



**Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund  
Half Year Report  
(due 31<sup>st</sup> October 2020)**

<b>Project reference</b>	IWT074
<b>Project title</b>	Cracking Wildlife Smuggling in Madagascar
<b>Country(ies)</b>	Madagascar
<b>Lead organisation</b>	Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust
<b>Partners(s)</b>	Cops without Borders; Alliance Voahary Gasy; Ministry of Justice; Ministry of Environment, Ecology and Forests; DLA Piper
<b>Project leader</b>	Chris Ransom (formerly Jeff Dawson)
<b>Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)</b>	HYR2
<b>Project website/blog/social media</b>	<a href="https://www.durrell.org/wildlife/species-index/ploughshare-tortoise/">https://www.durrell.org/wildlife/species-index/ploughshare-tortoise/</a>

**1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – Sept) against the agreed project implementation timetable (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up to the end September).**

**Output 1:** Project Leader Hasina Randriamanampisoa along with the Director General of Madagascar National Parks (MNP) visited Baly Bay first week October (originally scheduled for March) to discuss and look at issues there between the park management, local communities and Durrell. This was a critical trip and a new management plan for the park will be developed as a result, integrating the objectives of both Durrell and MNP. Documents regarding patrol incentives framework and patroller reviews have been submitted to MNP for consultation in September but are still awaiting feedback.

Community patrols have been ongoing and monthly SMART reports produced. From April to September 2020, 42 patrol groups (3 Durrell, 3 MNP and 36 community patrollers) have conducted 2645 man-days of patrolling, covering a total distance of 16,623km and recorded 119 threats. The distance covered in the same period (Apr-Sept) in 2019 was 9,322km illustrating the significant increase in patrol efficiency since the start of this project. Although there have been no direct observations of poachers or animal traps during this time, patrol groups encountered illegals camps on 8 occasions and observed indirect signs of illegal entry to the core zone on 39 occasions. At this moment, fires present the greatest threat to the ploughshare and its habitat, with 62 fires recorded since April and monthly figures rising rapidly since July. We are in consultation with G4S in Madagascar about undertaking further patroller training in both personal safety and infraction detection, and Cops Without Borders will support Durrell staff to prepare for the infraction detection training activities. This training will take place in November and December.

We do now plan to resume annual patrol festivals and, if COVID-19 restrictions allow, the next one will take place by the end of the project. From our SMART patrol data, we believe that no ploughshare tortoises have been poached from Baly Bay National Park this year. If this is the case, this is an enormous achievement for Durrell's ploughshare protection programme. We are currently gathering as much intelligence as possible in order to confirm that zero confiscations are equal to zero poaching. If this is confirmed it must be celebrated and this will form the basis of our annual patrol festival communications.

**Output 2:** To date law enforcement officer training has been on hold due to Covid-19 restrictions preventing travel to Madagascar of UK based trainers from Cops without Borders (CWB). A Level 2 training session, following up on the Level 1 training conducted in February 2020 was planned to be undertaken in mid-November with international flights anticipated to resume end-October. However, due to the worsening Covid situation in Europe the Madagascar government announced mid-October that it is

keeping all international travel to the mainland suspended for an indefinite period.

Christian Golovko Director of CWB over the past months has been investigating the feasibility of delivering law enforcement training remotely using video technology. Discussing this in August all parties felt, that with Madagascar lifting restrictions enabling group meetings and international flights mooted to restart September alongside the challenges of doing training remotely (language barriers, unfamiliarity/sensitivity of the subject matter) we decided to wait till face-to-face training could be done.

However, in light of the recent developments leaving no alternatives we are putting in place the necessary requirements to deliver training remotely to law enforcement officials in Madagascar as planned in the proposal. From the UK side Christian has secured permission to hire for use bespoke remote training facilities from Cognitas Global. In Madagascar, we are identifying suitable locations in Antananarivo where participants can undertake this training, such as renting out an entire internet cafe. Key requirements are a stable internet connection, 1 computer with webcam per participant and a private location. We are planning on undertaking at least one Level 1 and two Level 2 trainings before project end. Hasina met with the person responsible for designating the agents for the training from the police, the Gendarme and the regional department of Environment in Mahajanga to inform them of the additional training sessions planned in November. They were all pleased to hear the training was scheduled and are supportive of their agents attending remotely. On 28 October, Hasina met a representative of the Direction Générale de la Gouvernance Environnementale/MEDD in Antananarivo to inform her about the coming training sessions and it was agreed that Hasina will meet the DG in the first week of November to inform him of IWT project progress and the training.

