and international media in enhancing better understanding and increasing political will and response from the Lao Government in addressing IWT in Lao PDR.</p> <p><u>2.1 International and local media have been actively informed and instrumental in advocating for policy and law enforcement responses from the Lao Government on IWT issues</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Media articles in international and domestic media, from a baseline of 10 in 2014 reporting on the Xaysavang trafficking network, have increased in 2016 with 25 media articles having covered the role of Lao PDR in IWT, with 6 of the media articles reporting on 3 major wildlife trafficking syndicates in Lao PDR, e.g. Vannaseng and Vinnasakhone. A local newspaper has also reported on the issue of tiger farming in Lao PDR, indicating an increased role of local media and recognition by the Lao Government of this issue.</li> <li>• By December 2017, at least 87 media articles in international and domestic media have reported on Lao PDR's role in IWT. 19 of the media articles are wildlife seizures that link to Lao PDR. 4 of the media articles are seizures and law enforcement responses in Lao PDR either by the Customs Department or DOFI. 6 of the media articles reported on wildlife trafficking syndicates, and 1 media article came from a local Lao media outlet.</li> <li>• The role of international and local media has been sustained in 2018 where WCS interactions with and information provided to journalists and researchers have continued media reporting on IWT in Lao PDR. At least 153 media articles have been reported from January 2018 to May 2018. 14 of the media articles are seizures linked to Lao PDR. There are 5 media articles on seizures and law enforcement responses by the Lao Government. 39 media articles report on wildlife trafficking syndicates in Lao PDR. 7 media articles came from local Lao media outlets.</li> <li>• <u>From 2016 to May 2018, at least 58 media articles relate to wildlife seizures implicating the role of Lao PDR in IWT. At least 41 media articles report on wildlife trafficking networks and syndicates in Lao PDR. At least 9 media articles were reported by local Lao media outlets. From 2017 to May 2018, at least 9 media articles report on the Lao Government's law enforcement response to IWT.</u></li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Links to media articles linking Lao PDR on IWT and responses made by Lao PDR on IWT are provided in <b>ANNEX 5</b>.</li> </ul> <p><u>2.2 The Lao Government has actively and constructively participated in global IWT events, namely:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 67<sup>th</sup> CITES Standing Committee Meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa in September 2016 and the 17<sup>th</sup> CITES Conference of the Parties in Johannesburg, South Africa in September/October 2016, where the Lao Government announced its commitment to phase-out tiger farms in Lao PDR, in addition to welcoming the recommendations from the CITES Secretariat to strengthen its compliance process;</li> <li>• The IWT Conference in Hanoi, Vietnam in November 2016, where the Lao delegation, led by the Deputy Prime Minister, reiterated the Lao Government’s commitment to implement CITES and tackle IWT in Lao PDR; and</li> <li>• The 69<sup>th</sup> CITES Standing Committee Meeting in Switzerland in October 2017, where the Lao delegation welcomed the recommendations from the Standing Committee and application of the CITES Article XIII Compliance process, whereby the Lao Government submitted an Action Plan to implement the recommendations and report back to the CITES Secretariat on substantial progress and achievement. The process has also lead to subsequent policy and law enforcement responses in Lao PDR to improve its CITES compliance, strengthen law enforcement efforts, and address specific IWT issues on tiger farming and ivory trade.</li> </ul> <p><u>2.3 Diplomatic missions, donor countries, and neighbouring countries have initiated actions to support and advocate policy and law enforcement responses from the Lao Government on IWT issues:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From 2016 to 2017, the diplomatic community in Lao PDR under the Wildlife Working Group (WWG)15.7 has met with and/or sent letters to three key government offices in Lao PDR advocating action on IWT, namely the Prime Minister’s Office, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, and the Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment. This has been sustained and continued in 2018 with positive policy outcomes from the Lao Government.</li> <li>• <a href="#">In August 2016</a>, the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) budgeted over 1 million USD for two projects aiming to support the combat of illegal hunting and trading of wildlife in Lao PDR from 2016 to 2020, focusing on strengthening capacities with the Customs Department and the DCNEC.</li> <li>• CITES Secretariat Mission and CITES Standing Committee meeting in</li> </ul>
