

Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund Annual Report

IWT Challenge Fund Project Information

Project reference	IWT-066
Project title	Legal Intelligence for Cheetah Illicit Trade (LICIT)
Country/ies	Ethiopia, Somalia/Somaliland, Yemen
Lead partner	Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF)
Project partner(s)	International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) Legal Atlas (LA)
IWTCF grant value	BPS 394,750
Start/end dates of project	1 July 2019 – 30 September 2022
Reporting period (e.g. April 2021-Mar 2022) and number (e.g. Annual Report 1, 2, 3)	April 2021-Mar 2022 Annual Report 3
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1. Project summary

Combating cheetah trafficking in Ethiopia, Somalia/Somaliland and Yemen is hindered by lack of capacity, including incomplete understanding of existing laws by enforcers, prosecutors, and judges. Authorities in these countries have attempted unsuccessfully to stem illegal trade, making it a low risk/high profit activity. The LICIT project addresses the need for stronger legislation and enforcement, greater cross-border cooperation to combat cross-border trafficking, and community action by increasing awareness of wildlife laws among stakeholders. The project aimed to accomplish this by first researching and analyzing legislation to identify gaps and commonalities, recommending measures for strengthening, and developing adaptive tools to increase access to laws. This research has been applied through training and capacity building focused on awareness of wildlife laws and wildlife law enforcement operations, processes and skills. Enforcement capacity is also being strengthened by building networks for regional and national level communication and cooperation, including cross-border collaboration, and local stakeholder networks to facilitate community engagement.

Trafficking threatens cheetah populations in the Horn of Africa, where these CITES Appendix I-listed cats also face loss of habitat and human-wildlife conflict. Cheetah cubs and young of other species are taken from the wild, smuggled through Somalia/Somaliland and Yemen to the Gulf States, and sold as exotic pets. An estimated 300 cheetah cubs per year may be successfully trafficked. The annual loss of these cubs to a known Horn of Africa population of ~300 adults and adolescents (Durant et al, 2017) is devastating. Even cubs intercepted by law enforcement are lost to the wild, as some die due to inhumane treatment at the hands of traffickers, and most survivors lack the skills to be released.

The communities impacted by illegal wildlife trade in the project countries are generally pastoral, insular, and poor. Some are located in areas where cheetahs are found and captured; others are situated along the trade routes followed by traffickers as they smuggle their captive animals from origin to final destination. Communities along the border between Ethiopia and Somaliland have close cultural ties that facilitate cross-border transactions, legal and otherwise. Poaching and trafficking constitutes theft of important community resources and breeds insecurity. The problem has been worsened by drought and climate change, which has reduced livestock herds and magnified the impact of human-wildlife conflict. Communities where cross-border trafficking activities take place, and transit points such as the coastal communities of Somaliland, have been included in project activities. Engagement with these communities will focus on outreach and training and capacity building to reduce human-wildlife conflict and increase awareness about the importance of wildlife as a resource that, if sustainably managed, would protect threatened species, support ecosystem and community resilience, and provide opportunities for sustainable livelihood initiatives.

2. Project partnerships

The partnership between CCF, IFAW, and Legal Atlas remained strong through Year 3 of the project. All three were actively involved in planning, monitoring, and decision making, in consultation with non-financial partners when required. Working relationships with non-financial government partners in the project countries were driven by their interests in supporting the project as much as by the three main partners. This was reflected in participation in national training workshops and enforcement activities (see Sections 3.1 and 3.2, below).

Some informal partnerships established by the LICIT partners during Year 2 continued during Year 3:

- The LICIT partners joined with the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) Secretariat and IGAD in Year 2 to expand the LICIT legal analysis to new wildlife-related topics and all IGAD member countries. The success of this work led to an agreement in Year 3 to extend the project to a second phase, which will focus more specifically on legal standards and approaches to Trans-Frontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs), preparation of a policy paper on TFCAs within the IGAD region, and drafting of an IGAD Protocol on TFCAs for presentation to the Executive Committee of the Horn of Africa Wildlife Enforcement Network (HAWEN), a subsidiary body of IGAD. As with the initial phase, IGAD will provide institutional support through the HAWEN for the project, which is coordinated by CCF. This continued work directly benefits the LICIT project by strengthening the regional anti-trafficking network and promoting additional cross-border cooperation and harmonization of laws in the region. See Annex 4(a). This partnership supports Indicator 0.2.
- UNODC continued to work with the LICIT partners during Year 3 to facilitate country assessments based on the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) Toolkit, for LICIT Project countries. The ICWC organizations (UNODC, CITES Secretariat, INTERPOL, World Bank, and World Customs Organization) created the Toolkit to provide a framework through which the capacity of national institutions to prevent and respond to wildlife crime can be analyzed to identify technical assistance needs. An assessment is the first step for countries to access such assistance from the ICWC organizations. During Year 3 CCF worked with counterparts in Somalia to send a formal request to UNODC to trigger the assessment process. This was accomplished in November 2021 and UNODC replied that Somalia would be placed in the queue of assessment requests awaiting funding. ICWC assessments will benefit the LICIT Project by facilitating additional capacity building resources from the ICWC organizations that would magnify the impact of LICIT training and network building activities. This joint activity supports Indicators 0.3 and 2.1.

- The UN Volunteer (UNV) placed in the secretariat of the Horn of Africa Wildlife Enforcement Network (HAWEN) through collaboration between the LICIT partners, IGAD, and UNODC continued to work throughout Year 3. The UNV's presence significantly improved the functionality of the HAWEN, in particular by strengthening communication with member countries and partners and facilitating meetings of the HAWEN Executive Committee. This was important for the LICIT Project since the HAWEN provides the framework for the LICIT regional network (Indicators 0.3, 2.1).
- LICIT partners' collaboration with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) continued to develop during Year 3. USFWS completed its long-term strategic planning exercise, for which it solicited input from LICIT partners, among others. The exercise identified the Horn of Africa region and cheetahs as priorities, and set forth the following objectives as the basis for USFWS activities:
 - Using population monitoring data for cheetah in the Horn of Africa to inform conservation action plans;
 - Strengthening capacity of law enforcement and cheetah monitoring networks in the Horn of Africa and the Arabian Peninsula.
 - Understanding and addressing drivers for cheetah poaching in the Horn of Africa;
 - Understanding and addressing demand for cheetah in consumer countries.
 These objectives correspond closely to LICIT Project objectives and Indicators 0.2, 0.3, 2.1, and 2.2, which could lead to support from USFWS for actions that complement and build on LICIT goals. For example, USFWS, with support from CCF has set up virtual meetings to discuss potential support for national anti-wildlife trafficking task forces in Djibouti and Ethiopia.