**Output 3:** Since the Year 1 annual report was submitted, we have secured a 2-year grant in partnership with Traffic from the US Government's International Narcotics and Law Enforcement agency which will run till October 2022. It is highly likely that we were successful due to this IWT project already being in place and highlighting what has been achieved.

As part of this project Traffic will be extending their SADC-TWIX (Southern Africa Development Community - Trade in Wildlife Information eXchange) platform to Madagascar ([www.sadc-twix.org](http://www.sadc-twix.org)). The SADC-TWIX platform contains a database to which designated law enforcement officials can upload and share data at a national level to help combat wildlife crime. As this platform and database already exists and is proven, we will not be developing a duplicate intelligence database for national wildlife trade information during this project. An agenda item at the December round table meeting (see output 4) will be the involvement/responsibility of MEDD with regard to the operation of this database.

In relation to ploughshare tortoise data and community patrol data collected by Durrell at Baly Bay National park we are continuing our organisational transition to SharePoint. Once complete this is where this data will be managed with password protected and restricted access folders. CWB are assisting with developing guidance on information gathering, management and sharing for law enforcement officials which will be revised following the law enforcement training.

**Output 4:** Planning for the Inter-Ministerial round table (originally scheduled for 20 March 2020) is underway with a tentative date of December. In September, we re-hired the consultant who helped organise the March round table to do this and to undertake a review of mechanisms and barriers to implementing a CWT mechanism in Madagascar. To date he has interviewed a cross section of people including individuals involved in the Rosewood Special Court and the Head of Wildlife from the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development. An interview is also being planned with the Director General of the Ministry of Justice in Antananarivo.

We produced an article and a series of social media posts highlighting the project to mark World Ranger Day on 31 July. Here is a link to the article: <https://www.durrell.org/wildlife/news/celebration-world-ranger-day-2020/>. There is still scope to hold the LinkedIn live interview hosted by DLA Piper this year, and Jeff Dawson is in discussions with Marie Kingston about this.

An important development was the Minister of Environment publicly declaring wildlife crime as a crime in September. This is the first time that a government minister has made such statement and in part is due to the work and advocacy Durrell has been doing with support through the IWT fund.

**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.**

In recent months it has been extremely challenging to arrange meetings with key personnel in either the Ministry of Environment or Ministry of Justice to discuss and arrange project activities (for all NGOs working in Madagascar). A key reason for this was the Director General (DG) of the Ministry of Environment being dismissed in early September with a replacement only being appointed mid-October. Between the efforts of our project leader Hasina and in-country consultant, progress is being made to get these meetings and we remain confident of delivering an inter-ministerial roundtable before the end of the year.

As explained in Section 1, work with Traffic over the next 2-years will lead to the implementation of their TWIX database in Madagascar. As such we will not be developing a duplicate intelligence database as originally planned as TWIX will fulfil these needs.

**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.**

Limiting restrictions due to Covid-19 such as a ban on inter-regional travel and large gatherings, were in place in Madagascar from March through to September with varying degrees of strictness. This precluded any work such as law enforcement officer training or government round table meetings being undertaken. However, patrolling was carried out continuously in Baly Bay. Currently (as of 26 September) all inter-regional travel is open including to and from the capital, and meetings of up to 50 people are allowed. International flights were expected to restart at the end of October / beginning of November but are now suspended indefinitely due to the worsening situation in Europe.

The principal changes and adaptations are around delivery of law enforcement officer training. As explained in Section 1, we will now be delivering these remotely. Should this go well we anticipate being able to deliver the planned project outputs before project end.

There will likely be a budget underspend due to these changes as budget designated for international flights for CWB trainers and DLA Piper staff will likely not be required. Running the training remotely will require additional costs in the UK to deliver effectively (hiring bespoke facilities and online training platform). Once these are known an accurate budget forecast can be done and communicated in November.

**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 N/A

**3a. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g. more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?**

Yes  No  Estimated underspend:

**3b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully.** Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

**If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project, please submit a rebudget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a rebudget, so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes if necessary. 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?**

None.

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.

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](mailto:IWT-Fund@ltsi.co.uk). The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message e.g. Subject: IWT001 Half Year Report.