



Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund Half Year Report (due 31st October 2021)

Project reference	IWT-066
Project title	Legal Intelligence for Cheetah Illicit Trade (LICIT)
Country(ies)	Ethiopia, Somalia, Somaliland, Yemen
Lead organisation	Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF)
Partners(s)	International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), Legal Atlas
Project leader	Dr. Laurie Marker, Founder and Executive Director, CCF
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	HYR3
Project website/blog/social media	www.cheetah.org

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).

I. Over the last six months, LICIT partner Legal Atlas has continued to consult with legal authorities in Ethiopia, Somalia, and Somaliland to build on the legal agendas compiled at earlier stages of the project (Indicator 1.3). The focus of this work is establishing processes for implementing the agendas, leading to drafting and enactment of new legislation or regulations. This activity continues to benefit from synergy with the parallel project launched by CCF in partnership with the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) Secretariat and IGAD to strengthen legal cooperation on the regional level by expanding the LICIT legal analysis to other wildlife-related topics including Trans-Frontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs), and to all IGAD member countries. This partnership supports Indicator 0.2. See Annex A.

II. Partners staged a Somaliland law enforcement training workshop in Hargeisa from 19-23 September 2021. This event was a major element of project Output 2 (Indicator 2.3). Twenty-three trainees from multiple government agencies participated, including the Ministry of Environment and Rural Development (the LICIT government partner in Somaliland), police, Coast Guard, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Interior, Immigration and Border Control, and the Attorney General's office. Training sessions covered a range of topics such as strengthening Somaliland's wildlife laws, species identification, smuggling and concealment techniques, evidence management, and disposal of confiscated animals and animal products. The workshop agenda and list of participants are attached as Annexes B and C. A photo of the proceedings is included in Annex D. The workshop received coverage in Somaliland media. See <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=372916467716120> (Somaliland National Television); <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=390621032505788> (Universal Somali Television).

III. Concurrently with the workshop, the partners organized a stakeholders event in pursuit of continued LICIT Project network building (Indicator 2.1). In addition to the workshop participants, about 50 other contacts/potential contacts/supporters of LICIT Project work in Somaliland, including government ministers and the Head of the British Liaison Office in Hargeisa, took part. The LICIT partners provided briefings on the status of the project and held discussions on potential cooperation with future project activities. See Annex D for photos of

the event and Annex J.

The LICIT partners also took advantage of their travel to Somaliland to expand contacts within the Somaliland legal community through meetings including members of parliament, the Chair of the Somaliland Anti-Corruption Commission, the Dean of the University of Hargeisa Law Faculty, and members of the private bar. These meetings supported the legal strengthening and network building elements of the LICIT Project, including the follow-on work described in paragraph I. above (Indicators 1.3, 2.1).

IV. At the opening session of the workshop, Somaliland's Minister of Environment and Rural Development announced that the government had established an interagency wildlife trafficking Task Force to coordinate among Ministries and agencies with responsibilities related to wildlife law enforcement. Membership includes the Ministry of Environment and Rural Development (MoERD), Somaliland Police, Coast Guard, Attorney General's office, Customs, and Ministry of Defence. Realization of the Task Force is a direct result of LICIT project network building efforts, as partners worked with the MoERD to conceptualize and create it (e.g. Annex E). The Task Force will form the core of the LICIT Project network in Somaliland and is thus a key element in achieving Project Output 2 (Indicator 2.1). Partners will continue collaborating with the MoERD to develop the new Task Force. Representatives from most of the Task Force member agencies participated in the training workshop.

V. CCF co-sponsored the Consultative Conference for Environment Protection and Conservation of Biodiversity for Eastern Regions of Somaliland, an awareness-raising event convened at Burao, 26-27 July 2021 by the MoERD. The conference brought together 70 leaders from seven eastern regions of the country. The agenda included illegal wildlife trade and human-wildlife conflict, impact of charcoal production and new settlements, illegal pasture enclosures, increase of water points, and biodiversity protection. CCF Executive Director Dr. Laurie Marker presented on CCF's work in Somaliland, including the LICIT Project. World Vision, FAO, UNDP, Save the Children and Welthungerhilfe also co-sponsored the event. The conference benefited the LICIT Project by expanding the LICIT Somaliland network in the eastern regions (Indicator 2.1), providing information about the presence of cheetahs and prevalence of trafficking and human-wildlife conflict there, and spreading the LICIT Project awareness message to local officials from communities that are remote from Hargeisa and difficult to access. These contacts should also facilitate further LICIT community awareness efforts and wildlife surveys in these regions (Indicator 3.1). See Annex D for photo; Annex F.