During Year 3 the LICIT Project partners established additional informal partnerships to leverage resources and support for project activities, increase the roster of stakeholders, and expand the project's impact:

- IUCN provided support for CCF and the Somaliland Ministry of Environment & Climate Change (MoECC) to collaborate in developing a Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) model for rural, largely pastoral communities in Somaliland. The model would draw upon similar approaches in Kenya and Namibia to determine if these strategies can help Somaliland communities mitigate conflict with wildlife and reduce wildlife crime while strengthening local resource governance and increasing community resiliency. This initiative will be implemented in the Zeila Wildlife Reserve in Somaliland's Awdal Region, which has been designated a Key Biodiversity Area by the MoECC, and will benefit rural agro-pastoralist communities including an estimated 8,000 households. This partnership builds on and supports Outputs 2 and 3 of the LICIT Project.
- CCF received funding from the Explorers Club to conduct a rapid ecological survey in the Awdal region of Somaliland. The surveys collected data that included identifying wildlife species, types of habitat, and conditions affecting the ecosystem in the area. During visits to communities in the survey area, CCF gathered information from interviews with nomads and rural pastoralists to learn about cheetah sightings and increase understanding of the illegal wildlife trade and human-wildlife conflict in the region. The data collected will benefit the LICIT Project by adding to the information base about the status of cheetahs in the project region (Indicator 2.4), expanding a Somaliland national network, (Indicator 2.1), and building a stronger foundation for community engagement activities under Output 3. See section 3 below and Annex 4(b).
- CCF partnered with World Hunger Help (*Welthungerhilfe*) to develop a concept for community wildlife conservation in Somaliland. This initiative is based in part on lessons learned from the LICIT project, including the understanding that, unless they have food and water security, agro-pastoral communities are unlikely to develop a commitment to wildlife trafficking control or wildlife conservation measures, and will remain highly susceptible to impacts from poaching and trafficking. Thus, strengthening governance and management of wildlife (including wildlife law enforcement) and other

community environmental resources is unlikely to succeed unless it is presented as part of a more comprehensive set of tangible benefits such as better grazing lands, water, health, nutrition, and improved livelihoods. This concept has advanced to the proposal stage and if funded, would be piloted in a small number of communities in Somaliland's Awdal region. This initiative is a direct outgrowth from the LICIT project community awareness campaigns and would build on and strengthen project activities under Output 3. See Annex 4(c).

- CCF negotiated separate agreements with TRAFFIC and Focused Conservation for the purpose of gathering and sharing data relating to the illegal wildlife trade. Analysis of the shared information will allow the three organizations to develop a more thorough overview of illegal wildlife trade in general and illegal trade in live cheetahs in particular, and inform strategies and actions specifically targeting the key areas and actors involved. This will benefit the LICIT project by providing a more complete picture of the status of cheetahs in the project countries as well as informing decisions on where to focus community engagement activities for the remainder of the project and beyond. Information gained from these collaborations will also support LICIT project monitoring and evaluation activities.

3. Project progress

LICIT partners submitted a revised logframe in November 2021 requesting changes reflecting pandemic-related obstacles and lessons learned. Principal changes were:

- Deleted the reference to gazelles in the project impact.
- Changed Means of Verification 0.2.1 to reflect that due to CoVID delays it is unlikely countries will have enough time to enact new legislation before the end of the project.
- Changed Indicator 1.4 and Means of Verification 1.4.1 to reflect partners' assessment that legal guidebooks would be more relevant if they incorporated the outcomes of the project training workshops.
- Changed Indicators 2.1 and 2.2 to recognize that some project goals in Yemen are not achievable due to the pandemic and ongoing conflict and political fragmentation there.
- Deleted Indicators 2.5-2.8 and corresponding Means of Verification concerning community scouts. Due to CoVID-related restrictions and delays this concept was no longer feasible. Partners rescaled this element of the project to involve selection and training of wildlife observers and moved it from Output 2 to Output 3.
- Changed Indicator 2.9 to reflect that CoVID-related impacts have made it unlikely a communication and information sharing platform can be fully developed and deployed by the end of the project.
- Changed Indicator 3.1 to reflect that due to CoVID-related changes to the project timeline the LICIT networks will not be involved in community awareness campaigns.
- Changed Indicator 3.2 to reflect partners' decision to focus on training local veterinarians rather than community members.
- Added new Indicators 3.5-3.6 to replace deleted Indicators 2.5-2.8 to reframe community training from "scouts" to "observers" and moved it from Output 2 to Output 3.
- Added new Indicator 3.7 and Means of Verification 3.7.1 and 3.7.2, to realize concrete benefits from training community observers.
- Made conforming changes and edits to project activities.

Please refer to the Change Request for a complete list and justification of the logframe changes.

3.1 Progress in carrying out project Activities

ACTIVITIES UNDER OUTPUT 1: Legal and scientific knowledge products are available in support of the project.

Activity 1.1 was *completed in Year 1 of the Project*; Legal Atlas researchers collected, analyzed, and summarized relevant laws in the project countries, and made them openly available on the Legal Atlas Platform (www.legal-atlas.net/Wildlife_Trade).

Activity 1.2 was also **completed in Year 1 of the Project**. Based on its research Legal Atlas prepared and delivered country reports analyzing national laws and regional instruments relevant to the legal protection of cheetahs and gazelles for the four project countries.

Activity 1.3, a list of actionable items to improve the national legislation, based on gaps and constraints identified, produced for the local government/wildlife management agency, was completed during Year 2. The project timeline called for completion of this activity within 12 months of the project start date and this was achieved. Legal Atlas prepared and delivered legal agendas for the four project countries including recommendations for strengthening existing wildlife laws. In Year 3 these Agendas served as the basis for continued discussions with all four project countries on potential legislative or regulatory action to amend existing laws or develop new ones. See Activity 2.9 below.

Activity 1.4, Preparation of four legal Guidebooks for distribution at the LICIT Project training workshops (Output 1.4) is in progress. This activity was originally scheduled for Year 1 of the Project, with the expectation that the Guidebooks would be distributed at the workshops originally scheduled for Year 2. The need to postpone the workshops to Year 3 due to the pandemic led Partners to push back the due date for the Guidebooks as well. Partners also determined that the guidebooks would be more relevant if they incorporated material presented during the training workshops, and that it thus made more sense to finalize them after the workshops. Material for the Guidebooks has been identified and collected; the remaining steps are editing and delivery.

ACTIVITIES UNDER OUTPUT 2: The networks for combating Horn of Africa's illicit trade of cheetah and gazelle have been established and their capacity built.

Activity 2.1 was completed in Year 1 of the Project. Start-up Partners' meetings were held and cooperation agreements between them were drafted and signed.

Activity 2.2, hiring of a LICIT Regional Coordinator, was also completed in Year 1; the Coordinator continued to carry out his responsibilities toward project activities and management in Year 3.

Activity 2.3, efforts to identify and select stakeholders in the target countries and build national and regional anti-cheetah trafficking networks were in progress throughout Year 3.

I. Ethiopia:

- In Ethiopia the LICIT partners 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. The surveys were scheduled for November 2021 but due to the state of emergency declared by the Ethiopian government in connection with the Tigray conflict, this activity had to be postponed. It is now scheduled for summer 2022. See Annex 4(d).
- CCF 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 including Jijiga and Kebri Dehar Universities, which are key partnerships because they are the leading universities in 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 connections also help provide continuity for continued work beyond the LICIT Project. See Annex 4(e).

- 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. Partnership with the 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. See Annex 4(f).

II. Somalia

- In January 2022 the Somalia Federal Directorate of Environment and Climate Change announced it would form a National Wildlife Crime Coordination Task Force (NWCCTF) with 11 law enforcement agencies as members to promote cooperation and coordination among member institutions through information sharing, conducting joint operations and expediting prosecutions aimed at combating wildlife crime in Somalia. The announcement noted that the Task Force would contribute to development of the five-year National Environmental Strategy and Action Plan, and the drafting of a National Wildlife Act for combating Poaching, Illegal Trade and Trafficking of Wildlife and Wildlife Products. Announcement of the Task Force is a direct result of LICIT project network building efforts (Indicators 0.1, 0.2, 2.1), and the NWCCTF will serve as the focal point for the LICIT network in Somalia. See Annex 4(g).
- Somalia sent seven participants to the LICIT national workshop held in Addis Ababa in February 2022, most of whom represented new contacts. See Annex 4(h).
- LICIT partners supported the Federal Directorate in making a formal request in November 2021 to UNODC for a national capacity assessment under the ICCWC Toolkit. Such an assessment should lead to opportunities for further technical assistance from ICCWC agencies and provide valuable support for the new NWCCTF (Indicators 0.3, 2.1). See Section 2 above.

