



Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund Final Report

IWT Challenge Fund Project Information

Project reference	IWT 047
Project title	Developing Investigation and Prosecution Capacity to Save Angola's Elephants
Country(ies)	Republic of Angola / <i>República de Angola</i>
Lead organisation	Stop Ivory (SI) / Elephant Protection Initiative Foundation (EPIF)
Partner institution(s)	National Institute for Biodiversity and Conservation Areas (INBC) Wildlife Impact (WI) Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) International Environmental Law Project (IELP) TRAFFIC Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) Uganda
IWT grant value	£395,160.00
Start/end dates of project	01 July 2017 - 30 April 2020 Project extended to 30 April 2021 Project extended to 31 January 2022 Project extended to 31 March 2022
Project Leader's name	Ruth Musgrave - EPIF Dr Naomi Doak - EPIF
Project website/blog/social media	www.elephantprotectioninitiative.org
Report author(s) and date	Ruth Musgrave Director of Stockpile Management Harry Thorold Head of Finance Andrew Crichton Head of Operations 30 April 2022

1. Project summary

The project aimed to address:

- Angola's severe elephant poaching crisis;
- The weak criminal justice system pathway for the illegal wildlife trade in Angola, the lack of capacity within law enforcement agencies as well as the judiciary, and the lack of successful prosecutions; and
- The large-scale domestic ivory trade and trans-boundary trafficking of ivory through Angola.

Angola's main elephant population in the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA), described as the last stronghold for 60% of African elephants, was being poached at a rate of 10% per year. However, Angola can support the largest remaining African elephant range and, as such, protecting its elephant population is of critical international importance. Figure 1 below highlights the location of Luengue-Luiana National Park (LLNP) which forms part of the KAZA transboundary area.

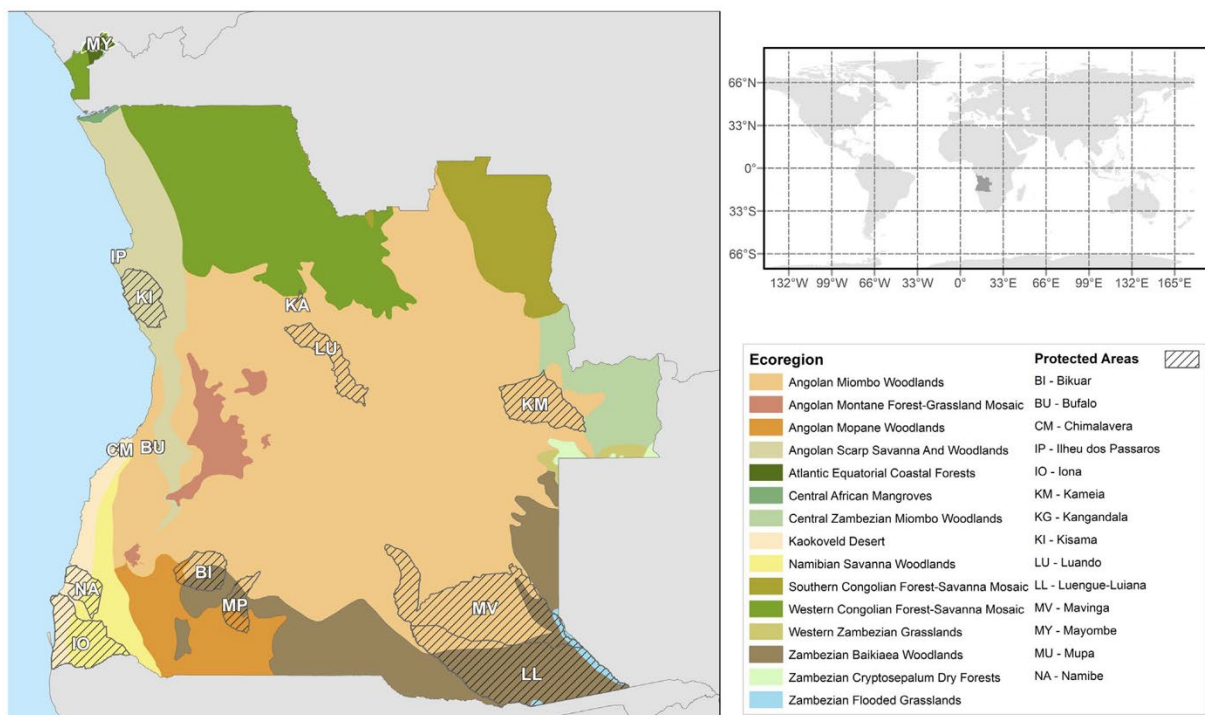


Figure 1 – An ecoregion and protected areas map of Angola (map sourced from doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0103403.g001).¹

The area annotated “LL” on the map represents Luengue-Luiana National Park, within the KAZA transboundary area.

Angola is a major ivory trafficking hub and arguably the largest such market in Africa; identified as “of importance to watch” by the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS), which identified commercial scale exports of raw and worked ivory in 2016. Since June 2016 Angola has been implementing measures to close its domestic ivory market.

Impact of this project on target species:

In the short-term, this project aimed to reduce the poaching of elephants and the trafficking of ivory through improved awareness and capacity building of prosecutors and the judiciary, leading to successful prosecutions. Assessment and analysis of the ivory trade in Angola and the investigations into the networks responsible for poaching elephants and trafficking ivory aimed to provide the evidence needed for successful prosecutions. This was intended to lead to the identification of networks expanding beyond

¹ Romeiras MM, Figueira R, Duarte MC, Beja P, Darbyshire I (2014) Documenting Biogeographical Patterns of African Timber Species Using Herbarium Records: A Conservation Perspective Based on Native Trees from Angola. PLoS ONE 9(7): e103403. IWT Final Report Template 2021

Angola. Successful prosecutions were intended to act as a disincentive and ultimately lead to a decrease in poaching.

