

## Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund Annual Report

To be completed with reference to the “Project Reporting Information Note”:  
(<https://iwt.challengefund.org.uk/resources/information-notes/>).

It is expected that this report will be a **maximum** of 20 pages in length, excluding annexes)

**Submission Deadline: 30<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

### IWT Challenge Fund Project Information

Project reference	IWT 080
Project title	Expanding Local Intelligence Networks to Combat Jaguar IWT in Bolivia
Country/ies	Bolivia
Lead partner	Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)
Project partner(s)	SERNAP, CIPTA, CRTM, POFOMA
IWTFCF grant value	£270,000
Start/end dates of project	Start Date: May 1 <sup>st</sup> 2021 End Date: October 31 <sup>st</sup> 2023
Reporting period (e.g. April 2021-Mar 2022) and number (e.g. Annual Report 1, 2, 3)	May 2021-Mar 2022, Annual Report 1
Project Leader name	Robert Wallace
Project website/blog/social media	<a href="http://www.wcsbolivia.org">www.wcsbolivia.org</a>
Report author(s) and date	Robert Wallace & Mariana Da Silva

### 1. Project summary

Bolivia faces the gravest illegal wildlife trade (IWT) crisis since the 1980s wildlife skin trade. Recent demand from Asian markets for jaguar teeth has resulted in over 200 documented jaguar deaths, and IWT is now the largest threat to jaguar populations in Bolivia and potentially the wider Amazon. Government authorities lack the resources, technical capacity, and knowledge at key points along the enforcement chain necessary to address this threat. WCS will work with authorities to 1) implement a strategy to strengthen capacities along the enforcement chain; 2) inform the public about IWT’s severity; 3) conduct regular online IWT monitoring efforts; and 4) build a local network of informants across western Bolivia to identify suspects and assist authorities to ensure convictions.

Building on our current DEFRA-supported exploratory project in the Greater Madidi Landscape, WCS will continue to work with authorities to improve their understanding of IWT dynamics and existing legal frameworks to combat IWT in Bolivia. We will work with indigenous communities, park guards, municipalities, ranchers' associations, and regional governments on the ground to

improve enforcement activities and conviction rates in the La Paz, Beni, and Pando Departments, also safeguarding natural resources that local communities depend on for sustainable livelihood options.

## **2. Project partnerships**

This project (IWT 080) was developed as a follow-up project to the preliminary project funded by DEFRA (IWT 068), and as such the actors in northern La Paz and southwestern Beni were already familiar with the project objectives. WCS has worked in long-term (10-20 year) partnerships with all of those partners and as such our project proposals respond to priorities set with our national and local partners. The project was also developed with the national authorities responding to a subset of their priorities. In the broader Beni region WCS has recently (August 2020) initiated a second landscape program in the Llanos de Moxos Biocultural Landscape, and in so doing we are developing formal agreements and relationships with other actors in the Beni on a broad range of conservation issues including combatting wildlife trade.

During IWT 068 we were able to feature the UK Ambassador to Bolivia, Mr Jeff Glekin, in some of the outreach and communication pieces and we will be looking to do so again. We recently attended conservation planning discussions with the Embassy and visiting UK government officials.

## **3. Project progress**

### **3.1 Progress in carrying out project Activities**

#### **Activity 1.1 Systematize jaguar IWT cases in the offices of POFOMA into the comprehensive database developed during the exploratory DEFRA IWT 068 grant**

In accordance with the framework agreement between WCS Bolivia and the Bolivian Police, and following an online training process and vaccinations of WCS staff, we supported the Forestry and Environmental Police (POFOMA) with a person based at their offices to systematize their data on IWT. We started in October 2021 and concluded in March 2022, systematizing 1098 cases between 2017 and 2021 that were already in digital format. Additionally, we reviewed five sacks of paper files to select documents related to IWT operations (Annex 1); the selected information was digitized and systematized, generating 1827 IWT additional events. The POFOMA information is the key missing data from the national database that WCS has developed in partnership with the Bolivian government which so far incorporates IWT records from more than 45 institutions across the country. We started to incorporate this data from POFOMA to the IWT database for Bolivia, paying attention to potential cases already reported by other institutions to avoid duplication of information. Here, it is important to emphasize that these processes included the systematization of all IWT cases for all species in the country, not just jaguar.