III. Somaliland:

- CCF worked with the Somaliland Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC) and other external partners to co-sponsor the Consultative Conference for Environment Protection and Conservation of Biodiversity for Eastern Regions of Somaliland held on 26-7 July 2021 in Burao. The event brought together 70 leaders representing communities in eastern Somaliland. Discussion included illegal wildlife trade and human-wildlife conflict, impact of charcoal production and new settlements, illegal pasture enclosures, increase of water points in rangeland, and biodiversity protection. This event benefited the LICIT project as an opportunity to develop new contacts in the eastern part of the country, which is difficult for outsiders to access but is also a significant source of trafficked cheetahs. These contacts should facilitate further LICIT community awareness efforts and wildlife surveys in these regions (Indicator 3.1). See Annex 4(i).
- In remarks delivered at the LICIT training workshop held in Hargeisa in September 2021 (see Activity 2.6.3 below), Somaliland's Minister of Environment and Climate Change formally 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 MoECC (Chair), Somaliland Police, Coast Guard, Attorney General's office, Customs, and Ministry of Defence. Realization of the Task Force is also a direct result of LICIT project network building efforts (Annex 4(j, k). 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). Work with the MoECC to develop the new Task Force is ongoing at the end of

Year 3 and will continue for the remainder of the project. Representatives from most of the Task Force member agencies participated in the training workshop.

- Concurrently with the September workshop, LICIT partners organized a stakeholders event in pursuit of continued LICIT Project network building (Indicator 2.1). In addition to 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 4(l).
- LICIT partners expanded contacts within the Somaliland legal community through meetings with 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 (Indicators 1.3, 2.1).
- CCF's survey in Somaliland's Awdal region led to contact with a number of potential new stakeholders, including officials at the regional and community levels, who can help build a Somaliland network (Indicator 2.1). See Section 2 and Annex 4(m).

IV. **Yemen:** The complex political situation and conflict in Yemen remained an obstacle to expanding a LICIT network there. Several potential contacts identified to Partners were not pursued because it turned out they had fled the country or were no longer performing their duties since they were no longer receiving their government salaries. Despite these obstacles, Yemen was able to send seven participants to the February 2022 LICIT national training workshop in Ethiopia, where they began work on developing a national cheetah action plan. See Annex 4(h).

The **consultation process with all relevant stakeholders to provide a detailed assessment of progress** related to the status of the cheetah population in the Horn of Africa region (**Activity 2.4**) was **completed in Year 1**, when LICIT Partners convened a stakeholder meeting that produced a cheetah strategy to serve as a reference point for stakeholder action and collaboration. LICIT Partners have continued to engage with stakeholders during Year 3 to assess the status of cheetahs in the project region. This included working with the Explorers Club to conduct rapid assessment surveys of the project focus species in selected areas of Somaliland (see Section 2 above), and collaborating with EWCA to establish relationships with universities in Ethiopia's Somali Regional State (SRS) with the goal of conducting similar surveys in the SRS. These surveys will continue building more accurate baselines for ongoing LICIT activities and beyond. Information gained from surveys in Somaliland is still being analyzed at the end of Year 3 but should provide valuable input toward establishing baseline habitat, distribution, and numbers data for the cheetah population in the region (see Section 2 above and Activity 3.1 below).

Activity 2.5, Needs assessments in Ethiopia, Somalia, Somaliland, and Yemen for the national TOT workshops, was **completed in Year 2**. The results of the assessments were used to inform selection of topics, preparation of agendas, and selection of participants for the two national training workshops held in Year 3 (see 2.6 below).

Activity 2.6, Partners will organise two, 5-day national workshops to increase understanding and awareness of wildlife trafficking and tools available to fight it, was **mostly completed in Year 3**. See 2.6.1-2.6.4 below.

Activity 2.6.1, preparing training materials, inviting participants, and preparing logistics for the national workshops in Ethiopia and northwest Somalia (Somaliland), was **completed in Year 3** as part of planning and preparation for the national workshops. See Annexes 4(n, o) for sample materials. A complete set of workshop presentations can be provided.

Activity 2.6.2, Delivery of a **five-day national training workshop in Ethiopia** for Ethiopia, Somalia, and Yemen was **completed** in Year 3. The event was held from 21-25 February 2022 in Addis Ababa. Twenty-nine officials from government agencies with responsibilities for wildlife law enforcement took part, including nine from the Ethiopian federal government, six from Ethiopia's Somali Regional State authorities, seven from Somalia, and seven from Yemen. Four of the trainees (3 Ethiopian, 1 Somali) were women (13.8 percent). Yemen was included in the Ethiopia workshop instead of the Somaliland workshop since Somaliland's unrecognized status made it too difficult for government officials from Yemen to travel to Hargeisa. The workshop was co-hosted by the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA), and EWCA staff participated as presenters as well as trainees. Training covered topics related to policy and strategy as well as operational skills. On the final day of the workshop, the three national groups worked separately on an exercise to apply what they had learned from the training sessions to determine priorities for national cheetah action plans (Indicator 2.2). The workshop was covered by Ethiopian media. See Annexes 4(h, p, q, v).

Activity 2.6.3, delivery of a **five-day national training workshop in Somaliland** was **completed** in Year 3. This event was held from 19-23 September 2021 in Hargeisa. Twenty-three officials from Somaliland government agencies with responsibilities for wildlife law enforcement took part, including representatives from member agencies of the National Wildlife Trafficking Task Force. Four women were among the trainees (17.3 percent). As with the Ethiopia workshop, training covered both policy/strategy and operational topics. The workshop was co-hosted by the Somaliland Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC), and received extensive media coverage. See Annex 4(r, s, t, v).

Activity 2.6.4, an **evaluation of the impact of the national workshops**, is **in progress**. The Somaliland workshop had an impact when trainees subsequently took part in law enforcement actions that led to arrests of traffickers and recovery of cheetah cubs. See Section 17 below and Annex 4(u). Workshop participants also supported CCF's survey work and community engagement in the Awdal region.

Partners will **conduct a needs assessment for an inter-regional enforcement cooperation workshop (Activity 2.7)** in 2022-23 and will **organise a three-day inter-regional workshop** in Ethiopia for the four project countries, with participation by other stakeholders to increase understanding and awareness of wildlife trafficking and tools available to fight it (**Activity 2.8**, including sub-activities **2.8.1 - preparation of materials, inviting participants, and preparing logistics for the inter-regional enforcement cooperation workshop for Ethiopia, Somalia/Somaliland, and Yemen**, and **2.8.2 - delivery of the three-day inter-regional enforcement cooperation workshop**) in 2022. An initial regional network-building meeting was held in Year 1 under the auspices of IGAD and the HAWEN. Work has continued with these partners to further develop regional network elements as building blocks toward greater inter-regional cooperation. See Section 2 above. Partners will **evaluat[e] the impact of the inter-regional enforcement cooperation workshop (Activity 2.8.3)** after the event is held.