In the medium term, this project aimed to act as a catalyst to the Angolan Government and donors alike to implement other elephant protection measures and activities to combat ivory trafficking, as outlined in Angola's National Elephant Action Plan (NEAP). The EPIF's successful work with the Angolan Government on this project facilitated the successful application for funds from the United States (US) State Department aimed at strengthening the management of evidence through reinforcement of storerooms, their organisation, and underlying procedures across the country.

In the long-term, this project aimed to contribute towards helping the elephant population to stabilise, recover and eventually grow – safe from poachers – with Angola no longer a central market for ivory trading in Africa. Of course, this cannot be demonstrated yet, but will require on-going monitoring and evaluation in the future. This may take the form of a follow-on project or direct activities implemented by the Government of Angola itself.

It was intended that the increased capacity and awareness of prosecutors and judiciary with respect to the wildlife trade in general will also increase the number of successful prosecutions for cases linked to ivory as well as those connected to other species. These prosecutions will ultimately be recorded in the National Wildlife Crime Recording Database. Improvements in law enforcement efforts will move wildlife crime from a low risk to a high-risk activity for those engaged in the practice, therefore decreasing the incentive to be involved in wildlife crime more generally.

Impact of this project on communities:

This project targeted: INBC, the Angolan Ministry of Environment (MoE), as well as prosecutors and the judiciary.

INBC staff received institutional capacity-building and personal development opportunities through this project. Law enforcement agencies and the judiciary were provided with training through this project, which directly upskilled 50 personnel drawn from across the police, the prosecutor's office, and the judiciary. This developed both personal and institutional capacity, improving the individuals' ability to carry out their professional duties, as well as develop recommendations to embed policies and practices within the institutions. All of which will, in time, lead to institutional-level change. Indirectly, the project benefited all prosecutors and judicial staff through cascade awareness raising, and the sharing of knowledge as well as tools, with course participants.

2. Project Partnerships

Government partners:

SI/EPIF was the lead organisation on this project and INBC was a highly involved partner, playing a key role in the development, planning and delivery of all activities. The EPIF's key point of contact within INBC has been Ms Albertina Nzuzi Matias with whom regular mobile phone, email and in-person correspondence has been maintained.

The activities delivered as part of this project were developed in coordination with INBC in order to align with the objectives set out in Angola's NEAP and National Ivory Action Plan (NIAP) and to ensure they were embedded with the relevant Government partners. Indeed, this project features as part of the NEAP Annex 2 (itself facilitated by the EPIF), which outlines the ongoing as well as proposed projects relevant to the NEAP and which has been signed off by the Head of INBC.

The relationship between the EPIF, INBC, the Angolan MoE, as well as the various Ministers of Environment who have served during the course of this project have remained strong throughout the implementation thereof. The EPIF has remained flexible and agile in ensuring ongoing and open lines of communication with all Government stakeholders, including the use of: WhatsApp and text messages, telephone calls, email, Google Translate as well as accredited Portuguese translators, an in-country legal expert (Maria Bom Jesus), working closely with the British Embassy, employing an in-country consultant to undertake face-to-face meetings, and undertaking 5 separate working trips to Angola. This multifaceted engagement strategy proved essential in mitigating delays to activities resulting from capacity and availability/scheduling issues within INBC and other Government departments.

The Attorney General's Office for the Republic of Angola (PGR) allocated a focal point, Dr Eduarda Rodrigues Neto, for the development, planning, and implementation of activities that required national prosecutorial input by the Head of INBC. This relationship was crucial in staying abreast of the rapidly changing and, at times, challenging legal landscape in Angola. This included the drafting of new wildlife legislation as well as changes to the Penal Code. The good working relationship with PGR was pivotal in informing deliverables such as the training course that included 20 prosecutors from across Angola.

NGO partners:

EIA (Environmental Investigation Agency, UK) was involved in the project since the application stage and led on the development of the methodology for, as well as the delivery of, the assessment of domestic and transboundary ivory trade, including the investigation of criminal networks trading ivory in Angola. EIA and SI/EPIF were in regular communication throughout the project (including 3 face-to-face meetings) and working relationships between EIA, the Angolan Government, other NGO stakeholders, and technical experts progressed well throughout. The EPIF facilitated activities and relationships between these groups wherever possible.

The partnership with WI, IELP, and USFWS was suggested through the Angolan MoE as well as Dr Tamar Ron and proved to be very productive. This was in large part due to the Ministerial approval and origin of this partnership, reinforced by the collaborative nature, commitment to information sharing, and regular communications between all parties. As these partners are all based in the US, interaction was primarily remote (email, video, and telephone calls), however a face-to-face meeting did take place during the course of September 2018.

Given the success of the partnership noted above, Dr Tamar Ron further opened communications between EPIF and TRAFFIC; having identified the synergies between the projects being implemented by the 2 organisations. TRAFFIC was undertaking a project entitled "Combating Wildlife Crime in Namibia and the Kavango-Zambezi Area", for which Angola was a focal point for specific activities. Moreover, strengthening investigations and prosecutions also formed a key component of this TRAFFIC project. There were regular and clear communications between TRAFFIC and the EPIF throughout and a representative from the former was included as an international guest speaker during Activity 1.3 of this project.

