

Illegal Wildlife Trade: Half Year Report

Project Ref No: IWT033

Project Title: Leveraging Action to Disrupt Wildlife Trafficking Networks in Lao PDR

Country: Lao PDR

Lead Organisation: Wildlife Conservation Society

Collaborator(s): Department of Forest Inspection, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

Project Leader: Christopher Holmes

Report date and number: 30th October 2016 / IWTCFR1

Project website: <https://programs.wcs.org/laos>

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

Activity 1.1: Information gathering surveys by WCS and partners in Lao PDR

Outputs: Information gathering surveys have been conducted on major wildlife trafficking syndicates, trade routes, entry and exit points, Ivory trading hotspots in stores and hotels. The information has been inputted into i2 for the production and dissemination of intelligence products as reported in activity 1.2 and 1.3.

Activity 1.2: Maintenance of WCS Intelligence management and analysis system ensuring Lao PDR has access to a global database on IWT

Outputs: The IBM i2 Intelligence Management system is being utilised to record, maintain and analyse data on IWT in Lao PDR. During the reporting period 170 records/source documents relating to Lao PDR IWT were inputted.

Activity 1.3: Production and dissemination of intelligence products on three wildlife trafficking syndicates operating in Lao PDR.

Outputs: There have been 18 Intelligence products produced and disseminated. These include a situational analysis, dossiers on the major wildlife trafficking organisations, individuals, investigation reports on ivory and wildlife trading hotspots and a geo intelligence report on borders and entry/exit points.

Activity 2.1: Develop an informed and active media network of domestic and foreign journalists.

Outputs: There have been 6 international newspaper articles published reporting on the three major wildlife trafficking networks in operating in Lao PDR. Three of these featured Vinnasakhone and Vanneseng for the first time. Tiger farming acknowledged for the first time by the government of Lao PDR in a domestic newspaper.

Activity 2.2: Tri-lateral dialogue on IWT enforcement collaboration between Laos, Vietnam and China.

Outputs: A tri lateral meeting between China, Lao PDR and Vietnam is in the planning stages. This is as a follow up to Tri-lateral and Bi-lateral meetings held during the year where a joint transnational task force was proposed to enable cross border cooperation, communication and investigation.

Activity 2.3: Technical and fiscal support to participation of key government agencies at global IWT events.

Outputs: The Director of the Division of Wildlife and Aquatic Management, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment was supported to attend the CITES Convention of Parties and Standing Committee to represent the government of Lao PDR. Prior to attending the COP he was prepared on issues effecting Lao PDR including the National Ivory Action Plan, report by the CITES secretariat on the CITES visit to Lao PDR, Tiger farming and positions on key proposals relevant to Lao PDR.

Activity 2.4: Establish a regular IWT coordination forum to inform and activate bilateral donor agencies and diplomatic missions.

Outputs: WCS participates and contributes to regular forums on IWT including the WG15.7, comprised of international Embassies, NGO's and donors, and the Law Enforcement Technical Advisors group.

Activity 3.1: Technical assistance to DOFI and CITES MA to implement actions towards compliance with national and international IWT.

Outputs: Technical support given to CITES MA on the reporting of the National Ivory Action Plan and technical support given to DOFI on a phase out strategy for ending tiger farming in Lao PDR and training in wildlife and Ivory identification and evidence seizure to assist with the closure of Ivory trade hotspots.

Activity 3.2: Briefings to National assembly, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government Inspectorate on IWT issues and responses.

Outputs: The Minister of the Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment has been extensively briefed on IWT issues and responses to IWT. This enabled him to respond to recommendations at the CITES Standing Committee and to make an intervention on ending tiger farms in Lao PDR.

Activity 3.3: Multi Agency workshops to plan and disseminate information responses to IWT

Outputs: This activity is planned for the second quarter of 2017.

2a. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

There have been no delayed, problems or unexpected developments in the implementation of this project.

2b. Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with LTS: Yes/No **NA**

Formal change request submitted: Yes/No **NA**

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes/No **NA**

3a. Do you currently expect to have any significant (eg more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?

Yes **No X** Estimated underspend: £

3b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully as it is unlikely that any requests to carry forward funds will be approved this year. Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project and would like to talk to someone about the options available this year, please indicate below when you think you might be in a position to do this and what the reasons might be:

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

There are no other issues we wish to raise that this time.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also be raised with LTS International through a Change Request.**

Please send your **completed report by email** to Joanne Gordon at IWT-Fund@ltsi.co.uk. The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message eg Subject: 001 IWT Half Year Report**