Activity 2.9, **provide post-workshops ongoing support and advice to Ethiopian law enforcement agencies** to operationalize trainings received and networks established, is **in progress**. During Year 3 Legal Atlas continued to work with Ethiopian counterpart authorities on a remote basis to support implementation of the Legal Agendas, including amending or upgrading wildlife legislation. Due to government reorganization, however, the Ethiopian wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA) was placed under a new ministry, the Ministry of Tourism, which caused delays as EWCA needed to develop new bureaucratic relationships. The LICIT partners responded by proposing an informal partnership with the School of Law at Addis Ababa University to provide external expert support to the legal strengthening process.

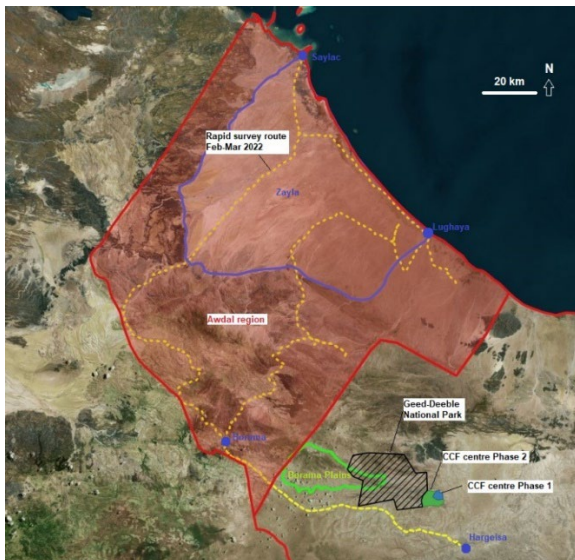
Activity 2.10, in which **relevant stakeholders from the workshops will enter into collaborative agreements both at national and inter- regional levels**, and its sub-activities, **development of national and regional action plans** based on outcomes from national and inter-regional workshops (**Activity 2.10.1**), **development of relevant agreements** for national and inter-regional networks (**Activity 2.10.2**), and **formalizing and executing national and**

inter-regional action plans (Activity 2.10.3) are *in progress* and will continue in 2022. Workshop participants from Ethiopia, Somalia, and Yemen began work on national action plans at the Ethiopia national workshop.

Partners will conduct an **assessment of Year 3** for the final project report (**Activity 2.11**).

ACTIVITIES UNDER OUTPUT 3:

Action to develop **awareness messages and delivery methods (Activity 3.1.1)** for **awareness campaigns and conduct campaigns (7) in target communities in Ethiopia and Somaliland** is *in progress*. Opportunities for fieldwork continued to be limited in Year 3 by the CoVID pandemic, and the conflict situation in Ethiopia. Some activity was possible, however; as described in Section 2 above, CCF partnered with the Explorers Club and the Somaliland MoECC to conduct a broad survey in areas of Somaliland's Awdal region to collect data about presence of cheetah and other wildlife. Survey activities included visiting communities in the area that were not reached in earlier LICIT campaigns to gather information about awareness and attitudes toward wildlife and trafficking. See map below and Annex 4(b, m). Together with the previous four campaigns conducted in Awdal during Year 2, five campaigns have been completed. The remaining two are scheduled in Ethiopia in 2022.



CCF/Explorers club survey area and route

Results of LICIT partners' **assess[ments of] community knowledge of and engagement in protecting wildlife resources** pre- and post-awareness campaigns (**Activity 3.1.2**) revealed that the main issue faced by surveyed communities was the impact on their livelihoods through livestock losses to all causes, including predation, drought, and disease. The majority of those surveyed did not see cheetahs specifically as enemies but understood that illegal wildlife trade is a problem. Many villagers requested training in matters such as livestock management and animal health. The results suggest approaches that would combine conservation initiatives with husbandry skills that would contribute to poverty alleviation by supporting existing as well as potential new livelihoods and strengthening protection and conservation of community wildlife and other environmental resources. CCF is pursuing this approach in its collaboration with World Hunger Help (WHH) (see Section 2 above).

Activity 3.2 - identification of 20 veterinary doctors (with at least 20% women) from Ethiopia and Somaliland, **Activity 3.3.1 - Provide training for 20 veterinary doctors** on handling and emergency treatment of cheetahs through hands-on workshops, and **Activity 3.3.2 - Assess training of veterinarians** through pre-and post-workshop questionnaires, were **completed in Year 2**. Twenty local veterinarians from Ethiopia and Somaliland were trained. Trainees continued to participate in evaluating and treating confiscated cubs transferred to approved treatment facilities in the region during Year 3 (Indicators 3.2, 3-3. 3.4).

CCF continued to **assess impact of veterinarian training (Activity 3.4)** during Year 3 as trained local veterinarians remained involved with treatment of confiscated cubs transferred to safe house facilities in Ethiopia and Somaliland. A total of 36 cubs were thus treated, of which 29 (80.5 percent) survived, compared to the estimated 15-20 percent survival rate of trafficked cubs not confiscated.

Activity 3.5 Identify/recruit community Wildlife Observers (including among women, religious leaders, elders, and veterinarians), **Activity 3.6 train community Observers** to assist with wildlife resource/human-wildlife conflict surveys of local landscapes and with informal education on wildlife and its ecological importance, **Activity 3.6.1 assess Wildlife Observers pre- and post-training** knowledge, and **Activity 3.7 Conduct wildlife resource/human-wildlife conflict surveys** in 12 communities in Ethiopia and Somaliland with participation of Wildlife Observers, will be carried out in 2022.

3.2 Progress towards project Outputs

Output 1. Legal and scientific knowledge products are available in support of the project

At the end of Year 3, three out of four legal knowledge products (Indicators 1.1-1.3) were complete and had been presented to counterparts. Work on the remaining Output 1 product, four national legal guidebooks (Indicator 1.4), is in progress. The timeline for the guidebooks was changed to allow incorporation of material presented at the national training workshops. Legal knowledge and analysis generated by activities supporting Output 1 provided a basis for continued efforts to provide technical legal assistance in Year 3, with the goal of supporting government counterparts in applying the knowledge products to strengthen laws. For Yemen and Somaliland, however, it proved difficult to find national legal experts with sufficient English language skills to serve adequately as focal points. In Ethiopia and Somalia, bureaucratic issues were the main challenge. In Ethiopia EWCA was transitioning to become subsidiary to the Ministry of Tourism and in Somalia, oversight of environmental issues was in flux as the government pursued the creation of a new environmental agency. LICIT partners responded by seeking informal partnerships with national law schools in Ethiopia and Somaliland to support the efforts, and by looking for external funding to hire fully qualified experts. Remaining consulting funds in the LICIT project budget are also a potential source of support for the latter strategy. Although these efforts encountered obstacles, they will continue until the end of the project period.

The indicators for Output 1 are measured directly, by evidence of completion and delivery of the associated work products. Based on these measurements, this Output has been 75 percent achieved by the end of Year 3 and is likely to be fully achieved by the end of the project.

Output 2: The networks for combating Horn of Africa's illicit trade of cheetah and gazelle have been established and their capacity built.

At the beginning of Year 3, establishment of three national networks and one regional network was in progress and the core elements of two networks were in place. Due to continuing obstacles related to the pandemic and ongoing conflict, partners judged it would not be possible to establish an adequate national network in Yemen, and this was dropped as part of revisions to the logframe. Otherwise, LICIT partners made further progress toward network creation by the end of Year 3, including:

- Partners delivered two national training workshops in Ethiopia and Somaliland (Indicator 2.3). See Section 3.1 and Annex 4(q, t);
- The Somalia Federal Directorate of Environment and Climate Change announced it would form a National Wildlife Crime Coordination Task Force (NWCCTF) with 11 members, which will serve as the core of a Somalia national network (Annex 4(g));
- Partners helped Somalia's wildlife authorities apply to UNODC for a capacity assessment that could lead to technical and capacity building assistance for the NWCCTF from the ICCWC organizations;

- The Somaliland Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC) announced formation of a National Wildlife trafficking Task Force, which will serve as the core of a Somaliland national network (Annex 4(k));
- In collaboration with the Explorers Club and the MoECC, CCF organized and conducted a wildlife and community survey in rural Somaliland (Sections 2 and 3.1 above; Annex 4(b, m)).