SI/EPIF and WCS Uganda worked together in the past in order to develop and roll out a National Wildlife Criminal Offenders database in that country. This model has since been adapted and rolled out in other African countries. Lessons learned during this process directly informed the development, planning, and implementation of Activity 1.5. in this instance.

Maria Bom Jesus' involvement on the project was exceptional as she rose to the challenge of working as a national legal expert on an environmental-focussed project after the activities had already commenced. Allocated by the Angolan MoE after the previously allocated national legal consultant was no longer available, she began the legislative review in August 2018. She was involved in developing, planning, and delivering Activities 1.2. and 1.3. as well as acting as an in-country "fixer" for arranging meetings and following up with PGR as well as INBC.

3. Project Achievements

3.1 Outputs

Output 1: Law enforcement agencies have increased capacity to effectively investigate elephant poaching and ivory trafficking cases; judiciary are willing and able to implement judicial guidance on wildlife crime.

The activities towards attaining Output 1 included:

0.1. **Project launch meeting with Minister including representatives from all law enforcement agencies, project partners, and media.**

The launch event was held on 04 December 2017 at the British Embassy in Luanda. Invitations and event program and other materials regarding the event were provided in Portuguese and English. The event was hosted by His Excellency Ambassador John Dennis and held in the presence of Secretary of State for the Environment Mr Joaquim Lourenço, representing Her Excellency Paula Coelho, Minister for the Environment. Attendees included SI Board Members David Stulb and Alexander Rhodes; a high-level cross-departmental delegation from the Angolan Government; the UN Resident Coordinator, Mr Pier Paolo Balladelli; and, NGO partners, including Mary Rice, CEO of EIA. The launch event was an excellent opportunity to inform all partners and stakeholders of the aims and activities of the project and achieved broader recognition through media coverage of the event.

1.1. **Review of penalties and application in wildlife crime – INBC and SI/EPIF will develop terms of reference and the review will be carried out by an Angolan lawyer.**

The planning for this activity was undertaken in Year 1. The roundtable discussion successfully took place in Year 2, with WI and IELP both present along with representatives from USFWS. The findings from the event and various meetings, including a stakeholders' coordination meeting, were essential for adapting the scope of Activities 1.2., 1.3., and 1.4. to best suit the rapidly changing legal landscape in Angola. At the time of the roundtable, several pieces of essential legislation for wildlife prosecutions (protected areas, environmental crime, CITES legislation, and the Penal Code) existed only in draft with no confirmed date for finalisation.

1.2. **Best practice handbook on wildlife crime developed (including planning and delivery).**

The findings from the Activity 1.1 roundtable on the current context of prosecutorial practice in Angola, and the imminent changes to be brought in through new legislations and Penal Code, were discussed with the legal consultants regarding the impact on Activity 1.2. It was agreed that the scope of the handbook be altered and paired back to avoid sections of it being obsolete as soon as the new legislation was adopted and so better suit the situation on the ground. Therefore, the output of the activity was updated to the "Pocketbook Guide to Wildlife Crime Charges in Angola." The first draft of which, developed in partnership with PGR and INBC, was trialled during Activity 1.3 as a training aid in the fact-finding exercises. It was intended as a quick reference guide for investigators, prosecutors, and the judiciary to provide information on various offences across multiple acts, which may be applied to wildlife crime. An updated version of the guide was produced and delivered to all participants as well as used as a training aid during Activity 1.4 in November 2019. The guide continues to be used by other organisations, including a US Agency for International Development (USAID) funded project.

1.3. **Training course for 30 prosecutors (including planning and delivery).**

The findings from the Activity 1.1 roundtable and consultations with the legal experts provided justification to alter the scope of the training course to better suit the situation on the ground. A skills-based training course using legislation which was imminently due to change was therefore not practical. More appropriate was to provide an introductory sensitisation symposium for both prosecutors and police to encourage cross-agency communications and provide a solid baseline for long-term capacity building. This approach was endorsed by the Minister of Environment and the delivery took place during the course of January 2019, slightly delayed due to the PGR office's involvement in an anti-corruption awareness course.

20 prosecutors and 10 police officers and investigators from across Angola received specific training and awareness raising on the importance of wildlife crime prosecutions and the national legislation currently available to them in support of prosecutions. Gathering data on the number of poaching and trafficking cases that resulted in arrests and successful conviction was undertaken in partnership EIA.

1.4. **Introductory Judicial Symposium on Wildlife Crime.**

Meetings regarding this activity were held in May 2019; expertise and feedback from PGR, MoE, and INBC were incorporated to ensure Angolan ownership and to refine the content and delivery for the judicial audience. The Judicial Symposium took place between 19 - 21 November 2019, later than initially proposed, but this was unavoidable due to availability of the lead international legal expert in combination with delays in being allocated a judicial focal point.

Training was provided to 20 magistrates and judges. Training included the launch of the aforementioned guide as well as case study exercises. The level of participation from attendees and demand for the training materials was high and indicated a strong motivation to prosecute wildlife crimes. Materials from the training were also provided to other project partners, including INBC, for dispersal across relevant Government agencies. Monitoring and evaluation activities were undertaken through surveys of participants. Consultation and outreach to the participants from the training indicate a continued willingness to follow judicial guidance on sentencing as and when wildlife crimes reach prosecution.

1.5. **Implement a national wildlife crime recording database – training and computers will be provided to INBC staff to implement a database at 7 different sites including INBC headquarters and protected areas.**

Initial discussions regarding the activity took place with a consultant from WCS Uganda, who confirmed their availability in 2019 to help develop a national wildlife crime recording database, as they had implemented a similar system for the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA).

