



## Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund Half Year Report (due 31<sup>st</sup> October 2020)

<b>Project reference</b>	IWT053
<b>Project title</b>	<b>Combatting transnational ivory and rhino horn trafficking networks in Cambodia</b>
<b>Country(ies)</b>	Cambodia
<b>Lead organisation</b>	Wildlife Conservation Society
<b>Partners(s)</b>	The General Department of Customs and Excise (GDCE), Forestry Administration, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
<b>Project leader</b>	<i>Yi Yuth Virak</i>
<b>Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)</b>	<i>HYR3</i>
<b>Project website/blog/social media</b>	<a href="https://cambodia.wcs.org/">https://cambodia.wcs.org/</a> , <a href="https://www.facebook.com/wcscambodia.fb">https://www.facebook.com/wcscambodia.fb</a>

**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 September).**

**Activity 2.1:** In a project meeting with FA in May and following briefings shared previously, FA requested the project support them to develop a joint proclamation on ivory stockpile management. We shared a more detailed briefing on what would be required for the proclamation and requested FA submit us a proposal for consultancy.

**Activity 2.2:** Completed in previous period.

**Activity 2.3:** We are planning two workshops in November and December; one for enforcement agencies and one for prosecutors and judges from key provinces for wildlife trafficking. The workshops will be hosted by the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and will share the results of activity 2.2., which identifies challenges and will discuss recommendations for improving investigation, prosecution and adjudication of these cases.

**Activity 3.1:** Global travel restrictions due to COVID-19 mean that we cannot bring in external expertise to support capacity building events or case-sharing workshops. As an alternative, we identified remote trainings following requests from FA for training on online trade investigations, but remote options were rejected due to language limitations. Our capacity building activities are therefore on hold. The planned workshops (activity 2.3) are a mix of knowledge-sharing, discussion and problem-solving, and will highlight key capacity issues of enforcement agencies.

**Activity 3.2** We have met regularly with our Customs Champion, who is facilitating internal discussions on WCS providing assistance to GDCE on stockpile management.

**Activity 3.3**

**Activity 4.3:** From April 2020 to September 2020, we have documented 20 Cambodian media articles related to wildlife crime. Almost 50% focus on seizures, half of which also document the criminal justice response. Notably for this period, 35% focus on hunting and trade issues (including references to COVID-19 impacts), policy and regulation.

**Activity 5.1:**

**Activity 5.2:** Due to COVID-19 restrictions, it is impossible to conduct bi-lateral meetings or exchanges. Remote fora are not an option in this region. Due to COVID-19 delays and likely necessary changes to project activities, we will submit a change request soon after this report.

**Activity 5.3:** No progress during this period due to COVID-19, although country programs continue to maintain contact with enforcement partners in Cambodia, Vietnam and China, and to seek opportunities for informal information sharing and collaboration.

**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.**

None during this period.

**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.**

The COVID-19 pandemic is having wide-ranging impacts on WCS programs and projects. Effective week of March 17<sup>th</sup> 2020 WCS closed all country program offices in the region including Cambodia. All field activities and travel, were suspended and WCS implemented a work from home protocol with meetings conducted via online video platforms. The Cambodia office initiated a phased re-opening in June/July and resumed activities with social distancing, reduced participants and other precautions. Several activities have been delayed, and any activities involving international travel are on hold. We will need to submit a change request for a no-cost extension and to re-allocate funds that cannot be spent on bi-lateral activities.

**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: Yes, partially

Formal change request submitted: No, not yet

Received confirmation of change acceptance No

**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:

We will need a no-cost extension for an additional 6 months, until June 2021, as a result of COVID-19 delays, to ensure we are able to complete the project.

**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](mailto: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.**