

Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund Half Year Report

(due 31st October 2020)

Project reference:	283
Project title:	Strengthening transcontinental cooperation to combat IWT between Viet Nam and Mozambique
Country(ies):	Viet Nam, Mozambique
Lead organisation:	Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)
Collaborator(s):	Viet Nam Supreme People's Procuracy (SPP), Ministry of Public Security (MPS), Mozambique National Administration of Conservation Areas (ANAC)
Project leader:	Hoang Bich Thuy
Report date and number:	April 1, 2020 – September 30, 2020, HYR4
Project website/blog/social media:	None

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

Output 1: Political commitment for cooperation between Viet Nam and Mozambique to combat IWT is strengthened through legal mechanisms and improved protocols.

Activity 1.1 Prepare draft MLAT and SOPs with Vietnamese agencies - Completed

Activity 1.2: Secure agreement on MLAT and protocols for enforcement cooperation

The signing of MLAT (Mozambique – Viet Nam Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty) on criminal matters in December 2018 marked the completion of this activity. The document was ratified by the President of Viet Nam in July 2019, and on May 21, 2020, Mozambique's Prime Minister, on behalf of the Council of Ministers, ratified it by a promulgation of the Resolution 35/2020. As such, the MLAT is now effective for implementation in both countries.

With leveraged funds from the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), in late 2019, WCS initiated discussions to organize the first bilateral review meeting for Viet Nam's SPP and Mozambique's PGR to enhance bilateral cooperation in prosecuting transnational crimes including wildlife crimes. This meeting was delayed twice in November 2019 and February 2020 due to presidential and National Assembly elections in Mozambique and because of the impacts of COVID-19; it is currently rescheduled for mid-2021.

Activity 1.3. Organize a series of face to face and virtual briefing sessions on legal framework and MLAT procedure between Viet Nam and Mozambique - Ongoing

This new activity was approved in September 2020. We plan to conduct two face-to-face and/or virtual briefing sessions, depending on COVID-19 travel restrictions in Viet Nam, on legal frameworks and MLAT procedures between Viet Nam and Mozambique for Vietnamese prosecutors from key provinces implicated in the trafficking of rhino horns from Mozambique. These meeting will discuss actions on how to proceed mutual legal assistance, convening

witnesses and experts, collecting and providing intelligence, evidence, and information exchange for a criminal prosecution, and providing a point of contact for agencies as necessary. Meeting briefs will be shared to the focal contact agencies at Mozambique's Public Prosecutor's Office (PGR) and the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) for subsequent coordination. This activity is planned for Nov-Dec. 2020. Updates will be in the final annual report.

Output 2: Enhanced capacity for cooperative law enforcement actions on IWT between Mozambique and Viet Nam.

Activity 2.1. Finalise preparation for the Vietnamese liaison officer - Completed

Activity 2.2. Conduct bilateral meetings to formalise the Vietnamese liaison officer deployment plan - Completed

Activity 2.3: Support the deployment of the Vietnamese liaison officer (VLO) – Completed

[REDACTED] In January 2020, WCS recruited a local CWT Coordinator based in Maputo, who will facilitate information exchange on cases related to Vietnam and Mozambique.

Output 3: Viet Nam and Mozambique proactively share information and actionable intelligence on African rhino horn and ivory trafficking networks

Activity 3.1: Investigate and collect data on trafficking networks - ongoing

In this reporting period, with co-financing from Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) Partnership Fund and Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), we produced and shared two intelligence reports and three other reports with various partners as follows:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Output 4: Vietnamese residents in Mozambique perceive a greater risk of partaking in wildlife crimes

No further activities to be conducted, following the change request approved in September 2020.

2a. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months (for Covid-19 specific delays/problems, please use 2b). Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

N/A

2b. Please outline any specific issues which your project has encountered as a result of Covid-19. Where you have adapted your project activities in response to the pandemic, please briefly outline how you have done so here. Explain what residual impact there may be on your project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

Both governments have responded to the COVID-19 pandemic with a series of actions such as quarantining infected locations and people, closing border gates, and social distancing in vulnerable localities. Gatherings, crowd meetings and cross-province/international travels are also discouraged or cancelled. Under Activity 1.2, we planned to work with the Viet Nam's SPP to co-host a bilateral review meeting with Mozambique's PGR. The meeting was delayed twice and rescheduled to mid-2021 with a hope that COVID-19 will be better controlled globally.

Similarly, we have seen very little action by the Governments of Mozambique and Viet Nam following sharing IWT intelligence products and partly due to government limitations on travels and gatherings, we changed our methods of collecting IWT information to desk-based reviews and rapid provincial verification trips when the travel restrictions were lifted in Viet Nam. In September 2020, we received approval for a change request asking for a no-cost extension of additional six months to December 2020 to ensure we have enough time to gather additional field information on IWT in key localities and to continue to follow up with government partners.

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

Discussed with LTS: No

Formal change request submitted: Yes

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes

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

Yes No Estimated underspend: £

3b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully. Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project, please submit a rebudget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a rebudget, so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes if necessary. Please DO NOT send these in the same email as your report.

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

No

If you were asked to provide a response to this year's annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document.

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 DO NOT send these in the same email.****

Please send your **completed report by email** to IWT-Fund@ltsi.co.uk. The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message e.g. Subject: IWT001 Half Year Report.**