A briefing note on the proposal to use the Ugandan model for the database was provided to INBC in April 2019. However, upon discussion with INBC, the lack of infrastructure within Angolan protected areas and a lack of capacity on the ground, meant that this model for the database would not be suitable in this case. Therefore, the EPIF worked with the head of the Environmental Crime Unit (ECU) and INBC to scale back the activity into a more appropriate deliverable.

To this end, a scoping mission with Government agencies took place in October 2019. However, this activity fell behind in terms of implementation. This was largely a result of staff changes at INBC and the Angolan MoE, as formal decisions were needed on the format for the database as a result of a variety of options being available under different projects. Consultations with all relevant stakeholders led to the decision to support the implementation of the USFWS database. Collaboration between EPIF and WI and a desire to implement the most effective and suitable database resulted in a consultant agreement from EPIF to WI to support and expand the delivery of the USFWS technology.

Output 2: Strategic assessment of domestic and transboundary ivory trade and analysis of key trade networks and personnel.

The activities towards attaining Output 2 included:

2.1. Desktop scoping study of Angola's historical and current ivory trade and comparison with the previous 2014 Martin/Vigne study.

In order to complete the activities for Output 2, SI/EPIF and the CEO of EIA held 2 in person meetings during the course of 2017. The focus was developing a Memorandum of Understanding, with a defined workplan and timeline for the deliverables on these activities. Ministerial approval of the project activities was required prior to commencing work and signing of the MOU between EIA/EPIF and this was eventually granted during the technical meeting at the launch event in Luanda. Following approval, SI/EPIF and EIA held 2 further face-to-face meetings (in 2017 and 2018 respectively), along with regular telephone calls, email exchanges, and video calls.

2.2. Scoping visit to Luanda – on-site assessment of ivory markets, interviews with traders and law enforcement officials, and production of report for investigations.

EIA undertook a scoping trip to Angola in early 2018. They found that there was still an ivory trade in operation within Angolan artist markets, however it was not to the same level as recorded in the 2014 Martin/Vigne study and it was no longer found openly within these markets. EIA's communications with market traders revealed that enforcement was not considered a concern regarding ivory sales, and that it was common for buyers to get through Angolan airports whilst wearing ivory without any need for concealment. The report contained more details on the findings as well as helpful recommendations for the consideration of the Angolan Government. Such as an educational poster campaign, in relevant languages, at the airports in order to raise awareness and counter such open flaunting of the laws, whilst being cost effective.

The resultant findings and report were delivered, by hand and in Portuguese, to the Minister of Environment during meetings in May 2018. The contents of the report are highly sensitive and have not been shared more widely.

2.3. First investigation on Angolan ivory trade including site visits and reports produced for and shared with relevant law enforcement agencies and report produced for potential second investigation.

In 2018, EIA undertook covert field investigations in Angola along with desk-based research and social media monitoring, which resulted in the identification of major wildlife trafficking networks operating in Angola. Multiple briefings and reports were given to trusted Angolan Government contacts prior to the CITES CoP, focussing on active criminal syndicates linked to specific Asian demand countries.

Due to the highly sensitive nature of the information and for the safety of the personnel working on the activities, information regarding this activity should not be published and should be treated as strictly confidential.

Output 3: Stakeholders fully appraised of outcome and impact of project activities and open access plan implemented.

All relevant materials developed under this project have been shared in soft and hard copy across the following Government agencies INBC, MoE, and PGR. Confidential reports under Output 2 have been shared with relevant agencies.

Project materials have also been shared with NGO partners and stakeholders working in the Angola wildlife space: TRAFFIC, the International Conservation Caucus Foundation (ICCF), USFWS, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). UNDOC and UNDP also indicated they would like to take the guide as a framework to build upon and update when they start interventions under separate projects.

Communications continued with all project partners and relevant stakeholders with regular updates on project activities throughout the implementation phase. All materials were shared openly as per the open access plan.

The activities towards attaining Output 3 included:

3.1. Project wrap-up meeting with all stakeholders to discuss outcomes of all outputs and open access plan implemented.

This activity was delayed indefinitely as a result of COVID-19, which prevented international travel between 2020-2021 and into 2022. All project partners and stakeholders have been kept up to date on the project activities and their deliverables throughout the course of the project.

It was hoped that this activity could be held before the end of 2021. Indeed, a draft agenda and invite list was developed, whilst options for a virtual meeting were explored. However, holding a virtual meeting with Angolan Government officials has proved difficult and ongoing delays associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and, more specifically, Angola's response to the pandemic meant that a second and then a third no-cost extension were granted until 31 January and 31 March 2022 respectively. No formal project wrap-up meeting has been held to date. However, this activity is intended to take place during the course of 2022 on conclusion of the database development and subject to availability from Angolan Government partners.

3.2. End of grant reports submitted.

This document forms part of the final project reports (technical and financial) and reflects all the approved change requests as well as other pertinent information relating to the grant.

3.2 Outcome

The intended outcome of the project was for Ivory trading and trafficking in Angola to be reduced, through strengthened capacity of the wildlife department, prosecutors and judiciary, and implementation of recommendations from the ivory trade analysis and investigation to facilitate successful prosecutions.

Indicator 0.1: National Stockpile Management System (SMS) data on seized IWT items as a proxy for increased national law enforcement capacity for evidence management and therefore increased capacity across the multiple law enforcement agencies involved in the chain of custody.

