



## Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund Half Year Report

(due 31<sup>st</sup> October 2018)

<b>Project reference:</b>	IWT-055
<b>Project title:</b>	Combatting illegal wildlife trade in the W-Arly-Pendjari (WAP) landscape
<b>Country(ies):</b>	Benin, Niger
<b>Lead organisation:</b>	Zoological Society of London (ZSL)
<b>Collaborator(s):</b>	Panthera
<b>Project leader:</b>	<i>Chris Ransom</i>
<b>Report date and number (e.g. HYR1):</b>	31/10/2018, (HYR1)
<b>Project website/blog/social media:</b>	<a href="https://www.zsl.org/conservation/regions/africa/west-african-carnivores-and-elephants-in-the-savannah">https://www.zsl.org/conservation/regions/africa/west-african-carnivores-and-elephants-in-the-savannah</a> (website), @ZSLAfrica (Twitter)

### 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).

This project started on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2018 and over this first reporting period (01/07/2018 – 30/09/2018), progress has been made on several activities.

#### **Output 1. Intelligence gathering network established and operational, investigative capacity enhanced to tackle wildlife crime affecting the WTBR.**

The protocols, guidelines and training materials for the management of sources and intelligence have been developed by the ZSL Law Enforcement (LE) Advisor (Activity 1.1). During July 2018, the first francophone Proactive Law Enforcement Training was delivered to 15 Beninese law enforcement agents from police, customs, wildlife agencies and anti-trafficking units from Cotonou port and airport (Activity 1.6). The training based on materials already used in Africa was adapted to the WAP context and included basic source awareness and management, and acquisition and assessment of intelligence to inform proactive operations. In addition, training on the use of new forensic methods for evidence gathering utilising a new kit for finger print detection was delivered by Jaqueline Reed, crime scene specialist from the University of Portsmouth. The feedback was positive, which contributed to strengthen our collaboration with law enforcement agencies in Benin to support their efforts to deter illegal wildlife trade in the country. To date, there has been no operational use of the forensic kits yet.

During this reporting period, the ZSL LE Advisor has also worked closely with ZSL WAP Technical Advisor to maintain and develop contacts with Beninese law enforcement agencies and assist in the establishment of an intelligence management structure (Activity 1.3). The ZSL LE Advisor has received information pertaining to 2 cases of IWT. One from March 2018, in respect of a seizure of over half a tonne of pangolin scales by ZSL-trained anti-trafficking officers, where suspects received a prison sentence of 3 years and fine. The other case, a

further pangolin scales seizure initiated and dealt with by partner NGO LAGA, is currently ongoing and is sub judice.

ZSL has a signed MoU with TRAFFIC in order share information on criminal intelligence for enforcement action. In this context, a database has been created to store intelligence records and link them to the TRAFFIC global database. All information is evaluated by the ZSL LE Advisor and then disseminated if appropriate (Activity 1.4). Between July and September 2018, 2 intelligence reports were received relating to the trafficking of pangolin scales and African Grey Parrots, which were shared in accordance with our MoU and legal policies.

### **Output 2. Effective system for site-based protection and surveillance in W Niger established utilising the SMART approach.**

We have reviewed the existing protection system and resources in W Niger National Park and conducted a needs assessment (Activity 2.1). A first operationalization plan to set up a pilot phase for the implementation of the SMART approach was then designed and discussed with park authorities; this helped defining a workplan and timelines for this phase (Activity 2.2). The Nigerien Park Authorities (« Direction de la Faune, de la Chasse et des Aires Protégées »; DFCAP) made two teams available to conduct patrols with on-the-ground and technical support from ZSL.

Subsequently, these two teams have received training and continue to be mentored (7 people per team; 12 eco-guards and 2 village trackers in total) in navigation, knowledge on wildlife species and data collection with CyberTracker (Activity 2.3). Additional training will be provided to a larger number of eco-guards after the pilot phase which will be completed at the end of October.