Progress was limited in Yemen, but Partners were able to engage new stakeholders through the training workshop (Annex 4(h)).

After lengthy CoVID related delays, the LICIT national training workshops (Indicator 2.3) were delivered in Year 3. Twenty-five percent of trainees received scores of at least 70 percent on post-training assessments. This was a disappointing result as it did not meet the threshold for Indicator 2.4 (80% above 70%), however trainees showed an average 20 percent increase from their pre-assessment scores, which indicated a significant gain in knowledge from a low baseline. See Annex 4(x).

At the end of Year 3, the project has met the threshold of Indicator 2.1 for three of the four project networks - the national networks in Ethiopia and Somaliland and the regional network. Indicator 2.3 was fully achieved with delivery of the workshops. Indicator 2.4 was partly achieved as noted above. Activities that would measure the other Output 2 indicators (2.2, 2.5) including creation of national action plans and a regional workshop are ongoing and will conclude by the end of the project period. Based on these results it is likely Output 2 will be achieved for three networks (Ethiopia, Somaliland, regional); the outlook for Somalia remains unclear.

Output 3: Cheetah and gazelle area communities increase their awareness of the importance of halting trafficking and conservation of the species

At the beginning of Year 3, community surveys had begun to establish a baseline of knowledge that indicated low awareness related to cheetah and gazelle trafficking and the needs and benefits of wildlife conservation, but a high level of interest in learning more about these issues, as well as how conservation could contribute to poverty alleviation. Pandemic restrictions and conflict in Ethiopia again limited LICIT partners' ability to conduct fieldwork, particularly in Ethiopia, but CCF was able to collaborate with the Explorers Club to conduct an extensive survey in the Awdal Region of Somaliland that included contact with communities not reached in the earlier campaigns, and contributed further to understanding of community awareness and attitudes toward cheetahs and cheetah trafficking. See Section 3.1 above and Annex 4(b, m).

By the end of Year 3 Partners had conducted five of seven proposed community awareness campaigns (Indicator 3.1). During Year 3, LICIT-trained local veterinarians in Somaliland continued to help provide basic veterinary services to cheetahs confiscated from trafficking (Indicator 3.2), with the goal of improving the survival rate of confiscated cheetah cubs. These veterinarians, trained during Year 2, helped treat 100 percent of confiscated cubs transferred to an approved treatment facility. Of these cubs, 80.5 percent (29 of 36) survived (Indicator 3.4), compared to the estimated 15-20 percent survival rate for unconfiscated trafficked cubs.

Remaining activities under Output 3 will be carried out in 2022. Assuming the pandemic does not prevent partners from conducting further fieldwork, it remains likely that Output 3 can be achieved by the end of the project.

3.3 Progress towards the project Outcome

The Outcome of the LICIT project is **a public/private network of key regional players...actively cooperating to combat wildlife trafficking between the Horn of Africa and the Arabian Peninsula.**

At the outset of the project the target countries and the Horn of Africa region had baseline institutional structures to address wildlife trafficking, but these uniformly lacked capacity or a focus on cheetah trafficking. Although the CoVID pandemic again disrupted major project

activities and limited others during Year 3, the partners nonetheless made progress toward the project Outcome.

Direct network building efforts continued in Year 3 and will continue until the end of the project period. Year 3 accomplishments such as facilitating establishment of national wildlife trafficking task forces in Somalia and Somaliland (Annex 4(g, k), delivery of national training workshops Annex 4(q, t), support for Somalia's application for an ICCWC capacity assessment, and developing new stakeholder contacts and informal partnerships (see Sections 2 and 3.1) supported the formation and functioning of the national and regional networks envisioned by the project outcome (Outcome Indicator 0.1).

Actions to provide ongoing technical legal assistance to project countries for implementation of the previously delivered legal knowledge products supported Outcome Indicator 0.2. Participation by LICIT project trainees in successful wildlife enforcement operations in Somaliland directly supported Outcome Indicator 0.3. Year 3 saw an increase in the number of cheetah trafficking-related news items in local media, including social media, in the project countries from the baseline of 10 to at least 19, a 90 percent increase (Indicator 0.4). See Annex 4(v). Continued community engagement helped build the necessary foundation for facilitating community action against trafficking (Indicator 0.5). See Annex 4(m).

As part of evaluation and planning during Year 3, LICIT partners reviewed and refined the outcome indicators to match more closely with the approach to the network building process set forth in the project outputs, output indicators, and activities, and to account for external events that have impacted the project. These changes were reflected in amendments to the logframe.

At the end of Year 3, the project Outcome remains generally achievable within the scope of the budget, amended logframe and no-cost extension, with the caveat that ongoing disruptions and uncertainties caused by the CoVID pandemic could still affect progress (see section 14).

3.4 Monitoring of assumptions

ASSUMPTIONS RELATED TO PROJECT OUTCOME

- **Interest of public and private stakeholders to join LICIT, as well as civil society, academia, and rural communities.**

This assumption remained valid during Year 3. Engagement with community stakeholders in Somaliland, and full participation in the national workshops by project countries demonstrated interest in LICIT objectives (see Section 3.1 above). Stakeholder interest also led to opportunities for several informal partnerships that facilitated LICIT objectives (See Section 2 above).

- **Horn of Africa political situation remains stable for the duration of the project.**

This assumption remained mostly valid during Year 3 in relation to the work of the Project, even though the general stability of the region remained precarious. The state of emergency declared by the Ethiopian government in response to the conflict in Ethiopia's Tigray region forced postponement and rescheduling of the Ethiopia national training workshop and community awareness campaigns. In Somalia, a political stalemate resulting from failed elections continued into Year 3, but key Somali government contacts for the Project remained in place. The unrecognized status of Somaliland continued to pose a political and diplomatic challenge but did not prevent specific project activities from taking place there during Year 3 (see Section 3.1 above). The chaotic situation in Yemen continued to limit Project activities, though some results were achieved (see Section 3.1 above). Some potential contacts in Yemen were not pursued because it turned out they had fled the country to escape the conflict.

- **Governments of Ethiopia, Somalia/Somaliland, Yemen and GCC keep detailed records on IWT investigated cases, seizure numbers and cases prosecuted.**

This assumption was not tested in Year 3. The project activities that would validate this assumption are ongoing, but enough data is not yet available.

- **Governments of Ethiopia, Somalia/Somaliland, Yemen and GCC share information on IWT investigated cases, seizure numbers and cases prosecuted with media and stakeholders.**

This assumption was not tested in Year 3. The project activities that would validate this assumption are ongoing, but enough data is not yet available.

ASSUMPTIONS RELATED TO OUTPUT 1

- **Field investigations can be conducted without undue security risks.**

This assumption was not fully valid during Year 3. Project field work in Ethiopia was delayed by security risks associated with the conflict in Tigray. Fieldwork in Somaliland was not unduly affected by security issues. The project plan does not include field work in Somalia or Yemen.