Indicator 0.2: Yearly average of seized elephant products linked to Angola recorded in ETIS increases from the baseline in 2016 to 2020 by 20% to indicate an increase in successful investigations and interventions as awareness and capacity for wildlife crimes increases.

As noted in the Annual Report for Year 2, Indicators 0.1 and 0.2 were updated from the initial indicators. EPIF continued to work with the CITES Management Authority National Focal Point to access the SMS data on IWT items. Unfortunately, the EPIF was unable to get access to the data in time for the submission of this final report. However, audits of Government held stockpiles were undertaken in late February to provide the required data for CITES reporting. EPIF will continue to work with the CITES Management Authority to secure access to the SMS data following an inventory due to take place in May 2022.

Delays in getting the updated data were partly due to the level of approval needed to share this data and impacts from COVID-19 as INBC staff have typically only worked at 30% capacity and have not been able to travel to locations outside Luanda to undertake checks of wildlife items until very recently.

EPIF also worked with EIA to gain access to updated analysis of Angola-related seizure data. Unfortunately, this data was not forthcoming prior to submission of the final report.

Indicator 0.3: By the end of Year 4, there is a national recording database for wildlife crime offenders functional and used Angolan law enforcement agencies to track wildlife crime cases. 5 members of MoE, INBC and the ECU are trained in using and maintaining it.

Implementation of this activity was delayed as a result of COVID-19 related restrictions on travel and meetings including training. Initial plans for the database to be implemented by WCS Uganda were adapted and changed as a result of the scoping visit undertaken in Year 3. During the scoping visit it was raised that USFWS was also supporting the implementation of a similar database and through discussions post the scoping visit and with agreement from the Government departments involved in the projects it was agreed that one database be implemented.

Given the USFWS system was more comprehensive, including CITES permit management, the decision was made to work with USFWS and WI to implement the broader system. A visit to Angola to confirm IT requirements, install software and conduct training was planned for March 2020 but this was subsequently delayed due to COVID-19 restrictions and did not take place. As were subsequent visits planned throughout 2020 and 2021. This aspect of the project is still taking place as of the time of writing. However, the full development of the database is due to conclude during the course of 2022.

Indicator 0.4: By the end of Year 1, ivory trade assessment provides new baseline data on ivory trade and trafficking in Angola following the 2016 domestic trade ban on ivory compared to 2014.

EIA successfully undertook assessments on the ivory trade and reports on the data and analysis were delivered to the Angolan Government.

3.3 Monitoring of assumptions

One assumption that was not questioned with respect to the project was that the Government of Angola would continue to operate standard working hours throughout the duration of the project and that travel, and activities would not be impacted by restrictions.

However, repeated outbreaks of COVID-19 significantly impacted travel and working functionality since February 2020 and continued until the end of the project in March 2022. Government staff were working from home since March 2020 with many staff only on 30% workload or time in the office. Importantly, internet connectivity was often an issue for Government staff. Moreover, EPIF restricted all travel except urgent and essential travel from February 2020 onwards. These hinderances were further complicated by repeated personnel changes, particularly at the highest level, within Government; staff not being paid; as well as Ministries being combined.

Outcome: Ivory trading and trafficking in Angola is reduced, through strengthened capacity of the wildlife department, prosecutors and judiciary and implementation of recommendations from the ivory trade analysis, and investigation to facilitate successful prosecutions.

Assumption: The Government of Angola remains committed to enforcing the domestic ivory trade ban and to improved investigations and prosecutions for elephant poaching and ivory trafficking.

Comments: The commitment of the Government of Angola to countering illegal ivory trade and wildlife crime remains strong. Despite the complications experienced as a result of staff changes within the Ministry and ongoing issues with communication responses, the Ministry indicated it remains committed to the project's long-term impact and other efforts to combat IWT. The Ministry was also impacted by COVID-19 both in terms of domestic travel and the percentage of staff time spent in the office. It is the EPIF's understanding that there have been significant budget impacts with many staff not paid for some time. Communications with the now Secretary of State for the Environment have indicated ongoing commitment to the project and its activities beyond the project timeline.

Output 1: Law enforcement agencies have improved capacity to effectively investigate elephant poaching and ivory trafficking cases, and the judiciary are willing and able to implement judicial guidance on wildlife crime

Assumption: Prosecutors actively engage in training programme and are able to implement lessons learnt to improve prosecutions on wildlife crime.

Comments: The 20 prosecutors and 10 police actively engaged during Activity 1.3 in and signed in everyday of the training. All participants were provided with the training materials on USB sticks so they can refer to the materials as required.

Assumption: Judiciary actively participate in the training programme and recognize the seriousness of wildlife crime in sentencing.

Comments: The 20 participants of the judiciary training programme actively engaged during the workshop (Activity 1.4) in November 2019 with participants attending every day of the training. All participants were provided with the materials and warmly received the guide, welcoming the publication. Feedback from the training was positive and the monitoring and evaluation survey conducted indicated not only an interest in the material but an increased level of awareness and knowledge after attending the training.

Assumption: Co-operation with all law enforcement agencies is achieved to ensure national wildlife crime recording database is used as central repository for all wildlife crime data.

Comments: This assumption was primarily linked to activities that were delayed throughout the project. However, the indications and enthusiasm for the database, as expressed during meetings with agencies on the scoping visits, indicated a willingness to use a database as a central repository across multiple agencies.

Output 2: A strategic assessment provides a clear map of the domestic and transboundary ivory trade in Angola and analysis of key trade networks and personnel.