In July 2018, ZSL donated equipment to 40 rangers, in the presence of the National Director of the wildlife division, all the park management team, and representants of the Embassy of the United States of America. This equipment included trousers, jackets, hats, backpacks, tents, t-shirts, boots, and electronic devices for patrol data collection. In addition, ZSL has provided financial and technical support to refurbish the Perelegou guard post and improve infrastructure capacity for patrols.

Over the past months, patrols were conducted on a regular basis in the Perelegou area (20 patrol days per month) with the ongoing support of the ZSL SMART Officer (Activity 2.4). ZSL have a staff member integrated into patrols which allows us to provide on-the-job training, ongoing assessment and support to plan future training sessions (Activity 2.5). Patrol teams have also started to collect SMART data, showing that 519 km were patrolled by eco-guards over this reporting period. At the end of September, ZSL discussed with the DFCAP to plan the next phase which will see this approach rolled out to additional sectors of W Niger Park.

### **Output 3. Improved understanding of the context for local communities with relation to IWT in the WTBR periphery zone, and information used to inform efforts to combat IWT and pilot or enhance incentive schemes linked to reducing the impact of IWT.**

Based on rapid stakeholder assessments conducted in Benin and Niger, the project team has identified 8 community blocks around W Benin and Niger (Activity 3.1). The next step will be to conduct free prior informed consent in these communities (Banikoara, Kandi, Karimama, Kérou, Malanville in Benin; Kirtachi, Falmey, Tamou in Niger) and work with selected villages to engage them in incentive schemes which can potentially include: market value enhancement for sustainable NTFPs and farmed produce (including honey, shea butter, moringa, desert date oil), village savings and loans schemes, cattle health management, grazing area management, etc.

**2a. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt 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.**

During the project period, the security situation in Burkina Faso has deteriorated significantly, with repeated attacks in the North Western part of the country, but also closer to the WAP landscape around Arly National Park. The project team has therefore conducted an ongoing risk assessment in the project area (in and around the W Niger and W Benin) and continues to liaise closely with the security attachés at the relevant French and American embassies.

ZSL are in the process of registering a branch office in Benin and have put recruitment of employees on hold until this is completed. Completion was expected by now but has not yet come through. As a result, there have been delays in recruiting project staff, most notably those required to conduct activities related to local communities (Output 3). We are now looking to take on personnel on a contract basis to prevent any further delay to the project. Competent staff have been identified and everything is now in place to start recruiting the community team.

Additionally, we have not been able to carry out wildlife market surveys due to security concerns around W Niger and a reduced road access caused by heavy rains. The Nigerien government has recently reinforced the security around the park, with additional police patrols, which will enable us to conduct surveys in local markets around W Niger. Two candidates have already been identified in Benin and we are in process of identifying two others in Niger. These candidates will be recruited and trained in November 2018 to start the market surveys in December 2018 in Benin and in January 2019 in Niger.

A number of the Africa programme team at ZSL in London have recently found new jobs and have either left already or will depart in the next month. These are Paul De Ornellas, original PI for the project and Programme Manager for Africa, Sophie Grange-Chamfray, Projects Coordinator for Africa, and Christian Plowman, Law Enforcement Advisor for Africa. We are in the process of recruiting replacements and have some contingencies in place, but the transition period may see some impact on the project. The most notable of these will be the replacement of the Law Enforcement Advisor. We will be evaluating the potential impact of this on the project implementation and budget spend immediately and inform LTS of any changes that may be required.

**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 (*However an email has been sent which mentioned a potential underspend but with no additional information*)

Formal change request submitted:  Yes/No

Received confirmation of change acceptance  Yes/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: £.

**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.

**We will be doing this imminently and will also call LTS to discuss.**

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

Despite progress was made on activities, we spent less than expected on the budget as we mainly used match funds from ongoing grants that were ending during the reporting period. As several match funding grants are now complete, we will start spending more on travel and subsistence and operations costs in the coming months.

**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. Additionally, if you were funded under R4 and asked to provide further information by your first half year report, please attach your response as a separate 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 send your **completed report by email** to Victoria Pinion at [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.**