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		<p>2016 provided recommendations to the Lao Government in strengthening its CITES compliance, leading to the announcement to phase-out tiger farms and implement CITES.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Vietnamese Government in hosting the IWT Conference in November 2016 invited high-level delegation from the Lao Government as a Guest of Honour and to speak on Lao PDR's commitment to tackle IWT.</li> <li>• <a href="#">In March 2017</a>, the Chinese government, through the Deputy Minister of the Chinese State Forestry Administration, Mr. Peng Youdong, entered into an agreement (MoU) with the Lao Government, through Deputy Minister of the Lao Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Mr. Thongphat Vongmany, on forestry cooperation, which includes strengthening efforts at wildlife conservation and CITES implementation between the two countries.</li> <li>• The Thai Government in September 2017 hosted the 4<sup>th</sup> Regional Dialogue to strengthen collaboration on IWT issues with Lao PDR and among Southeast Asian countries and China in combatting wildlife trafficking, particularly on ivory and rhino horn, tiger, pangolins, and rosewood.</li> <li>• CITES Secretariat Mission and CITES Standing Committee meeting in 2017 with recommendations for the Lao Government in strengthening its CITES compliance, leading to the application of the CITES Article XIII process and the submission of an Action Plan to report on substantial progress and achievement in implementing the recommendations.</li> <li>• <a href="#">In October 2017</a>, the Vietnamese government, through the Forestry Administration, entered into an agreement (MoU) with the Lao Government, through DOFI, on forest cooperation, forest law enforcement, controlling and preventing illegal trading and transport of timber, forest products, and wildlife, along the common borders of the two countries.</li> <li>• In November 2017, the US State Department submitted a report to the US Congress on focus countries and countries of concern under its Eliminate, Neutralize, and Disrupt (END) Wildlife Trafficking Act, listing Lao PDR as both a focus country and one of three countries of concern – which indicates that the Lao Government is actively engaged or knowingly profited from the trafficking of endangered or threatened species.</li> <li>• In January 2018, the US Treasury Department imposed sanctions on the Zhao Wei Transnational Criminal Organization, based in the Lao PDR</li> </ul>
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		<p>within the Golden Triangle Special Economic Zone (GTSEZ) for engaging in drug trafficking, human trafficking, money laundering, bribery, and wildlife trafficking, facilitated through the Kings Romans Casino.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Canada and Luxembourg Governments supported a Conference on Strengthening Capacities on Combating Transnational Organized Crime in Lao PDR organised by the Office of the Supreme People’s Prosecutor (OSPP) and the Institute for Legal Support and Technical Assistance (ILSTA) in February/March 2018. UNODC presented issues on wildlife crime and recommended clarity on institutional mandates for wildlife crime investigations, strengthened cooperation with neighbouring countries, and addressing the tiger farm issue in Lao PDR.</li> <li>• In March 2018, the Chinese embassy in Vientiane initiated a cooperative effort with the Chinese business community in Lao PDR to support Lao government efforts to tackle IWT through a joint pledge in a bilateral dialogue with Lao-WEN.</li> </ul>
<p>Activity 2.1. Develop an informed and active media network of domestic and foreign journalists (including media briefings, interviews, field trips, media analysis feedback reports)</p>		<p>WCS provided technical assistance and information to journalists and researchers from major international and local media outlets and organisations (e.g. New York Times, the Daily Mail, Xinhua, SixthTone, South China Morning Post, Vientiane Times, KPL, among others) in an effort to bring international attention to the situation and response of the Lao Government on IWT issues.</p> <p>In 2016, 25 media articles were published linking IWT to Lao PDR, with 6 media articles reporting on the three major wildlife trafficking networks operating in Lao PDR. Three articles featured Vinnasakhone and Vannaseng for the first time. Tiger farming was also acknowledged for the first time by the Lao Government in a domestic newspaper. In 2017, at least 87 articles were published exposing the role of Lao PDR in illegal wildlife trade. In 2018, at least 153 articles were published on Lao PDR’s role in IWT and actions being taken by Lao PDR to address IWT. See <b>ANNEX 5</b> for the media scanning links.</p>
<p>Activity 2.2. Tri-lateral dialogue on IWT enforcement collaboration between Laos, Vietnam, and China</p>		<p>In August 2016, a CEPF-supported tri-lateral cooperative field mission between frontline officers from Lao PDR, China, and Vietnam to track experiences, approaches, and update the situation on wildlife trafficking along the major Indo-Burma trade route culminated in a tri-lateral meeting in Guangzhou, China. In the meeting where WCS provided technical support, enforcement agencies from the three countries agreed on urgent measures enabling cross-border cooperation, communication, and investigation, to tackle wildlife trafficking networks operating across their countries.</p> <p>This trilateral meeting was followed by a series of regional dialogues and meetings to strengthen enforcement collaboration with Lao PDR on IWT issues, where WCS and the project provided technical assistance. In September 2017,</p>