Assumption: Effective engagement of all key personnel in the ivory trade assessment.

Comments: EIA worked effectively with law enforcement contacts within the Angolan Government and stakeholders to provide any updates to the trade assessment.

Assumption: Law enforcement agencies remain committed to acting upon recommendations from the assessment.

Comments: EIA worked to deliver real time information on wildlife crime networks and seizures discovered through their investigations for Activity 2.2. They provided information to law enforcement agencies throughout the project although it is unclear if this has led directly to any enforcement action.

Output 3: Stakeholders fully appraised of outcome and impact of project activities and open access plan implemented.

Assumption: Stakeholders remain engaged throughout the project.

Comments: EPIF staff worked closely with all project partners and stakeholders involved in the project or organisations who were also implementing related projects in Angola. The project activities were well received by everyone. COVID-19 restrictions impacted the project as planned country visits had to be cancelled.

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

Project impact: The intended impact of the project was that elephant populations in Angola increase to sustainable levels, making it a stronghold for elephants in southern Africa following a sharp decline in poaching and ivory trade. This was to be achieved through increasing the capacity of law enforcement agencies, leading to an increase in successful prosecutions, and by implementation of recommendations to combat domestic and trans-boundary ivory trade.

Impact on IWT:

The project worked to support good practices based on knowledge and awareness of wildlife laws in Angola. It is widely recognised that ensuring there is a strong rule of law with reliable prosecutions and strong penalties can provide a disincentive to poaching and is necessary for long-term action against the illegal trade. Once implemented, in-country capacity, resources and procedures should be in place to support strong prosecutions. As a result, a strong message that the criminal justice system will act against poaching and trafficking should impact on IWT. The long-term impact on poaching and the ivory trade will take place incrementally over time.

Impact on human development and well-being:

Crime of any type creates insecurity and potentially increases the risk of violence when communities lose confidence in public law enforcement departments. By reducing crime and the corruption often associated with it, this should improve the relationship between communities and the law and improve confidence in law enforcement officers by local communities who suffer from the negative effects of poaching.

The advantage of strong law enforcement action against poaching, ivory trafficking and IWT more broadly is its visibility, with successful investigations and prosecutions against criminal networks. This visibility adds confidence that a country has a genuine interest to combat poaching, protect wildlife and strengthen judicial systems.

4. Project support to the IWT Challenge Fund Objectives and commitments under the London Declarations and Kasane Statement

This project contributed to the IWT Challenge Fund Objective 2: Strengthening Law enforcement. The project was designed to contribute to efforts to address Objectives I, I VIII, X, XI, XIII, XIV and XV of the London Conference Declaration and Objectives 4, 5 and 9 of the Kasane Statement. Project activities undertaken during the project addressed not only Objective 2 of the Challenge Fund but also the identified objectives of the London Declaration and Kasane Statement. Moreover, ongoing engagement with project partners and commitment to the project activities throughout implementation helped to ensure the issue of IWT was not been completely abandoned amidst all the other issues that have arisen as a result of COVID-19.

Activities conducted in Year 3 under Output 1 and 2 of the project directly supported Challenge Fund Objective 2. Implementation of these activities involved work with law enforcement agencies in Angola with Activities under Output 2 directly supporting investigations and the work of law enforcement. In November of that year, the judiciary workshop held to sensitise participants to wildlife laws also directly supported this objective of the Fund. Continued work on Activities 1.1 and 1.2 ensured the necessary materials and initial framework for addressing London Conference Declaration VIII and X could be kept up to date.

The publicity and outreach in the surrounds of Activity 1.4, and the resulting guidance for Government and reports produced in Activities 2.2 and 2.3, supported efforts to meet London Conference Declaration Objective I. Within Year 3 of the project Objective 4 of the Kasane Statement was supported through continued activity on Activity 1.1 including work on the guide and sharing of this work to raise awareness of amendments pertaining to wildlife crimes in the draft Penal Code. Kasane Statement Objective 5 was addressed during the delivery of the Activity 1.4 wildlife crime sensitisation training courses. At this workshop the guide (Activity 1.2) was used as a training aide.

Within Year 2 the project took action towards meeting Kasane Statement 4, through completing Activity 1.1. - the roundtable in September - and through the submission of amendments pertaining to wildlife crimes in the draft Penal Code during meetings in December. Kasane Statement 5 was addressed during the delivery of Activity 1.3 - the wildlife crime sensitisation training course - whereby the draft of Activity 1.2, the guide, was used as a training aide delivered to all 30 participants on the course. Activity 1.1 also assembled all the necessary materials and created the initial framework relevant for addressing London Conference Declaration VIII and X. The publicity and outreach in the surrounds of Activity 1.3, and the resulting guidance for Government and reports produced in Activities 2.2 and 2.3, acted to meet London Conference Declaration I.

Within Year 1 the project took action towards meeting Kasane Statement 4, through completing Activity 1.1. Activity 1.1 also assembled all the necessary materials and created the initial framework relevant for addressing London Conference Declaration VIII and X. The publicity and outreach in the surrounds of Activity 0.1, and the resulting guidance for Government and reports produced in Activities 2.1 and 2.2 acted to meet London Conference Declaration I.

5. Impact on species in focus

The key impact the project was working towards was the reduction of poaching and ivory trafficking within Angola through delivering on priority actions in Angola's NIAP and NEAP respectively, making the species in focus the African elephant.

