



## Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund Half Year Report (due 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021)

<b>Project reference</b>	IWTR6S2\1029
<b>Project title</b>	Dismantling wildlife trafficking cybercrime networks in Southeast Asia
<b>Country(ies)</b>	Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore
<b>Lead organisation</b>	Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology (DICE), University of Kent (UoK)
<b>Partners(s)</b>	Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Indonesian Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MoEF), Indonesian National Police (INP), Indonesian Attorney General's Office (AGO), Indonesian E-Commerce Association (idEA), Sarawak Forestry Corporation, Malaysian National Police (PDRM), Singapore National Parks Board (NParks), Microsoft, Facebook.
<b>Project leader</b>	Dr David Roberts
<b>Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)</b>	1st April-30th September 2021 (HYR1)
<b>Project website/blog/social media</b>	N/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: Enhanced tools for identifying and investigating online IWT developed and tested in 3 Southeast Asian countries.**

**Activity 1.1: Conduct a situation analysis and needs assessment for the 3 target countries.**

**Situation report:** DICE, in collaboration with WCS have undertaken a situation analysis to identify what is known about the species in the trade and the online platforms over which trade is taking place. Specifically, DICE conducted a review of the literature identifying 13 specific relevant papers and reports regarding online trade in Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore. Within these we identified arrange of species being traded over 20 online platforms. WCS have undertaken monitoring of online platforms as well as analysis of historic data.

**Indonesia:** Based on WCS Indonesia's current monitoring 477 posts were recorded from 6 e-commerce companies; Bukalapak.com (59 posts), Kaskus.com (18 posts), Lazada.com (24 posts), Shopee.com (203 posts), Tokopedia.com (173 posts), plus Facebook. A total of 19,271 individuals (animals) were recorded from a wide range of species and products including rhino, black coral, Bali starlings, Brahminy kite, bear, elephant, tiger, serrow, rays, and pangolins. In addition, during 2021, 83 Facebook groups and 1,114 accounts were identified selling protected wildlife in Indonesia. (Also see activity 3.1.)

Malaysia: WCS Malaysia produced a 13-page situation report regarding the online trade in wildlife in Sarawak and Peninsular Malaysia, combining data from current monitoring efforts as well as accounts from 10 wildlife enforcement officers. (Also see activity 3.1.)

**Needs assessment:** DICE, in collaboration with WCS and NPark, have conducted a needs assessment by means of a questionnaire across law enforcement officers in the three countries. The questionnaire was sent out via email at the beginning of August 2021 in English and for Indonesia in Bahasa. Prior to sending out the questionnaire, it was piloted with law enforcement officials at different levels (i.e. officers to director general), both police and customs and across three continents.

Indonesia: To date, we have received 10 completed questionnaires from five key law enforcement agencies in Indonesia; Attorney General's Office (n=2), Aviation Security (n=2), Judges (n=2), Police (n=1) and the Ministry of Environment and Forestry's (MoEF) (n=3). This includes the MoEF's Civil Servant Investigator and an MoEF lead trainer from the Human Resources Education and Training Centre (Pusdiklat KLHK). These questionnaires were targeted at key law enforcement officers who have an intimate understanding of the online wildlife trade and experience in handling wildlife trafficking cases, including online trade.

Malaysia: To date, we have sent the questionnaire to five law enforcement offices in Malaysia, including *Operasi Bersepadu Khazanah* (OBK) taskforce partners. We are awaiting completed questionnaires. As part of the *Operasi Bersepadu Khazanah* (OBK) taskforce.

Singapore: To date three completed questionnaires have so far been secured from wildlife law enforcement officers by NParks.

### **Activity 1.2: Develop and strengthen private sector partnerships with the social media/e-commerce companies that are most used by wildlife traffickers.**

During this period, WCS Indonesia has been in close communication with MoEF's Directorate of Biodiversity Conservation (Dit. KKH KLHK) on how to best engage and develop partnerships with private sector organisations, particularly social media/e-commerce companies that are used for online IWT. So far, we have engaged with the Head of Public Policy and Government Relations from the Indonesian E-commerce Association (idEA) and the Customer Service Specialist at Jualo.com, a non-member of idEA. As a result, KKH will host a meeting between Dit. KKH KLHK and idEA on 21 October 2021 to further discuss opportunities and collaborations for strengthening efforts to combat online IWT, particularly focusing on how e-commerce companies can foster their efforts to monitor and report IWT. Following this, an additional meeting will be scheduled with Jualo.com.