the Thai Government hosted the 4<sup>th</sup> Regional Dialogue on Combatting Trafficking of Wild Fauna and Flora in Bangkok, that tackled the current situation on trafficking of ivory, rhino horn, pangolins, tigers, and rosewood within Southeast Asia and China, and provided opportunities for the Lao PDR to strengthen collaboration and learn best practices on CITES policy and enforcement from Vietnam and China, and other countries in Southeast Asia. In October 2017, DOFI entered into an agreement (MoU) with Vietnam’s Forestry Administration to promote cooperation on forest cooperation, forest law enforcement, controlling and preventing illegal trading and transport of timber, forest products, and wildlife, along the common borders of the two countries. In March 2018, WCS assisted DOFI in preparing for hosting the ASEAN Working Group on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement Meeting in Luang Prabang, where the Lao Delegation re-confirmed its commitment on CITES issues and wildlife law enforcement in cooperation with countries in ASEAN and with international organizations. This was followed by the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime Working Group on Wildlife and Timber Trafficking hosted by the Royal Thai Police in Bangkok, to discuss its workplan on IWT enforcement collaboration in Southeast Asia.

WCS also supported the participation of DOFI and Lao-WEN in a Thai-Malaysia-Lao tri-lateral dialogue hosted by the Malaysian Government in March 2018, where WCS, under the project, provided technical input during the meeting.

On 30 March 2018, WCS provided technical and financial support and logistical coordination to assist DOFI in organising a bilateral dialogue meeting between Lao-WEN and the Chinese embassy in Vientiane with representatives from the Chinese business community in Lao PDR. The dialogue meeting resulted in a joint pledge signed by the Chinese embassy and representatives from the China Hunan Chamber of Commerce, China General Chamber of Commerce, and the China Southern Airlines Vientiane Office to support efforts of the Lao Government against illegal ivory and wildlife trade, and to raise awareness within the Chinese business community in Lao PDR against illegal ivory and wildlife trade. The bilateral dialogue meeting outcome, statements made by participants, media reach of the meeting, photos, and the joint pledge made by the Chinese embassy and representatives from the business community is included in **ANNEX 6**.

After the project, WCS continued to provide technical assistance under its partnership with DOFI and DoF by facilitating a cooperative dialogue and action planning between the Lao Government and the CITES MA of China in Vientiane and Luang Prabang in May 2018. The project leveraged future planning with the Lao Government for upcoming cooperative dialogues with China, Vietnam, and Thailand in late 2018 and 2019.

