



Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund Half Year Report (due 31st October 2020)

Project reference	IWT056
Project title	Strengthening Enforcement against the Illegal Pangolin Trade in Uganda
Country(ies)	Uganda
Lead organisation	Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) UK
Partners(s)	Natural Resource Conservation Network (NRCN)
Project leader	Julian Newman
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	HYR3
Project website/blog/social media	https://eia-international.org/our-work/wildlife/pangolins/ ; https://eia-international.org/wildlife/helping-pangolins/saving-pangolins-from-extinction/

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).

The following report covers the period 1st April to 30th September 2020.

Financial investigations: NRCN has maintained contact with joint financial investigation team members (DPP, FIA, UWA, UPF, and URA). [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] NRCN has continued investigations, arrest and prosecutions activities. This has involved 17 field operations that led to 32 individual arrests (including 1 exporter and 3 urban middlemen) and the seizure of 233kg of pangolin scales, 13 live pangolins and 2 pangolin skins. NRCN prosecutors supported the prosecution of 9 pangolin traffickers in the Special Wildlife Court in Kampala.

Intelligence analysis and dissemination: EIA has completed extensive open-source research into China's legal pangolin scale market including laws, sale of patented medicines containing pangolin scales by pharmaceutical companies and the regulated transfers of pangolin scales by entities in China. A 16-page intelligence summary on pangolin scale and ivory trafficking trends during COVID-19 based on information collected through remote investigations was produced. [REDACTED]

Wildlife valuation guidelines: NRCN has continued engagements with UWA to maintain buy-in for the wildlife valuation guidelines. Meetings with UWA have been held to agree terms of reference for a consultant to be recruited by NRCN to assist UWA in the development of the wildlife valuation guidelines. In year 3 quarter 3, NRCN plans to recruit a national consultant to complete the work with UWA.

LE pangolin awareness materials: NRCN initiated distribution of the poster produced in year 2 to raise awareness of pangolin trafficking, pangolin products and concealment methods amongst Ugandan law enforcement stakeholders. A total of 2000 copies of the poster were printed, and it is under distribution to UWA stations, police stations/posts, and court premises across Uganda.

Transport sector and other disseminations: EIA has produced a 96-page transport and wildlife/timber trafficking assessment. EIA and NRCN has engaged with United for Wildlife to facilitate participation from Uganda transport sector stakeholders in an East Africa taskforce meeting that will take place on 10th November 2020. NRCN is also in the process of building support from UWA to facilitate the involvement of Uganda government transport sector agencies to engage on efforts to combat pangolin/wildlife trafficking. In year 3 quarter 3, NRCN will work with UWA to share a briefing on wildlife trafficking and the transport sector in Uganda and hold a roundtable on this issue.

Public-facing communications: In August, EIA joined the US based Center for Biological Diversity and International Environmental Law Project in filing a Pelly petition calling on the US government to formally sanction China for illegally trading in pangolins. EIA also completed extensive open-source research into China's legal pangolin scale market including laws, sale of patented medicines containing pangolin scales by pharmaceutical companies and the regulated transfers of pangolin scales by entities in China. A public-facing report titled "Smoke and Mirrors: China's complicity in the global illegal pangolin trade" was published on 13th October.

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.

With the onset of COVID-19, Uganda's ten national parks have experienced a rapidly escalating poaching crisis. As international tourist numbers diminished due to global transportation restrictions, Uganda's national parks have become more vulnerable to poaching. Wildlife traffickers operating between eastern DRC and Uganda are also capitalising on a reduction in law enforcement effort to smuggle illicit wildlife products through Uganda undetected. NRCN has adapted to these evolving trends in wildlife trafficking by targeting organised poaching networks operating in and around protected areas. EIA/NRCN have also initiated collaboration with Conserv Congo in DRC to facilitate information sharing [REDACTED]

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.

Between March and July 2020, Uganda implemented COVID-19 control measures. These included restrictions on public gatherings, meetings, workplaces and transportation services, as well as the closure of Entebbe International Airport for incoming and outgoing commercial flights. This situation has had several impacts on the implementation of the project, including the temporary closure of NRCN's offices in Kampala, barriers to organising meetings with government departments, difficulties in conducting field investigations and prosecutions in Uganda, and a reduction in cross-border collaborations with DRC, Tanzania and Malawi. Travel restrictions in Uganda have increased the costs associated with transport and demanded more

resources to gather intelligence and transfer suspects. Furthermore, EIA staff have been unable to travel to Uganda to collaborate with NRCN in-person and conduct M&E activities.

To adapt to the situation, EIA and NRCN have maintained regular communication over email, WhatsApp and Zoom to coordinate project activities and share information. NRCN has obtained special authorisations from UWA to conduct field investigations. However, a closure of the special wildlife court between March and July has led to a backlog in court cases building up. NRCN is engaging with the DPP to explore options to clear the case backlog. Since an easing of COVID-19 restrictions, NRCN/EIA has reinitiated efforts to engage the Uganda transport sector and finalise the wildlife valuation guidelines. Uganda will hold national elections on 14 January, and NRCN will adapt activities to mitigate the impact of this.

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

Formal change request submitted: No

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: £ [REDACTED]

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?

Various activities planned for the period 1st October 2020 to 31st March 2021 are dependent on international travel. Due to the uncertainty associated with COVID-19, EIA expects an underspend in the budget for this year and we will therefore submit a change request to enable us to utilise this underspend.

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.**