VI. In Ethiopia the LICIT partners have continued planning for community awareness campaigns in the Somali Regional State (SRS), focused in communities along the Ethiopia/Somaliland border where cross-border smuggling of trafficked cheetahs is reported to take place (Indicator 3.1). The LICIT Project regional coordinator conducted a field visit in July 2021 in support of the planning process. This activity is supported in part by a matching funds grant of £5000 from CCF/UK's work with the UK-based charitable platform The Big Give, through its Green Give program. Due to changes in the SRS administration, this activity has been postponed from November 2021 to early 2022. See Annex G and part 2a below.

VII. CCF has supported the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA) in creating partnerships with Ethiopian universities to conduct research and education on wildlife and habitats and provide community services in connection with these activities. To date 13 universities have signed an MoU. The latest signatory, on 14 September, was Jijiga University, which is a key partnership because it is the closest university to the LICIT Project focus area in the SRS. This partnership benefits the LICIT Project by providing potential local resources to support surveys of cheetah and other wildlife, research on human-wildlife conflict, and awareness campaigns and network building (Indicators 2.1, 3.1). These kinds of connections also help provide continuity for continued work beyond the LICIT Project. See Annex H.

VIII. Similarly, CCF continued developing an informal partnership with the Ethiopian Veterinarians Association (EVA), a civil society organization with close to 2000 members in all parts of Ethiopia including the SRS where much of the LICIT Project work is focused. Partnership with EVA would benefit the LICIT Project by providing opportunities to increase knowledge of wildlife medicine, with a focus on cheetahs, to help ensure emergency care for

confiscated cubs at the point of confiscation, and by supporting community engagement. This activity parallels the partnerships CCF established with veterinarians associations in Somaliland and supports Indicators 2.1, 3.1, and 3.4. CCF prepared an overview of the illegal cheetah trade and the LICIT Project for publication in the EVA's member newsletter (Annex I).

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.

Following elections in September 2021, a new administration took office in Ethiopia's Somali Regional State. As a result of these changes, the Director of the Regional Bureau of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change lost his position. He was the principal contact in planning LICIT project community awareness activities in the region, which were scheduled to take place in November 2021. In the circumstances partners have decided to postpone these activities until early 2022 to allow time for the new Director to assume his responsibilities.

As indicated in the LICIT Annual Report for 2020-21, the ongoing conflict and political fragmentation in Yemen has continued to pose a challenge to project implementation, and it has become increasingly clear that not all of the original project goals can be achieved there. In particular, the project is unlikely to succeed in establishing a national anti-wildlife trafficking network in Yemen, nor will it be possible to undertake any kind of awareness or engagement work. We expect, however, that Yemen wildlife officials will be able to participate in one of the project training workshops either in person or virtually.

Progress has also been slow in Somalia due to the political crisis over failed elections that left the country without a functioning government for several months, though there still appears to be a reasonable likelihood of achieving certain project goals – legal strengthening, workshop participation, and establishment of some form of national network. Partners have engaged with the UN Support Office in Somalia, which has expressed interest in helping in Mogadishu.

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 pandemic continued to impact project implementation through the first half of the 2021-22 project year, mainly by limiting travel and fieldwork. Training workshops, community awareness campaigns, wildlife surveys, and network building activities have all been delayed or disrupted. Efforts to conduct project work by virtual means have been affected by unreliable internet service in project countries. CoVID delays have significantly altered the project timeline. The training workshop held in Somaliland in September 2021 was originally scheduled to take place in July 2020. Partners were constrained to request transfer of a significant part of the project budget from 2020-21 to 2021-22. The need to postpone and reschedule project activities has forced partners to reconsider the feasibility and scope of some project activities, such as training a cadre of community scouts, and to adopt a strategy of proceeding where possible regardless of the timeline or the logical order of activities. In response to these challenges partners are considering change requests for amendments to the logframe and for an extension of the project period.

The training workshop held in Somaliland in September 2021 served as a test to see whether project fieldwork could be conducted successfully, with CoVID safeguards including mask-wearing and distancing. The event was successful, as described in section 1 above, but one of the workshop trainers tested positive for CoVID prior to departure and was forced to remain in quarantine in Hargeisa until he could be cleared to travel (he has recovered). Partners are planning additional project events including two workshops but will continue to monitor pandemic conditions and risks closely in connection with any travel or activity.

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: Partners are considering a change request

Received confirmation of change acceptance

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: £ 0

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?

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.**