Activity 2.3. Technical and fiscal support to participation of key Lao

In September 2016, WCS joined the Lao delegation attending CITES CoP17 and

<p>government agencies at global IWT events (e.g. Standing Committee)</p>	<p>67<sup>th</sup> CITES Standing Committee Meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa to provide technical assistance and guidance. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment was prepared on issues affecting Lao PDR, including the National Ivory Action Plan, report by the CITES Secretariat on its CITES mission to Lao PDR, tiger farming, and other outstanding issues and key proposals relevant to Lao PDR. At the meeting, the Lao delegation accepted all the CITES Secretariat's recommendations and made a commitment to phase out tiger farms in Lao PDR.</p> <p>This was followed in November 2016 by the IWT Conference in Hanoi, Vietnam where Deputy Prime Minister Sonexay Siphandone reiterated the Lao Government's commitment to CITES and to tackle IWT in Lao PDR.</p> <p>WCS has worked with DFRM (and DoF since the transition of the CITES MA in 2017) and DOFI in ensuring that the Lao Government continues to make progress on the commitments it made through a combination of technical assistance under Activity 3.1 and continued media pressure under Activity 2.1.</p> <p>In 2017, WCS continued to provide technical support to DOFI and the CITES MA to prepare for the CITES Secretariat Mission to Lao PDR in 2017, prepare and submit government progress reports to the CITES Secretariat, and prepare for relevant issues to Lao PDR during the 69<sup>th</sup> CITES Standing Committee Meeting, where the Lao PDR was subjected to a CITES Article XIII compliance process. The Lao delegation to the Standing Committee meeting welcomed the recommendations and endeavoured to comply with the tasks recommended by the Standing Committee to submit an Action Plan indicating the specific actions the Lao Government will implement in 2018 to comply with CITES recommendations.</p>
<p>Activity 2.4. Establish a regular IWT coordination forum to inform and activate bilateral donor agencies and diplomatic missions</p>	<p>WCS participated and contributed to regular meetings and fora on IWT. There were 3 main regular IWT coordination fora established and sustained during the project: (1) WWG 15.7, an informal group of developmental partners involving members of the diplomatic community and international organizations in Lao PDR, which share information on wildlife and timber trafficking; (2) the Law Enforcement Technical Advisory Group (LETAG), chaired by DOFI with representatives from Lao-WEN agencies and Technical Advisers from international projects and organisations in Lao PDR to discuss information on and technical support and responses to IWT in support of the work of DOFI and Lao-WEN; and (3) the Sub-Sector Working Group (SSWG) on Forestry, a higher-level coordination forum chaired by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry to report on and discuss issues and progress on work and activities relating to the forestry sector, including wildlife, with representatives from relevant agencies, members of the diplomatic community, and international organizations.</p> <p>In addition to these regular informal and formal coordination groups, WCS has also regularly discussed and provided information and intelligence to the UK and</p>



		<p>US embassies and the EU mission to activate political and policy support in advocating to the Lao Government necessary steps and requirements to strengthen its responses to IWT, particularly in the phase-out of tiger farms, closure of ivory markets, and strengthening law enforcement and coordination efforts at key trafficking hotspots.</p> <p>WCS is still actively participating as a member of the WWG15.7 after the project, following-up on numerous CITES policy and law enforcement recommendations and responses.</p>
<p><b>Output 3.</b> As informed, supportive and active constituency is developed from the National Assembly, Government Inspectorate, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Public Security, Ministry of Finance</p>	<p>3.1 By March 2018, five statements, legal documents, or actions by National Assembly, MoFA, and GI on IWT responses (Baseline = 0)</p>	<p>WCS support to the WWG15.7 under Activity 2.4 has been the primary mechanism for achieving activities within this output. Information and intelligence has been actively provided to the UK and US embassies and the EU mission to help facilitate preparation of letters and meetings with Ministers and the Prime Minister's Office on IWT. It was also through the engagement with media and journalists under Activity 2.1 that facilitated better awareness and urgency on IWT issues in Lao PDR, both among the international community and the Lao Government to enhance national response on CITES compliance and IWT issues.</p> <p>During the project, <b>13 statements, legal documents and actions</b> from the Lao Government were achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In May 2016, <i>Prime Minister Order No. 15 (2016)</i> was issued on intensifying compliance in the management and inspection of wood exploitation, timber removal and wood-related businesses</li> <li>• In June 2016, MAF issued <i>MAF Order No. 0054 (2016)</i> on the expansion and implementation of Prime Minister Order No. 15 (2016) where action is to be taken to “strictly prevent hunting, transport, merchandise in local market, import-export and transit of aquatic and wild animals and their parts through Laos to the third countries. Commercial farming of aquatic and wild animals in the list I of CITES is prohibited.”</li> <li>• In July 2016, a <i>5-Year Memorandum of Understanding (Co-Action)</i> on an active and comprehensive partnership was signed between WCS and DOFI to respond to IWT issues until 2021</li> <li>• In October 2016, the Lao Government announced during the CITES Standing Committee Meeting and the Conference of the Parties its <i>intervention to phase-out tiger farms in Lao PDR</i></li> <li>• In November 2016, in the IWT Conference in Hanoi, Deputy Prime Minister Sonexay Siphandone reiterated the Lao Government’s <i>commitment to tackle IWT in Lao PDR.</i></li> <li>• In December 2016, the Prime Minister issued <i>Notice No. 1990 (2016)</i></li> </ul>

