



Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund Half Year Report

(due 31st October 2019)

Project reference:	IWT-055
Project title:	Combatting illegal wildlife trade in the W-Arly-Pendjari (WAP) landscape
Country(ies):	Benin, Niger
Lead organisation:	Zoological Society of London (ZSL)
Collaborator(s):	Panthera
Project leader:	<i>Eleanor Harvie</i>
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1):	31/10/2019, (HYR2)
Project website/blog/social media:	https://www.zsl.org/conservation/regions/africa/west-african-carnivores-and-elephants-in-the-savannah (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).

Output 2: Intelligence gathering network established and operational, investigative capacity enhanced to tackle wildlife crime affecting the WTBR.

- **Results from the market surveys in Benin and Niger (Reports Annex 1):**

Knowledge of the illegal wildlife trade is necessary to measure the impact of ZSL's and its partners' activities in the park areas, but also to determine how to better support community's socio-economically. ZSL has carried out surveys in main markets on the outskirts of Pendjari NP (Benin) and W NP (Niger), as well as in the country's main markets from December 2018 to April 2019. The specific objectives have been defined as follows:

- Inventory the by-products of the target species available on the Beninese market;
- Collect information on the marketing channel for by-products of target species;
- Map the Beninese markets in which the by-products of the target species are found;
- Compare the results of this study with those of 2017.

The target species of the study were the lion (*Panthera leo*), cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus*), leopard (*Panthera pardus*), elephant (*Loxodonta africana*), serval (*Leptailurus serval*), caracal (*Caracal caracal*), pangolin (*Manis* sp), gorilla (*Gorilla gorilla*), chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*) and vulture (*Gyps fulvus*).

To collect relevant information, the surveyors travelled to 41 of Benin's 77 communes to observe markets and shops: in total, 94 sellers were approached in 50 national markets (24 markets in the South and 26 in the North). In Niger, they investigated in 62 markets in three different regions (Falmey, Tamou and Niamey).

In Benin, it appears that by-products from lion and elephant are the most common; 36.75% and 33.73% of the observed products respectively belong to these two species. The availability of by-products varies according to the region: lion and elephant by-products are more available in northern markets while pangolin (*Manis* spp) by-products are more available in the south. Based on sellers' words, the origin of the products is more international (60%), mainly from Nigeria (42%), than national.

Among the 62 markets investigated in Niger, 30 offered products from some of the targeted species. The main products encountered were pieces of skin, vulture wings and animal fat. Like in Benin and still from the sellers' statement, 50% of the available by-products came from the three neighbouring countries: Nigeria, Benin and Burkina Faso.

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

- **Basic Law Enforcement Training Level 1, 9 and 10th March 2019, Niger (Reports Annex 2):**

This training, led by CWB, provided fundamental policing skills, designed to enhance evidence gathering and investigative skills, leading to the acquisition of levels of evidence accurately recorded for prosecution. It was delivered to ensure capacity building of law enforcement agents in and around the W National Park in Niger who are spending 50 per cent or more of their active duty time in the field or on patrol. 20 persons were trained: the majority of them were from the Direction des Eaux et Forêts, representatives from the Police Nationale, Gendarmerie, Garde Republicaine. Members of the judiciary were also present.

This mix of agencies was productive and the participation of two Court president was of great advantage to the training to understand the importance of gathering and acquiring proper evidence and information pertaining to a case.

- **Basic Law Enforcement Training Level 2, November 2019, Niger:**

The participants of the Level 1 Training Course requested to attend the Level 2 Training to continue improving their skills and capacities. Following up with this feedback, a second training has already been approved by the Niger Wildlife Authorities and will be held in November 2019.

- **Training and rollout of SMART approach in W Niger:**

Since 2018, the SMART system has been by patrols in Niger to gather all the information collected in formalized reports. Examples of a SMART report are attached as Annex 3.

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.

- **Recruitment of the two community officers to implement the community survey and the activities related to the communities**

Two community officers were recruited in October 2019 for 7 months with the overall objective to contribute to the sustainable management of biodiversity in Northern Benin and in Niger by engaging the communities of our focal landscape (the WAP territory) in positive conservation actions. This includes the development of collaborative methods to help natural resources sustainable management and to protect against poaching and other illegal activities that impact on WAP communities. The purpose of ZSL's interventions is to improve the attitude of communities towards the conservation of wildlife species (especially large carnivores) and their habitats and to ensure that the target communities engage and support protected areas.