In addition, in July 2021, WCS Indonesia and DICE held an online meeting with the UK Embassy in Indonesia to introduce this project. Chris Agassl, a Digital Access and Anti-Corruption Lead from the UK Embassy, stated that they have a number of upcoming meetings related to cybercrime scheduled with BSSN (National Cyber and Encryption Agency). Further discussions with the UK Embassy and BSSN will be explored to highlight the issue of online wildlife trade and how our project can feed into this.

### **Activity 1.3: Develop and subsequently upgrade the tools to enhance law enforcement capacity for gathering, managing, and actioning intelligence to target priority online IWT suspects**

This activity is dependent on the information that comes out of Activity 1.1. However, DICE has developed a provisional list of online platforms (n=36) of potential interest (pending the result of the needs assessment) based on a discussion with our partners and survey of the literature, and conducted a survey of these platforms to determine whether any tools would require the use of an Application Programming Interface (API). These were then investigated by the software developer regarding ease of use. DICE also conducted a review of existing cyber tools that are used to track aspects of illegal online trade (n=34) that may also be applied to illegal wildlife trading online. In summary we have (a) a provisional list of websites, (b) identified API availability, and (c) list of cyber tools that have or are being developed.

## **Output 2.**

### **Activity 2.1 Develop a set of high-quality training modules**

The development of a high-quality training module will commence once Activities 1.1 and 1.3 have been completed. However, we have start initial preparations by exploring materials pertaining to wildlife crime and cyber-crime to provide the necessary foundation for participants before applying the tools. Further we have identified n=46 existing toolkits within the broader area of wildlife crime that may be informative.

### **Activity 2.2 Provide in-country training in project-developed tools**

See Activity 2.1. However, we have started discussions with MoEF's Human Resources Education and Training Centre (Pusdiklat KLHK). In view of the current COVID-19 situation, we are planning to utilize a hybrid learning method for the training: a combination of asynchronous learning and synchronous learning that will provide ample opportunities for participants to maximize their learning experience.

### **Activity 2.3 Run a regional IWT cybercrime workshop**

Currently awaiting completion of Activities 2.1-2 that are also dependent on Activities 1.1-3. However, WCS will coordinate with key law enforcement agencies to ensure they are involved in the implementation of this IWT cybercrime workshop.

## **Output 3.**

### **Activity 3.1 Monitor and analyse online IWT**

*Indonesia:* During this reporting period, WCS Indonesia monitored advertisements across six giant marketplace platforms that actively operate across Indonesia: Shopee, Tokopedia, Bukalapak, Lazada, Kaskus, and Facebook. By using 37 keywords, they identified a total of 550 advertisements for wildlife trade. These advertisements encompassed 304 live individuals from 46 species. Several of the monitored platforms, such as Tokopedia, Bukalapak, and Facebook, provide ad reporting features for users. By utilizing this self-reporting feature, 305 advertisements were reported across these platforms, which led to 176 advertisements being deleted and 39 others from Bukalapak and Tokopedia providing evidence of a violation that could be used to prosecute the traders. As a result, 36 of the accounts reported to Bukalapak were locked for an unknown period of time to prevent transactions. WCS also monitored 722 accounts from 50 different groups on Facebook. From these accounts, 1,341 Facebook posts pertaining to wildlife trade were identified, encompassing a total of 3,400 live individuals from 120 species, including birds, reptiles, and mammals. Of all advertised species, 82 were protected, 28 were non-protected, six were non-native, and could not identify four species. Live birds dominated these advertisements, while African spurred tortoises, iguanas, and the body parts of Sumatran tigers and Sumatran elephants were identified. In total, 1,189 posts from 654 accounts were reported to Facebook, which led to the deletion of 946 posts from 549 accounts. A map and profile of online IWT were produced of the Facebook network based on the data collected during monitoring.

*Malaysia: Peninsular Malaysia* – WCS monitored sellers using Facebook for online wildlife trade from seven groups containing 99,048 users. These were selected based on their previous history of wildlife trade. 88 wildlife trade-related advertisements were placed during a two-day period. These advertisements comprised a total of 122 live individual animals from 40 species, including birds (47.5%; n=19), mammals (47.5%; n=19), and reptiles (5%; n=2). The three most frequently traded species were white-rumped shama (n=11), common palm civet (n=10), and long-tailed macaque (n=9). Under the WCA, any form of trade in totally protected species is prohibited, whilst the legal trade of protected species is permitted with a valid license. Results from WCS show that 18 protected and 15 totally protected species were traded. In addition, some sellers openly admitted that the animals they sold did not have special permits or licenses under DWNP. In terms of the maximum price species were sold for, the white-rumped shama received the highest price (MYR 850 or USD 203.45 each), followed by owls (MYR 750 or USD 179.51 each) and otters (MYR 650 or USD 155.58 each). Whereas red junglefowl were sold for the lowest price (MYR 16 or USD 3.83 each). Other analyse where conducted and are included in the situation report of Activity 1.1.