- **Legal materials are accessible online from official and secondary sources.**

This assumption remained valid during Year 3. Although access to legal materials was not 100 percent, this did not prevent progress on related project activities.

- **Local partners gather and share legal materials that are not available online.**

This assumption was valid in Year 3. Partner government institutions in project countries were not able to provide 100 percent of materials sought, but this did not prevent progress on related project activities.

ASSUMPTIONS RELATED TO OUTPUT 2

- **Interest of public and private stakeholders to join LICIT.**

This assumption remained valid during Year 3. Existing stakeholders remained interested in collaborating with the LICIT Project and participating in project activities such as the national training workshops. Several new stakeholders entered into informal partnerships that have leveraged additional resources to further LICIT objectives or created opportunities for future collaboration. (See section 2 above).

- **Law enforcement agencies are committed and able to contribute through dedication of staff time and other support within the scope of their resources.**

This assumption was partly valid during Year 3. Law enforcement stakeholders remained generally interested and supportive of the LICIT project. Counterpart agencies in the project countries were not always able to contribute adequate personnel or other resources, in particular legal resources, although they cooperated to organize several project events including the national workshops. See Section 3.1 above.

- **Local communities are interested in participating in the network and send members to become trained as community scouts and collaborate with law enforcement.**

This assumption was partly valid during Year 3. Community stakeholders engaged about the LICIT project generally expressed interest and support for network participation and community action against trafficking (see Sections 2 and 3.1 above). Community scout training was removed as a project activity as it became infeasible due to CoVID-related delays to the project timeline.

ASSUMPTION RELATED TO OUTPUT 3

- **Communities interested and engaged in anti-trafficking, and the conservation of cheetahs and gazelles.**

This assumption was valid during Year 3. The positive responses to community awareness activities in Somaliland revealed a strong interest on the part of communities to learn about wildlife issues including cheetah trafficking and conservation measures (see Sections 2 and 3.1 above).

3.5 Impact: achievement of positive impact on illegal wildlife trade and poverty reduction

As conceived, the LICIT Project contributes to poverty alleviation by helping local communities in Ethiopia and Somaliland better understand the value of their wildlife resources and better protect those resources from losses due to poaching and illegal trade. This is accomplished through outreach and training in targeted communities. Outreach continued in Somaliland during Year 3 with community contacts achieved through work in partnership with the Explorers Club (see sections 2 and 3.1 above and Annex 4(b, l)). Engaging these beneficiaries will help build networks of community contacts that can influence community attitudes and activities to oppose poaching and trafficking and facilitate the introduction of further initiatives to support conservation of cheetahs and other wildlife resources.

The project's higher-level impact on illegal wildlife trade in Year 3 was its continued contributions to strengthening the legal, diplomatic, and policy frameworks necessary to support national and regional efforts to end trafficking in cheetahs and other wildlife and wildlife products. The legal agendas delivered to the project countries and follow up technical assistance, which will carry on throughout the project, will help governments strengthen domestic anti-trafficking laws and regulations (Indicators 0.2, 1.3). These actions, as well as network building activities and support for the HAWEN, also helped establish a stronger legal and policy basis for inter-governmental cooperation in the region and for collaboration with international organizations and NGOs on cross-border anti trafficking initiatives (Indicator 2.1).

The project's higher-level impact on poverty alleviation is based on the role of wildlife as an important resource in community landscapes, on the same level as other resources such as water, forests, livestock, or agricultural land. Wildlife contributes to ecosystem services by maintaining biodiversity and balance within the ecosystem. Wildlife related community engagement programs offer opportunities for livelihoods, training, education, capacity building, and development of civil society. The LICIT project aims to provide an example of how protection of wildlife resources, in particular ending the loss of those resources to poaching and trafficking, can be an organizing theme around which poverty alleviation initiatives can be implemented. CCF's collaboration with WHH is directly targeted to this concept (see section 2 above). Community engagement efforts as part of the survey work supported by the Explorers Club (see sections 2 and 3.1 above) also represented steps toward this goal (Indicator 3.1).

4. Thematic focus

The LICIT project supports two of the principal themes: ensuring effective legal frameworks and deterrents, and strengthening law enforcement. The former is the focus of project Outputs 1 and 2; the latter of Outputs 2 and 3. Evidence of support for ensuring effective legal frameworks includes the legal knowledge products delivered to counterparts in project countries during Years 1 and 2 of the project and the ongoing effort to provide continuing technical legal assistance to use these products to support specific actions to strengthen laws. Evidence of support for strengthening law enforcement includes the training workshops for wildlife enforcement personnel from project countries and establishment of national networks to address wildlife trafficking. Notable events in the past year include creation of national wildlife trafficking task forces in Somalia and Somaliland to coordinate wildlife enforcement actions on a government-wide basis, and enforcement operations in Somaliland involving LICIT-trained

officials that resulted in recovery of 27 cheetah cubs and arrests of traffickers. See Sections 3.1 and 17 and Annexes 4(g, k, u).

5. Impact on species in focus

Project activities in Year 3 produced a positive impact on the focus species (cheetahs) as the result of training and capacity building, community engagement, and increased functioning of project networks. In October 2021, wildlife officers from the Somaliland Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC), who had participated in LICIT project training in September 2021, conducted a wildlife law enforcement sweep in the Sool and Saraar regions of the country that rescued eleven cheetah cubs that had been illegally taken from the wild in four separate incidents during September and October (see Section 17). This was followed by another significant operation in March 2022, when MoECC officials confiscated another 15 cubs and arrested a major trafficker. Local veterinarians trained as part of the project continued to contribute to providing urgent care to these cubs and others recovered during the project year and transferred to an approved treatment facility (Indicators 3.2, 3.4). As a result, all 36 confiscated cheetah cubs that came to the CCF sanctuary in Somaliland during Year 3 received care (100 percent; Indicator 3.4), of which 29 (80.5 percent) survived. This compares with an estimated survival rate of 15-20 percent for trafficked cubs not intercepted by law enforcement. A small number of cubs were recovered in Ethiopia and transferred to a sanctuary there. The community engagement conducted during the Awdal survey in Somaliland was a further step in creating awareness and conservation interest in areas where wild cheetahs are found, which is intended to lay a foundation for actions that would have more direct impact on the focus species (Indicator 3.1). See Sections 2 and 3.1 above and Annex 4(l).

6. Project support to poverty reduction

The review of the Year 2 Annual Report asked the partners to address the following comment:

Could the team please provide more information on the poverty reducing/livelihood improving activities, clearly stating how the work undertaken by the project has had/will have an impact on livelihoods of local communities?

The original LICIT project approach to poverty alleviation was that offering outreach and training in targeted communities would build networks that could influence community attitudes to understand the value of wildlife as a community resource and oppose poaching and trafficking as theft of those resources. This would be accomplished through recruiting local volunteer scouts from target communities and training them to spread conservation messages and assist local law enforcement. It was assumed that the benefits derived from community scouts would encourage governments to support them through incentives or job creation, which would provide livelihoods and reduce poverty. The validity of this approach has not been tested as CoVID-related obstacles have prevented the fieldwork that would have been necessary to establish the network of scouts, and this activity has been removed from the project logframe since even with the no-cost extension, there is no longer enough time remaining to implement it.

What has been done, when conditions have allowed, is initial community engagement to build contacts, survey attitudes toward cheetahs and wildlife, and assess knowledge of trafficking and interest in wildlife conservation (Indicator 3.1). See Sections 2 and 3.1. This work has revealed a high level of community interest in conservation and has helped build a knowledge foundation for more direct steps to address poverty and livelihoods. Five of the seven proposed assessments have been conducted in Somaliland; the remaining two are scheduled to be carried out in Ethiopia in 2022. In addition, partners intend to select and train wildlife observers in 12 communities to assist with species surveys that will also contribute to the knowledge base. These will be volunteer roles, but at a scaled back level that should be achievable within the time and resources remaining (Indicators 3.5-3.7).