#### **Activity 1.3 Legal and translation support provided to government authorities for priority IWT cases**

In October 2021, key staff of the General Directorate of Biodiversity and Protected Areas (DGBAP) of the Ministry of Environment and Water (MMAyA), was changed, including the director and the legal adviser. Only in December 2021 the new authorities and staff were designated, and WCS Bolivia held a successful meeting with them to introduce this project and the overall CWT activities. The new authorities expressed their willingness to keep coordinating and working with WCS, and asked the team to provide a document with WCS's activities within the national framework to combat illegal wildlife trade (Annex 2).

During the last two weeks of December 2021, WCS held two additional meetings with DGBAP and the Forestry and Environmental Police (POFOMA) where both institutions expressed their interest and commitment to collaborate on coordinated operations of priority IWT cases. In the last meeting, representatives of the General Prosecutor Office (GPO) also participated at the suggestion of WCS (Annex 3), and they also expressed their willingness to participate in the coordinated IWT operations as a key actor for the successful advancement of the legal cases. The DGBAP also informed us of a newly signed framework agreement between MMAyA and

the GPO, which will be very positive to strengthen the coordination and involvement of the prosecutors in IWT cases.

WCS supported POFOMA with 585 litres of fuel for three cars for two IWT operations in Caranavi on the 17<sup>th</sup> December 2021 (Annex 4) and on the 16<sup>th</sup> February 2022 (Annex 5). These operations included intelligence prospection work and interventions in the main trade areas of Caranavi, particularly at the market that takes place every Thursday. This is a key town due to its location between IWT hotspot areas of origin in the lowlands of Bolivia and La Paz city, a key destination for the sale of wild animals (including parts and derivatives) and key transit point to international markets. During these interventions, legal cases were opened against illegal wildlife traders and animals were confiscated. At WCS's request, these operations were coordinated with the DGBAP, the General Prosecutor Office and approved wildlife custody centres.

In February 2022, we held a meeting with the new national director of POFOMA to introduce this project and the overall CWT activities. The new director expressed his appreciation for the support provided by WCS in the operatives of December 2021 and February 2022, and his willingness to continue coordinating and working with WCS.

### **Activity 2.1 At least 3 targeted communication and outreach campaigns on IWT for urban audiences (including resident Chinese population) designed and implemented on social media and traditional press**

#### ***Communication Plan for CWT***

A communication plan was developed (Annex 6) based on the concept of transmedia narrative or storytelling; to adapt to different audio-visual formats and platforms, inviting audiences or users to interact. At the local community level, radio continues to be the medium of communication par excellence in Bolivia, and it is important to take advantage of its presence and participatory nature. However, we also work in a multimedia way to build a transmedia strategy with stories capable of working independently on social networks and that, at the same time, have the attractiveness to capture the interest of the target audiences. Persuasive and emotional communication techniques are being used for jaguar and wildlife conservation in Bolivia, including the activities in this and the next section.

#### ***Campaign for the International Jaguar Day 2021***

We developed a campaign for the International Jaguar Day on November 29<sup>th</sup> 2021, with the objective of reaching the general population with messages through social networks: Facebook, Tik Tok and Instagram:

<https://bolivia.wcs.org/portals/14/Comunicacion/TraficoVidaSilvestre/Material10-Dic-2021/DialInternacionalJaguar/ArteCampana.jpg?ver=l4Fsb9 li5Lx7xAzDosEw%3d%3d>

We used influencers to spread awareness and sensitization messages about the problem of jaguar trafficking in the country, to achieve a better understanding and involvement of the Bolivian society in the fight against illegal trafficking and its implication in human health. Additionally, a campaign was carried out in the streets, for which a photo frame was made, highlighting Jaguar Day, so that people could take photos, using the established hashtags: #SalvemosJuntosAlJaguar, #JaguarYoTeProtejo, #DíaInternacionalDelJaguar and send messages for the conservation of the jaguar, which were uploaded to their social networks and shared by WCS and Piensa Verde (an allied institution for this campaign):