### **Activity 3.2 Produce Target Intelligence Packages (TIP) and technical assistance to government partners**

Indonesia: WCS provided technical expertise to MoEF (including the Natural Resource Conservation Agency and regional office of the Directorate General of Law Enforcement) and regional police to support their efforts in mitigating online IWT in Indonesia. Recently, this led to three sting operations in Sumatra and Java, during which the law enforcement agency arrested three suspected wildlife traders.

More is likely to come towards the mid-end of the project.

#### **Output 4. Activity 4.1 Evaluate training impacts and enhance training modules to support advanced training**

We will begin this activity following the implementation of Activities 2.1-2. However, we have begun preliminary coordination with MoEF's Human Resources Education and Training Centre (Pusdiklat KLHK) to review and develop the training, monitoring, and evaluation system that is currently in place. We expect that the new monitoring and evaluation system will enrich participants' learning experience and allow us to effectively evaluate the impact of the training.

#### **Activity 4.2 Monitor and evaluate arrests and prosecutions of online traders based on project generated information**

WCS – Information concerning online IWT was mostly discovered via social media platforms and subsequently passed on to the Natural Resource Conservation Agency and police to extract further information and, where necessary, conduct sting operations to arrest perpetrators. As a result of our technical assistance to the government, perpetrators were arrested during three sting operations in Sumatra and Java. The legal process for one suspect (ER) is ongoing, while two others (EP and GL) were not charged with sanctions but are now obliged to report to the police at a specified time. Based on communications with the enforcement authority, WCS were informed of the arrest of two suspects in Yogyakarta by the regional police (Ditreskrimsus Polda D.I. Yogyakarta). These two suspects traded live protected species mostly for the pet trade. Additionally, one perpetrator was arrested by SPORC Brigade Harimau for trading 1kg of Sunda pangolin scales. Furthermore, part of a Sumatran tiger skin was recently found by the Bakauheni KSKP Sector Police (Polsek KSKP Bakauheni) at Bakauheni Port. The police investigated this case further and found that a suspect used Facebook to sell the Sumatran tiger skin. The police eventually apprehended three perpetrators from three different cities: Indramayu, Depok, and Demak.

#### **Activity 4.3 Submit results in peer-reviewed journal**

To be completed towards the end of the projects

#### **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.**

There was a 3.5 month delay in appointing a software developer in part due to Covid-19. However, this did not delay the project as the initial stage of the project is a needs assessment and situation report. While this would have been conducted in part by the software development, a short term contract was used to hire an assistant who had expertise in online wildlife trade. However, while we recruited a software developer who started in mid-June, they resigned at the end of August. We are now in the process of recruiting a software developer with interviews at the beginning of November. While the delay is a concern we do not believe it will impact the project timetable. However, we are concerned regarding recruiting in a pandemic with job vacancies being at their highest.

#### **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.**

Initial start date of the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 was delayed due to the late announcement of the award, and was therefore pushed back to 1st September 2020. However due to COVID-19 impacting the ability to meet in person, particularly with law enforcement officers, the start date was further pushed back to 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021 (change request was submitted and approved).

With travel restrictions, the cost of quarantining and PCR tests have meant that international travel has not been able to take place and in-country travel has at times also been restricted through lockdowns etc. Given the nature of the project many aspects of the project have and can be undertaken remotely through online video conferencing. However, this has been slow at times and does not provide the same ability to develop a relationship.

That said, we do not believe at this initial stage there will be any long term delays.

The second wave of COVID-19 in Indonesia (June – August 2021) has pushed the government to apply a policy that restricts travel throughout the country. This has affected our coordination and communication with government partners. Moreover, several staff from MoEF, including our key contact in Pusdiklat KLHK, were infected by COVID-19. Consequently, we have had to postpone scheduled coordination meetings until these individuals fully recover from the virus. As a result of COVID-19, the court process for project-related cases currently takes place online and attendance in court is limited to those in charge of the case. However, despite the current pandemic, we were able to successfully conduct most project-related activities and neither the project's budget nor timetable were affected.

**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: Yes

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes

**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?**

It is worth noting an additional outcome from this project, that the needs assessment questionnaire highlighted in Section 1, Output 1, Activity 1.1, has formed the basis of a similar questionnaire to UK Police officers by the National Wildlife Crime Unit's Cyber-enabled Priority Delivery Group with results to be presented at the Wildlife Crime Enforcers Conference in December 2021.

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](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.**