The LICIT partners continue to believe that community action to protect cheetahs and other wildlife is necessary to create healthier community landscapes, which in turn will help alleviate poverty by reducing threats to livestock upon which these communities depend for their

principal livelihoods. Partners have come to understand, however, that for economic and social reasons, initiatives that depend solely on volunteers would not likely succeed in the pastoral communities common in Somaliland or the economically and culturally similar Somali Regional State of Ethiopia. It has also become clear over the course of the project that the governments of the project countries would not have the capacity to support community scouts even if they were created. Partners have learned that communities will be more willing to take action if conservation measures are integrated into more comprehensive community development initiatives that create and sustain benefits and livelihoods. Partners have thus sought to create informal partnerships and collaborative relationships that can leverage LICIT project knowledge and experience together with external resources to pursue an integrated approach. This work has begun in 2022 and will continue beyond the end of the LICIT project. See Sections 2, 9, and 10.

7. Consideration of gender equality issues

Gender equality is an integral element of the training, network building, and local community awareness aspects of the LICIT Project, with a target of significant participation by women in all LICIT activities (see, e.g., Indicator 3.2). Partners have sought to include women's civil society associations in national stakeholder networks and to create opportunities for women and women-led organizations to participate in and benefit from community-level initiatives related to wildlife protection.

The LICIT Project national workshops included women from three of the four project countries (Ethiopia, Somalia, Somaliland). These women accounted for 8 of 52 total trainees (15.3 percent), a relatively low percentage likely due to a general lack of women in law enforcement and wildlife conservation positions in these countries. The workshops provided opportunities for the female participants to improve their professional knowledge and skills. During Year 3 CCF continued its partnership with the Somaliland Women Veterinarians Association (SOWVA). SOWVA members who worked at the CCF veterinary clinic in Somaliland received on-the-job training in providing care to cheetahs and other wild species. The work of the SOWVA-affiliated veterinarians promoted increased survival rates for individual cheetahs confiscated from traffickers (see section 5 above). Gender equality impacts from the partnership with SOWVA include strengthening the role of women in civil society and promoting the role of women in veterinary medicine.

8. Monitoring and evaluation

Partners conducted M&E activities in Year 3 under the coordination of CCF. The group of key project personnel is small enough that information was shared directly among them. This communication uses digital platforms for conferences and document exchanges. A comprehensive M&E Plan provides a framework document for M&E activities. Achievements are measured by completion of project activities according to the project logframe and timeline. Oversight for Legal Atlases' responsibilities and contributions was conducted through regular direct communications with Legal Atlas principals. The IFAW Regional Coordinator reported on a regular basis to the IFAW project manager for LICIT and the IFAW Wildlife Crime Program Director, and all three were in frequent, regular contact with CCF's Project Coordinator and Project Supervisor. CCF developed an internal monitoring process for its own activities and responsibilities that supplements direct communication among project staff.

The project outcome envisions the establishment of anti-trafficking networks. Strengthening legal frameworks is a key element of these networks; thus, activities such as follow up technical assistance to support drafting of potential new laws and regulations demonstrate a direct contribution to the related project output (Output 1) and the project Outcome.

Likewise, activities that produced concrete steps to establish LICIT networks, such as the establishment of national Wildlife Trafficking Task Forces in Somalia and Somaliland (see section 3.1 above and Annex 4(g, j, k)), demonstrate a direct contribution to the related project output (Output 2) and the project Outcome.

The third major element of the project involves engagement with communities to extend networks to the local level and increase awareness of the importance of ending cheetah trafficking and protecting community wildlife resources (Output 3). The surveys and community engagement activities undertaken in Year 3 with support from the Explorers Club were a direct contribution to achieving this Output and the project Outcome. See Sections 2 and 3.1 above and Annex 4(b, m).

The M&E plan was revised in Year 2 to reflect the status of project work, in particular the continued impact of CoVID-related delays. Based on these revisions and recommendations from the Mid-Term Review, partners requested changes to the project logframe during Year 3 as part of their assessment and planning for the remainder of the project.

9. Lessons learnt

The main events for the project this year were the national training workshops for wildlife law enforcement officials from the four project countries. These provided a number of lessons, including that you can't always get the participants you want. The workshops were designed mainly for operational law enforcement personnel. Partners consulted with counterparts in the project countries on desired participants, but final selection was the prerogative of counterparts, and in the end both workshops included a significant number of participants who had policy, management, or staff responsibilities. Partners responded by amending the curriculum to focus more on legal, policy, and strategy issues. The workshops were successful in conveying the materials presented, which advanced the general goals of the project, but the impact on operational capacity was not as significant as originally expected (but see Section 17).

A second, related, lesson learned was that classroom training is not enough by itself to ensure that knowledge and skills are sustained. What is taught should be reinforced through follow-up practical training and mentorship. As initially conceived the project included a training-of-trainers element that could have been directed to this purpose, but pandemic-related delays and travel restrictions made it infeasible to pursue this activity, which was removed from the logframe. Some trainees have participated in activities that would have allowed them to employ their new skills, and partners will look for opportunities to facilitate additional knowledge sharing, but this will be on an ad hoc basis. In addition, the number of non-operational trainees in the workshops, and the consequent changes to the curriculum, meant there was less in the way of operational knowledge to be further shared.

A key lesson learned from community engagement was that community buy-in to proposals to strengthen governance and management of wildlife, including wildlife law enforcement, and other community environmental resources is much more likely if conservation measures are brought to communities as part of a more comprehensive set of tangible benefits such as improved grazing lands, forests, water, health, nutrition, and livelihoods. CCF's informal partnership with World Hunger Help is designed to build on this lesson. See Section 2 above.

10. Actions taken in response to previous reviews (if applicable)

The review of the Year 2 Annual Report included the following comment:

Could the team please provide more information on the poverty reducing/livelihood improving activities, clearly stating how the work undertaken by the project has had/will have an impact on livelihoods of local communities?

This comment is addressed in Section six, above.

11. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere

Design of the LICIT project was changed during Year 3 due to the cumulative impacts of the pandemic as well as other disruptive events such as the state of emergency declaration in Ethiopia, which occurred two weeks before the scheduled dates for a project workshop in Addis

Ababa, and forced yet another round of cancellations and reworking of the project activities and timeline. Changes were reflected in amendments to the logframe. See Sections 3, 9, and 14.

12. Sustainability and legacy

As has been true throughout the project, interest in the LICIT project on the part of government partners and stakeholders remained strong during Year 3, as evidenced by participation in the national workshops (see Section 3.1), though still limited by lack of capacity.

In fulfilment of the LICIT partners' commitment to open access, the IWT legal frameworks and assessments for the project countries remain freely available on the Legal Atlas platform (www.legal-atlas.net).