Activities to support improved awareness and capacity of prosecutors and the judiciary in Year 3 (Activity 1.4) through sensitisation training on wildlife crime and use of the Guide to Wildlife Crime Charges in Angola (Activity 1.2) provided materials for enhancing the capacity of Angolan law enforcement to address wildlife crime and specifically poaching of elephants and the trafficking of elephant ivory.

The activities under Output 2 of the project, the assessment and analysis of the ivory trade in Angola and the investigations into the networks' poaching elephants and trafficking ivory, provided information and intelligence necessary to support successful prosecutions. The data gathered through the investigation has supplemented data on ivory trade and trafficking in Angola and while no prosecutions have been brought at this stage it is hoped the continued support provided will enable action to be taken against poachers, directly benefitting elephants.

Whilst elephants are the focal species of the project activities, other species impacted by the illegal wildlife trade, including species targeted for bushmeat, also benefit. Increased understanding of the networks and routes of IWT also identified traders involved in the trade of other species, which will be utilized to further investigations and improve the effectiveness of law enforcement.

6. Project support to poverty alleviation

Angola suffers from objectively high levels of poverty, low institutional and technical capacity, high levels of corruption, and weak law enforcement. This project aimed to reduce poaching and ivory trafficking to promote a sustainable elephant population in one of Africa's last strongholds for elephants and through these efforts it was hoped that overall law enforcement capacity would be improved, which would indirectly assist local communities through stronger rule of law and reduced corruption.

Expected beneficiaries: the key beneficiaries of the project were INBC staff; law enforcement agencies; and the judiciary. Local communities living around the key elephant habitats and National Parks will also benefit from the project activities through increased capacity for law enforcement and a strengthened ability to maintain the rule of law. However, contributions to address poverty were largely indirect. It was also hoped that the improved law enforcement efforts at the level of prosecutions would lead to improved security for rangers and National Park staff.

Indirect contribution of the project to poverty alleviation: this project aimed to address the weak criminal justice system pathway for the illegal wildlife trade in Angola, the lack of capacity within law enforcement agencies and the judiciary, and the lack of successful prosecutions. Year 3 Activities 1.4, 2.2, and 2.3 all provided training and information to Angolan Government and law enforcement agencies to improve their investigations and ability to address criminal activity linked to the illegal wildlife trade. Strengthening law enforcement would indirectly help agencies maintain the rule of law while securing the future of African elephants in Angola would further support local communities by providing potential tourism opportunities in the future.

7. Consideration of gender equality issues

This project was designed in accordance with Sustainable Development Goal 5 and the International Development (Gender Equality) Act. INBC and SI/ EPIF teams working on and implementing the project are gender balanced.

Efforts to ensure gender equity and equality were prioritised throughout the project. However, the limited ability to implement the final activities as a result of COVID-19 has meant that previously planned capacity building initiatives that would include equal gender representation did not take place.

8. Sustainability and legacy

Sustainability and scalability were built into the project and its activities throughout. While this has been a challenge, given restrictions on the implementation of activities, products and reports from the project have continued to be shared with projects working on similar issues. The guide was shared with a number of other projects that are working to update the document and develop a mobile application to ensure it remains not only up to date but also available to relevant stakeholders.

Outputs from the project will continue to inform on-going activities led by the Angolan Government long after the project has concluded. The planned exit strategy was still appropriate at project closure.

Angola is a key country for elephant conservation and combating the ivory trade; the EPIF expects that this project will help to leverage funding, technical advice, awareness and media attention to ensure on-going support for priority actions within Angola. The EPIF intends to continue to support the Angolan Government to deliver on its NEAP beyond the end of this project.

9. Lessons learnt

Implementation of activities from Year 4 onwards was very challenging given the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 and related restrictions, particularly on international travel. In an effort to ensure project partners, including the Government of Angola, remained committed to the project and the remaining activities an in-country consultant was contracted with funds from another donor. The changes to staff within the Angolan MoE and INBC and the inability of EPIF staff to travel highlighted the importance of having someone on the ground to assist with implementation and stakeholder engagement. Whilst this has not totally mitigated the difficulties resulting from COVID-19 it has continued to facilitate follow up with Government agencies and has been invaluable for providing local knowledge and language when discussing the project with new staff.

Unfortunately, the wide ranging and extensive impacts of COVID-19 are not something anyone could have fully foreseen or planned for and they remained a challenge to delivering the project throughout. Angola is a difficult country to work in without these added challenges and having someone in-country to assist has been invaluable. This kind of support should be factored into project budgets from the start. It has been an additional expense not included in the DEFRA budget for this project and has been covered by other funding.

9.1 Monitoring and evaluation

The logframe and project implementation plan have been used to monitor progress against agreed project indicators, which feed into addressing the project outcome. Updates have been made to the logframe as needed throughout the project, with change requests submitted and approved. This primarily involved changes to the timeline for the remaining activities (impacted by COVID-19).

Given the small number of activities affected and the nature of these activities there were no changes made to the monitoring and evaluation plan. The wrap-up meeting to be held at the end of the project was of course a key component of the monitoring and evaluation but did not take place as at the end of the grant period, due to ongoing work in March 2022. This is being scoped as part of the additional activities funded by the underspend from Year 3 (as discussed with LTS and DEFRA).

Monitoring and evaluation for the implementation and training for the database will be conducted by both EPIF and USFWS.

9.2 Actions taken in response to annual report reviews

Comments from the reviewer(s) to all Annual Reports were helpful and sensible in scope. Every attempt has been made to address these in the respective follow-on reports, with suggestions and inputs referenced and considered throughout in regard to the delivery of the respective activities. However, it should be noted that the nature of some of the activities means that information remained confidential and some of the data noted by the reviewer could not be shared as per agreement with law enforcement agencies. This is also the case for data contained in government reports to CITES in regard to the auditing of ivory stockpiles. This data is owned by the Government of Angola and as per agreements with CITES it is not information that can be made public or shared in reports.