<https://bolivia.wcs.org/es-es/Iniciativas/Tr%C3%A1fico-de-vida-silvestre/Material-audiovisual.aspx>

We also produced different materials to be disseminated on Facebook and Instagram (carousels, post, a 180° design). Also, a short awareness video was produced:

<https://bolivia.wcs.org/portals/14/Comunicacion/TraficoVidaSilvestre/Material10-Dic-2021/DialInternacionalJaguar/DialInternacionalJaguar-panoramaV3.jpg?ver=TC95tGrjF1Y8fQcMs94nRg%3d%3d>

All the materials were published simultaneously on the social networks of WCS and Piensa Verde. The scope and reach of the campaign were relevant, with 38,292 people visiting the WCS Bolivia Facebook page, with 2,597 interactions (likes, comments and number of times

shared). The influencers reached 402,200 reproductions and obtained 49,879 interactions on their social networks.

There was also significant press coverage, with the publication of 13 press releases in different media (newspapers, news agencies, websites), 69% nationally and 31% internationally.

### ***Book "Felines of Bolivia"***

The book "Felines of Bolivia" was developed with the aim of helping children to learn more about the wild cats that exist in Bolivia, especially the jaguar, but also about the threats they face. Giving children tools to spread the message at an early age is essential to break the belief that animals are commodities. Teaching them that this important issue is vital for wildlife. Two thousand copies were distributed in schools in the CIPTA and CRTM indigenous territories, and the Madidi and Pilón Lajas national protected areas, as well as in Rurrenabaque and Ixiamas: <https://bolivia.wcs.org/es-es/Iniciativas/Tr%C3%A1fico-de-vida-silvestre/Material-audiovisual.aspx>

### ***Testimonials from park rangers of the Madidi and Pilón Lajas protected areas***

Interviews were conducted with three park rangers from the protected areas of Madidi and Pilón Lajas, in order to convey to the public their work experience in the protection of wildlife and to communicate their knowledge about the importance of the jaguar in conservation, due to its ecological role and its cultural value. These interviews were carried out by telephone due to the restrictions caused by the pandemic and have been adapted to audiograms, which in addition to being broadcast on the radio, are present on social networks as a way of viralizing content and taking advantage of the multimedia of the internet.

The three audiograms were published through the WCS Bolivia Facebook page, reaching 3,720 people and 358 interactions (likes, comments and shared publications). They were also sent to local reporters from Madidi and Pilón Lajas so that they could be disseminated through their different media.

### **Activity 2.2 At least 3 radio and television campaigns for local rural populations in lowland La Paz, Beni and Pando Departments, spelling out the illegality of wildlife trade, designed and implemented**

#### ***Communication Plan for the Protected Areas of Madidi and Pilón Lajas, and CRTM And CIPTA indigenous territories***

A communication plan has been developed (Annex 8) to prevent wildlife trafficking in the National Park and Integrated Management Natural Area - PN ANMI Madidi, the Biosphere Reserve and Community Land of Origin RBTCO Pilón Lajas, the T'simane Mosestén Regional Council – CRTM, the Indigenous Council of the Tacana People – CIPTA, the Indigenous Central of the Leco de Apolo People – CIPLA and the Indigenous People of San José de Uchupiamonas – PISJU, to strengthen actions that allow controlling and reducing wildlife trafficking in the areas protected areas, indigenous territories and their adjoining areas. Ensuring their effective protection and increasing the efforts, not only of the government, but of society as a whole.

The plan seeks, through information and social mobilization, to strengthen the capacities of local communities to address wildlife trafficking, associated with clear and precise policy recommendations to reduce or eliminate these practices in rural and urban areas. from the landscape. The development of communication materials is proposed to allow the social actors involved to be approached to promote processes of information, awareness and participation of civil society, with local and regional coverage, through the use of mass media (radio, television and social networks).

All the messages have been and will be elaborated in a participatory manner with technicians from the project in the field, representatives of CIPTA and CRTM, and the protected areas staff.