The LICIT project exit strategy is that by the end of the project, participants in the networks and beneficiaries of project training will be able to act through their communities and government institutions to continue building capacity of networks, promoting awareness, and change attitudes and behaviors in ways that will combat cheetah trafficking and protect wildlife resources. These kinds of changes will promote sustainability of LICIT outcomes as they become part of an institutional or community ethos and will establish a foundation for future initiatives. Legal Atlas' intelligence platform will remain openly available to all stakeholders after the project concludes and can be used by the project countries to continue reviewing and strengthening their existing legislation as well as helping sustain enforcement on the ground. New or amended laws and regulations resulting from processes initiated during the project can codify LICIT-proposed improvements. New or improved national and regional action plans and agreements to combat wildlife trafficking developed by LICIT-supported networks can serve as guidelines for post-LICIT activity. Informal partnerships focused on integrating conservation of community wildlife with other development-focused activities will establish a more sustainable foundation for LICIT objectives beyond the end of the project (see Section 2 above).

At the end of Year 3, this strategy is still generally valid, assuming the CoVID pandemic does not prevent partners from completing project activities (see Section 14). Partners will assess whether changes to the exit strategy are necessary as part of their evaluation and planning process for the final months of the project.

13. IWT Challenge Fund identity

Throughout Year 3, the Partners ensured that DEFRA and the IWT were recognized in connection with significant LICIT Project activities. This included placement of logos on banners, printed materials, presentations at the national workshops, and references in written materials such as press releases. See Annex 4(q, t, w). The Partners' standard approach has been to promote the LICIT Project as a distinct identity.

At this point, at the end of Year 3, principal contacts in the target countries have a good understanding of the project and its goals, including the role of DEFRA and the IWT. When a LICIT Project activity such as the workshops involved new stakeholders, partners' presentations included an introduction to the project that mentioned the role of DEFRA and the IWT (see, e.g., Annex 4(p)).

14. Impact of COVID-19 on project delivery

The CoVID pandemic continued to impact partners' ability to implement the LICIT Project during Year 3. By the end of the project year, partners were able to organize and deliver two national training workshops (Indicator 2.3; see 2.6 above) that were originally scheduled for Year 2 and had been postponed and rescheduled several times. Despite these successes (no workshop participants tested positive for the virus), pandemic-related restrictions still limited other project activities including fieldwork needed to build LICIT networks, engage communities, and carry out follow-on training.

The partners' mitigation strategy for the workshops and other project activities has been to postpone and reschedule to the extent possible. This has required adjustments to the project

timeline and moving funds between project years. The partners also explored the possibility of conducting some activities virtually, which achieved some success, but more could have been accomplished had sustained travel and physical presence in the project countries been possible, especially at the community level. This was only highlighted by the successful results of in-person activities such as the training workshops that partners were able to conduct.

With the end of the project approaching, however, postponement is no longer a workable strategy. Based on a recommendation in the project's mid-term review (MTR), partners requested and received a six-month no-cost extension to the project period. Partners also received approval for changes to the logframe to scale back certain project activities that partners judged were no longer feasible as originally proposed, in particular community-based activities such as training community scouts, which require a longer lead time and significant fieldwork. Although the pandemic appears to be abating in the project countries, it isn't over yet, so the risk of further disruption remains; but if current trends continue, the extension of time should allow completion of remaining project activities.

15. Safeguarding

Please tick this box if any safeguarding or human rights violations have occurred during this financial year.

No safeguarding issues arose in connection with the LICIT Project in Year 3.

The LICIT partners are committed to safeguarding in all LICIT Project activities.

- CCF has a safeguarding policy complemented by privacy, whistleblower, and child protection policies that address the principles and requirements for safeguarding.
- IFAW has a dedicated Safeguarding and Welfare Policy as well as a range of organization wide policies and processes relating to physical, verbal, and sexual harassment, human trafficking, privacy, and discrimination. There is a dedicated Ethics Policy and telephone hotline that covers whistleblowing, and a Code of Conduct to which all staff are required contractually to adhere.
- Legal Atlas has an Equal Employment Opportunity Policy in place addressing harassment, inequality, and other discriminatory practices.

16. Project expenditure

Table 1: Project expenditure during the reporting period (April 2021-March 2022)

Project spend (indicative) since last Annual Report	2021/22 Grant (£)	2021/22 Total actual IWT Costs (£)	Variance %	Comments (please explain significant variances)
Staff costs	██████	██████	██████	Variances are Likely due to exchange rate differences or savings on travel and operating costs
Consultancy costs	██████	██████	██████	
Overhead Costs	██████	██████	██████	
Travel and subsistence	██████	██████	██████	
Operating Costs	██████	██████	██████	
Capital items (see below)	██████	██████	██████	
Others (see below)	██████	██████	██████	
TOTAL	██████	██████	██████	

NOTE: Figures reflect change requests approved by DEFRA that reduced the 2021-22 budget by ██████, representing undisbursed funds allocated to project evaluation and audit and other project activities including travel. These funds were moved to 2022-23 to support project activities during the six month no-cost extension period.

17. OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements of your project during the reporting period (300-400 words maximum). This section may be used for publicity purposes

I agree for the IWTCF Secretariat to publish the content of this section

Post-training Operation Recovers 11 Cheetah Cubs from Illegal Captivity

In October 2021, a team from the Somaliland Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC), in collaboration with the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF), conducted a wildlife law enforcement sweep in the Sool and Saraar regions of the country that rescued eleven cheetah cubs that had been illegally taken from the wild in four separate incidents during September and October.

A month earlier, in September 2021, MoECC wildlife officers had participated in training held under the Legal Intelligence for Cheetah Illicit Trade (LICIT) project to increase Somaliland's capacity to stop illegal trade in cheetahs and other wildlife. During a week-long workshop in Hargeisa, MoECC officers and participants from other Somaliland law enforcement agencies learned about intelligence gathering, conducting confiscations, proper handling of cubs, and the importance of establishing a chain of evidence from the field. The October sweep enabled the officers to gain successful, practical field experience using their new skills. The LICIT project is funded by the UK government through its Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund and implemented by the Cheetah Conservation Fund, the International Fund for Animal Welfare and Legal Atlas.

MoECC officials believe the cubs confiscated during the October sweep were being held for sale, but officials intervened before this could take place. At the time of recovery the eleven cubs were estimated to have been five-six weeks old. Ten of the cubs were in relatively good shape and did not appear to have been held for long. A single male cub was in much worse condition, however, and appeared to have been longer in captivity. Cubs taken from their mothers at this early age and held captive typically suffer severe impacts from malnutrition and dehydration, and many will perish. In two of the four incidents, the persons holding the cubs escaped, but in the case of the single cub, MoECC made an arrest.

In one case involving four of the confiscated cubs, community members pointed to livestock predation as the primary motivation for taking them from the wild. Evidence CCF has gathered during other missions indicates conflict between pastoralists and predators is a key driver of offenses against wildlife in Somaliland's rural areas.

The recovered cubs were transported to the CCF Safe House facility in Hargeisa for sanctuary and further care. See Annex 4(u).

Checklist for submission

	Check
Different reporting templates have different questions, and it is important you use the correct one. Have you checked you have used the correct template (checking fund, type of report (i.e. Annual or Final), and year) and deleted the blue guidance text before submission?	X
Is the report less than 10MB? If so, please email to IWT-Fund@itsi.co.uk putting the project number in the subject line.	
Is your report more than 10MB? If so, please discuss with IWT-Fund@itsi.co.uk about the best way to deliver the report, putting the project number in the subject line.	X
Have you included means of verification? You should not submit every project document, but the main outputs and a selection of the others would strengthen the report.	X
Do you have hard copies of material you need to submit with the report? If so, please make this clear in the covering email and ensure all material is marked with the project number. However, we would expect that most material will now be electronic.	N/A
Have you involved your partners in preparation of the report and named the main contributors	X
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table fully?	X
Do not include claim forms or other communications with this report.	