		<p>directed to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry to address follow-up actions and commitments made as outcomes of the IWT Conference in Hanoi in November 2016, which includes: raising understanding and awareness in participation against all forms of illegal wildlife trading.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In January 2017, the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications (MPT) issued <i>Decision No. 168 (2017)</i> on prohibited items in the postal service, which include rhino horn, elephant ivory, tiger parts and wildlife, with measures on violators.</li> <li>• In April 2017, <i>Prime Minister Order No. 528 (2017)</i> was issued to prohibit the sale of 16 elephants to Dubai, demonstrating the Lao Government's commitment and response to information regarding the trade in live elephants</li> <li>• In October 2017, the Lao Government submitted its <i>progress report to the National Ivory Action Plan</i>, which reiterated its commitment made in CITES COP17 to close down domestic ivory markets and continued implementation of its NIAP. Likewise, during the 69<sup>th</sup> CITES Standing Committee Meeting, the Lao Government accepted the recommendations and the Article XIII Compliance Process imposed on Lao PDR.</li> <li>• In December 2017, the Lao Government submitted its <i>Action Plan to respond to the recommendations of the 69<sup>th</sup> CITES Standing Committee Meeting</i>, outlining specific action points to be implemented by the Lao Government as CITES compliance</li> <li>• <i>Revisions to the Penal Code</i>, particularly on wildlife- and forest-related offenses, have been adopted by the National Assembly, and submitted to the Office of the President for further action</li> <li>• In January 2018, the Prime Minister issued <i>Notification No. 64 (2018)</i> tasking development of three regulations to strengthen Lao PDR's implementation of CITES: (1) a Prime Minister Decision to establish the CITES Steering Committee; (2) a Prime Minister Order on strengthening CITES management and inspection; and (3) a Decision on wildlife farming guidelines.</li> <li>• In March 2018, the Prime Minister issued <i>Decision No. 18 (2018)</i> establishing and appointing the CITES Steering Committee responsible for oversight on CITES implementation. MAF also approved the National Wildlife Crime Response Strategy Plan under MAF Decision No. 0654 (2018) providing for Lao-WEN operational framework to respond to wildlife crime.</li> </ul>
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<p>Activity 3.1. Technical assistance to DoFI and the CITES MA to implement actions towards compliance with national and international IWT commitments</p>		<p>Technical support was provided to the CITES MA under DFRM on the reporting of the National Ivory Action Plan (NIAP) and MIKE progress reports in 2017. Technical support was sustained and continued to assist the CITES MA under DoF to prepare its Action Plan in December 2017 as part of the recommendations from the 69<sup>th</sup> CITES Standing Committee Meeting, and to consolidate information and ETIS reports on rhino horn and ivory seizures to the CITES Secretariat in February 2018. A checklist of CITES notifications and deadlines of reports, as well as a checklist for the progress in the implementation of its Action Plan to the CITES Secretariat were also provided to the CITES MA as part of the technical assistance to ensure awareness, understanding, and response to its CITES commitments. After the project, WCS has continued to provide the requested technical assistance, through workshops and mentoring meetings, on the implementation of its Action Plan and reporting of the NIAP and Action Plan progress reports to the CITES Secretariat.</p> <p>Technical assistance was also provided to the CITES MA and DOFI on a phase out strategy for tiger and bear farms in Lao PDR and trainings in wildlife and ivory identification and evidence management to assist in the closure of ivory and wildlife trade hotspots.</p> <p>WCS and DOFI also engaged an international media and communications consultant, commissioned to design awareness campaigns targeting Chinese tourists visiting Lao PDR. The message will focus on the prohibition and negative consequences of engaging in illegal wildlife trade in English, Chinese, and local Lao languages. Designs developed under the consultancy have been used by DOFI and local authorities in the production of the campaign materials to be installed in Luang Prabang airport in July 2018, and still under negotiation, for Wattay Vientiane airport.</p>