#### ***Radio spots and microprograms***

Within the framework of the co-financing of the Alliance for Wild Fauna and Forests (EU), training was carried out for 30 local communicators in charge of Radio Education of Bolivia (Educación Radiofónica de Bolivia ERBOL), selected from among 100 applications from different municipalities in the country with a focus on the departments of La Paz, Beni and

Pando. The objective was to stimulate a network of reporters who come from communities and municipalities linked to protected areas and indigenous territories, so that they develop campaigns and disseminate issues related to the prevention of wildlife trafficking in their media. The contents for the training sessions were prepared according to the technical orientation of the WCS specialists in wildlife trafficking. During the training phases, the local communicators developed scripts for two radio spots and two microprograms, which were later recorded by ERBOL and will be broadcasted on local radio stations, starting in May 2022 under the implementation of this project (Annex 9).

### **Activity 3.1 Conduct meetings and IWT workshops with key local actors in Beni and Pando and facilitate meetings to develop local IWT networks in order to generate local intelligence on jaguar IWT**

A workshop to further develop the local CWT network in the Greater Madidi-Tambopata Landscape was postponed until May 2022, initially due to a 3<sup>rd</sup> wave of COVID-19, subsequently because park guards and protected area staff were responding to forest fires in the region, and finally because of a 4<sup>th</sup> wave of COVID-19 (Omicron variant).

Within the framework of the development of our Llanos de Moxos Landscape Conservation Program and the IWT 080 objective to expand our IWT efforts into the Beni Department, WCS met with the Regional Government of the Beni and Pando to discuss the potential for joint communication efforts regarding the IWT challenges in the region. The resulting formal agreement with Beni was signed in a ceremony in Trinidad on the 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2022, although subsequently due to changes in staff and the 4<sup>th</sup> wave of COVID-19 moves to begin agreed upon activities including CWT actions have been delayed.

WCS also began developing long-term relationships with a number of local actors in the Beni, including the largest and most remote municipality in the Beni (Exaltación), the Cayubaba Indigenous Council, the Trinidad and Loreto municipalities, and three municipal protected areas: Gran Moxos, Ibare-Mamore, and Grandes Lagos Tectónicos de Exaltación. These actors are additional to the Reyes, Rurrenabaque and Santa Rosa del Yacuma municipalities, and the Pampas del Yacuma and Rhukanrhuka municipal protected areas in the southwestern Beni with whom CWT engagement began during IWT 068. Collectively, along with the Beni Regional Government, this represents an impressive geographical coverage with which to roll-out communication efforts and expand the local IWT networks and their control and vigilance efforts in the next six months.

### **Activity 4.1 Support park guard and indigenous peoples to improve and intensify control and vigilance activities to combat IWT in national and subnational protected areas and indigenous territories**

Visits to the communities and organization of workshops with them were postponed until May 2022 due to the third (June-August) and fourth wave (December-February) of COVID-19 in Bolivia. Unfortunately, vaccination rates in the Bolivian population have been very low, especially in remote areas, so travel to these sites represented a high risk for the WCS team and for the communities. At the end of December, the government began a vaccination card process; this document would be a requirement to enter State institutions and to carry out various types of paperwork, which has significantly increased vaccination rates.

We supported an emergency operative of the park rangers of Madidi National Park related to a female jaguar that was shot and her cub trapped and kept captive. Park rangers organized a patrol to the area with a veterinarian to evaluate the condition of the cub and decide next steps. Sadly, when they arrived, the cub was dead, presumably due to an infection caused by the chain it was put on. The park rangers confiscated the corpse and buried it to make sure its parts don't enter the illegal market (Annex 10).

## **3.2 Progress towards project Outputs**

*Output 1: Improve strategic, efficient, and effective enforcement of wildlife trafficking-related laws to increase convictions.*

The establishment of the first national database on illegal wildlife traffic represents an enormous achievement and a fundamental resource for the country into the future. This began

as a task for jaguar under the IWT 068 grant and continued with additional support from the EU to broaden the database to include all illegally traded wildlife species. In this period, crucially we were able to include data from POFOMA which was not even in digital format, literally stored in sacks. The database now has data from 45 relevant institutions across the country.