One community officer will be based in in Kandi, Northern Benin while the other one will be based in Niamey, Niger, but both will spend extended periods on community sites around the W and Pendjari National Parks, with possible moves to other parts of the country.

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.

Security issues in the region: As discussed with LTS and DEFRA via phone and a change request, we have had to adapt our methodology and approach in order to ensure safety of our staff, whilst ensuring that we are able to continue progressing towards the objectives of this programme. During this period, it was necessary to show flexibility of support and this was matched by the flexibility offered by IWT Fund managers. A serious issue arose in 2019. On May 1, 2019, two French citizens and their Beninese

guide were kidnapped in Pendjari NP and brought to Burkina Faso. Consequently, the Pendjari NP was classified as a red zone by several government foreign departments. Discussions with partners, intelligence sources and the authorities (including embassies in both Benin and Niger) are constantly ongoing to ensure the safety of our work in the region.

The WAP Field Manager was moved from La Tapoa (Niger) to Kandi (Benin) in May 2019. The level of support provided to W Management has remained the same, but the level of ad-hoc technical support, and day-to-day field monitoring by ZSL's Field Manager has only been possible remotely, and via monthly visits since May 2019. The ZSL WAP Field Team continue to have regular (almost daily contact) with intelligence networks in both countries, and ZSL's Africa team in London review Health and Safety procedures on an almost weekly basis with ZSL's Health and Safety department (and its security providers). In Q1 2020, thanks to the reallocation request, the WAP Team will attend a HEAT (Hostile Environment Awareness Training) in order to increase their preparedness to work in the region. Pendjari NP is again once open, and once the roads are accessible (they are due to dry out in December), the WAP Field Manager will be able to drive through the WAP Parks Complex and provide day-to-day support in person again (provided there are no further incidents and our intelligence network provides evidence to suggest we are able to do so). The support of ZSL to DFC (Niger) through this challenging time has been acknowledged and their dedication to tackling IWT expressed (attached to this report – Annex 4).

Community Officer: As notified to LTS on 4th July 2019, ZSL have encountered an issue of non-delivery by a consultant to whom we paid as an advance for work regarding scoping of community activities. Two letters have been issued by ZSL's legal department, and have been signed for as received. A response was received for a pledge to return the money in July, but to date the money has not been returned to ZSL. The decision has been taken by the team, upon advice by the ZSL legal team, to report this incident to the national police, who will now follow up on our behalf. However, this incident, whilst causing delays to the activities whilst we awaited the delivery of the consultant's work, will not cause a delay to the overall objectives of the project - community officers are currently undertaking fieldwork in Niger and Benin.

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
Formal change request submitted:	Yes
Received confirmation of change acceptance	Yes – 14/10/2019

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.

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

This period has seen staff changes in the project, both at the country level and at HQ.

- In May 2019, Vincent Lapeyre, Technical Advisor, left the project but remains part of the regional team through an appointment at one of ZSL's partners.

However, this period has also seen the team grow in their capacity to respond to the needs of the programme and deliver project objectives:

1. Yekini Chabi N'diaye, who started with ZSL as a field officer, has been promoted to WAP Field Manager. Yekini has shown himself highly skilled and able to rise to this challenge;
2. Manon Gruner has joined the team as WAP Programme Manager. Manon will be responsible for management of the team, tracking of activities and management of the project operations;
3. In mid-November, a new Law Enforcement Advisor will be starting at ZSL and will be supporting the team around the management of intelligence networks.

Regarding Comments Received as Feedback to the Annual Report:

1. **Redirection of Activities:** This was addressed through a change request in July, whereby the security issues were explained.
2. **Assumptions and Indicators not reviewed :** Whilst the project has been able to deliver training in intelligence gathering and law enforcement techniques, there has been a lack of a Law Enforcement Advisor, with the necessary dedication needed for the establishment of intelligence networks (along with the sensitivity of the information). The Law Enforcement Advisor will start in November 2019, and is highly experienced. Upon his commencement of the role, the assumptions and indicators will be reviewed, and any necessary modifications will be made via a change request before the end of December 2019.
3. **Recognition of support from IWT Challenge Fund:** The ZSL WAP website (above) has been reviewed and updated to recognise the support by IWT Challenge Fund.

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.**