10. IWT Challenge Fund Identity

Efforts to publicise and acknowledge the IWT CF and DEFRA funding took place throughout the project. This was difficult given the limited implementation of activities possible but DEFRA and the IWT CF were publicised where possible.

The EPIF has ensured that briefing notes and material produced under the project clearly and correctly recognises the CF with the correct logos and with the wording: “Developing investigation Prosecution Capacity to Save Angola’s Elephants.” This project is funded by the UK Government Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs “Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund.”

A strong awareness and understanding of the IWT CF are present, not only within the host country but also with other project stakeholders including USFWS and the US-based WI. These organisations now have a greater familiarity with the CF and the opportunities it provides.

11. Impact of COVID-19 on project delivery

COVID-19 and the associated restrictions on both international and national travel has had a significant impact on the delivery of the final project activities since March 2020. The project was due for completion in March 2020 with the remaining activities scheduled to take place, namely the implementation and training on the proposed database, a second visit and briefing on ivory trade investigations and the project wrap-up meeting. Unfortunately, all of these activities required international travel for project partners and domestic travel and meetings for Government partners. At the time restrictions in place meant none of these things were possible.

A project extension was granted for what was then effectively Year 4 of the project (2020/2021 UK financial year) and planning was underway to hold the various training courses and in country meetings. Outbreaks of COVID-19 in Angola, the UK, the USA, and elsewhere since then continued to prevent international travel with staff from both EPIF and USFWS (the project partner delivering the database activity) unable to travel to Angola. Local partners and Government employees in Angola were also severely restricted, with working days, hours and staff capacity reduced to near zero at times. Discussions on alternative means for delivery of the activities were held but the nature of the activities to deliver these remaining project activities to the highest standard has meant this has not been possible. This is also the underlying cause for the significant underspend of projects funds in both Year 3 and the final year of the project.

A project extension request for a further 9 months was requested and approved, as was a further 3 month extension until the end of March 2022. These were no-cost extensions with no further funds required but additional time needed to allow for travel. Unfortunately, the emergence of the so-called Omicron variant of COVID-19 at the end of 2021 ultimately meant that these last effort travel plans did not materialise. This was largely due to Angola's significant response to the variant (no international flights in or out of the country) as well as the risk management protocols of USFWS.

As a result of the pandemic, the project team adopted an increased use of virtual meetings in an effort to not only maintain communication but also plan for remaining activities. This has been difficult given unreliable connectivity in Angola and Government employees only in the office for 30% or less of their time. Moreover, many do not have reliable internet connectivity at home. As such, ongoing delays were unavoidable.

Of course, the health and safety of staff and partners is the primary concern of the EPIF. The organisation has been monitoring the health of partners and has also supported the costs involved with COVID-19 testing from a budget separate to the DEFRA funding. EPIF has also, where possible, helped support the costs of working from home for some partners.

The final project activities, less the closure workshop, were concluded despite these extremely challenging circumstances. The closure workshop, of course, did not occur prior to project closure as the final database development work was still ongoing as at the end of March 2022.

12. Finance and administration

12.1 Project expenditure

Project spend (indicative) since last annual report	2020/21 Grant (£)	2020/21 Total actual IWT Costs (£)	Variance %	Comments (please explain significant variances)
Staff costs (see below)	██████	██████	██████	
Consultancy costs	██████	██████	██████	Slightly less consultant time was needed due to the intended site visits not taking place.
Overhead Costs	██████	██████	██████	Overheads that would have been incurred due to international travel, meeting preparation and administration etc. did not materialise.
Travel and subsistence	██████	█	██████	COVID-19 restrictions precluded travel and activities from taking place. Work was conducted remotely.
Operating Costs	██████	█	██████	As above. The development of the database (up to the end of March 2022) was entirely conducted remotely and no in person workshops, consultations, training etc. were possible.
Capital items (see below)	-	-	-	Materials for training, workshops and so on were not required as these events took place/were delivered remotely.
Others (see below)	██████	█	██████	As above.
TOTAL	██████	██████		

Staff employed (Name and position)	Cost (£)
Dr Naomi Doak – Project Manager	■
Harry Thorold – Head of Finance	■
TOTAL	■

Capital items – description	Capital items – cost (£)
TOTAL	

Other items – description	Other items – cost (£)
TOTAL	

12.2 Additional funds or in-kind contributions secured

Source of funding for project lifetime	Total (£)
TOTAL	

Source of funding for additional work after project lifetime	Total (£)
TOTAL	

Checklist for submission

	Check
Is the report less than 10MB? If so, please email to IWT-Fund@ltsi.co.uk putting the project number in the subject line.	Y
Is your report more than 10MB? If so, please discuss with IWT-Fund@ltsi.co.uk about the best way to deliver the report, putting the project number in the subject line.	N
If you are submitting photos for publicity purposes, do these meet the outlined requirements (see section 13)?	N/A
Have you included means of verification? You should not submit every project document, but the main outputs and a selection of the others would strengthen the report.	Previously Submitted
Do you have hard copies of material you need to submit with the report? If so, please make this clear in the covering email and ensure all material is marked with the project number.	N/A
Have you involved your partners in preparation of the report and named the main contributors	Y
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table fully?	Y
Do not include claim forms or other communications with this report.	