<p>Activity 3.2. Briefings to National Assembly, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government Inspectorate on IWT issues and responses</p>	<p>During the initial year of the project when the CITES MA was the responsibility of DFRM under MoNRE, the Minister of MoNRE was extensively briefed on IWT issues and responses to IWT, particularly in relation to the Lao government's participation in high-level international meetings such as CITES and the IWT Conference supported by the UK Government. During the CITES Standing Committee Meeting and Conference of the Parties in 2016 in South Africa, briefings and information enabled the Lao Government to respond to recommendations and make an intervention to phase out tiger farms in Lao PDR.</p> <p>The transfer and designation of the CITES MA to DoF under MAF required informing and providing updates and briefings to the Minister and Vice-Minister of MAF and the Director-General of DOF on CITES and IWT issues and responses to IWT. These included briefings on tiger farming and ivory trade in Lao PDR. During the 69<sup>th</sup> CITES Standing Committee Meeting in 2017, briefings and information provided to MAF, DoF, and DOFI on the IWT issues in Lao PDR prepared the Lao Government delegation to understand the implications of the recommendations from the CITES Standing Committee, and follow-up actions to implement these recommendations. This has also lead to subsequent policy issuances by the Prime Minister in 2018, during and after the project, ensuring better awareness and coordination among different Ministries and their line agencies on CITES and IWT issues and responses, e.g. establishment of a CITES Steering Committee through <i>Prime Minister Decision No. 18 (2018)</i>.</p> <p>Information briefings on IWT issues and responses have continued to sustain progress on the Lao Government's CITES implementation and compliance and preparation for international meetings such as CITES (Standing Committee meeting in 2018; Conference of the Parties in 2019), and the London IWT Conference in October 2018. These have been done through existing platforms such as the: (1) SSWG on Forestry meetings; (2) Lao-WEN meetings, coordinated by DOFI; and (3) CITES coordination and planning meetings, coordinated by DoF.</p>
<p>Activity 3.3. Multi-agency workshops to plan actions and disseminate information on responses to IWT</p>	<p>During the project, planning meetings and discussions were regularly held with Lao-WEN agencies including the Department of Forest Inspection, Customs, and Environmental Police, specifically to share information and plan responses to addressing the ivory and related wildlife trade markets in Lao PDR. These were through government recognized platforms/fora such as: (1) Lao-WEN Coordination Meetings, also chaired by DOFI and coordinated through the Lao-WEN Coordination Unit with representatives from Lao-WEN agencies to update on issues and plan coordinated responses on IWT; and (2) in multi-agency capacity-building workshops and trainings, as well as planning meetings, organized by DOFI with other agencies, and supported under the project and other relevant projects of WCS. Lao-WEN agencies participating in the multi-agency workshops include: DOFI, DoF, DCNEC, Interpol NCB Police, Ministry of</p>

Science and Technology as CITES Scientific Authority, Customs Department, Department of Import-Export, Office of the Public Prosecutor, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In addition, Activity 2.4 on regular IWT coordination meetings (e.g. LETAG meetings, and the SSWG on Forestry meetings) provided additional platforms to link information and technical support from the international community in Lao PDR to leverage policy and law enforcement actions and responses from DOFI, DOF, and Lao-WEN agencies.

These multi-agency platforms and fora to disseminate information and plan actions and responses to IWT have been sustained and are still continuing after the project to follow-through recommendations from the 69<sup>th</sup> Standing Committee Meeting of CITES, the dissemination and implementation of a recently issued Prime Minister Order No. 05 (2018) imposing strict compliance in the management and inspection of prohibited wildlife in Lao PDR, and operational planning for wildlife crime responses and actions.

## Annex 3: Media Scanning on Wildlife Seizures in Lao PDR from Checklist for submission

	Check
<b>Is the report less than 10MB?</b> If so, please email to <a href="mailto:IWT-Fund@ltsi.co.uk">IWT-Fund@ltsi.co.uk</a> putting the project number in the subject line.	
<b>Is your report more than 10MB?</b> If so, please discuss with <a href="mailto:IWT-Fund@ltsi.co.uk">IWT-Fund@ltsi.co.uk</a> about the best way to deliver the report, putting the project number in the subject line.	
<b>Have you included means of verification?</b> You need not submit every project document, but the main outputs and a selection of the others would strengthen the report.	
<b>Do you have hard copies of material you want to submit with the report?</b> If so, please make this clear in the covering email and ensure all material is marked with the project number.	
Have you involved your partners in preparation of the report and named the main contributors	YES
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table fully?	YES
Do not include claim forms or other communications with this report.	