Our ongoing support for strategic and coordinated operations is gradually leading to more arrests, although it is unclear if these will lead to increased convictions. Hopefully, that will become clearer over the next evaluation period.

*Output 2: Expand comprehensive outreach and communication campaign to educate rural and urban populations on the illegality of jaguar trafficking.*

We have continued national-level communication efforts through social media, as well as local communication efforts based on journalist capacity building and radio and television spots. Prior to our efforts under IWT 068 and IWT 080 there was very little of the former and none of the latter.

*Output 3: Improve local capacities and enforcement protocols for addressing trafficking incidents, as well as evidence-based interventions, to significantly reduce jaguar killing and trafficking through effective actions and impositions of sanctions that act as a deterrent.*

The delay in signing of the agreement with the Beni regional government, and subsequent changes in the staff with whom we were coordinating, has delayed the geographical expansion of the local efforts, but that process will be the focus of the next reporting period, and the relationships we have developed with seven additional strategic actors in the Beni over the last 11 months is an important opportunity. More recently, in April 2022 (just outside the reporting period) we have been coordinating with the Pando regional government officials which will also lead to activities in the next reporting period.

*Output 4: Local actors in western Bolivia, such as indigenous organizations, park guards, ranchers, and local government authorities, have demonstrably improved control and vigilance capacities through IWT networks to safeguard natural resource management livelihood options.*

This is the output that has been most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, as visits to indigenous communities and promotion of crucial meetings and workshops were only really feasible between August and mid-October during a lull in the COVID-19 waves, and unfortunately in that period the protected area and indigenous organization staff were occupied with a spate of forest fires in the region. From April 2022 onwards, the number of COVID-19 cases in Bolivia are minimal and 4<sup>th</sup> vaccination doses are available, as such we expect activities to return to normality, albeit with appropriate social distancing and mask protocols.

### **3.3 Progress towards the project Outcome**

*Outcome: Bolivian authorities and civil society increase capacity to address the threat of Asian demand for jaguar teeth and reduce jaguar losses in north-western Bolivian lowlands (30% of Bolivia's jaguar habitat).*

Understandably during the pandemic period, the bulk of our focus has been with either communication efforts at both the local and national levels, as well as working with Bolivian authorities on systematizing data and developing experiences of adequately coordinated actions to counter illegal wildlife trafficking in urban settings. Given the gradual return to normality over the last couple of months, we anticipate being able to develop planned activities with park guards, indigenous communities and other local actors during the next year of the project.

### **3.4 Monitoring of assumptions**

*Outcome Assumption 1: Relevant government authorities maintain current interest in addressing this priority threat to jaguars, and are able to coordinate efforts to ensure high profile arrests lead to convictions.* Assumption Met. Although the authorities at the DGBAP and POFOMA both changed during this period, which delayed activities somewhat, both have committed to working even more intensively with WCS into the future.

*Outcome Assumption 2: Indigenous organizations remain committed to combatting IWT in north-western Bolivia, and continue to implement control and vigilance in indigenous territories.* Assumption Met. Although activities continued to be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic indigenous leaders remained committed to CWT, and indeed have participated in international CWT events in the last month (not in this reporting period).

*Output Assumption 1: Through coordination with national government authorities, especially POFOMA, and park guards at the local level, we are able to strategically identify prosecutors.* Assumption Partially Met. The GPO office has now engaged with the DGBAP and POFOMA, although work still needs to be done regarding identifying individual prosecutors.

*Output Assumption 2: Government authorities are willing to come together to coordinate a response to IWT.* Assumption Met. The government authorities coordinated on the operations conducted in Caranavi.

*Output Assumption 3: Government authorities continue to request WCS for translation and legal support for high profile IWT cases as they have done since 2014.* Assumption Yet to be Tested. There has not been a high-profile case involving translation needs during this reporting period.

*Output Assumption 4: Government authorities are able to coordinate between each other to develop common communication messages.* Assumption partially met. Several WCS led campaigns have involved multiple national government actors, however, the next step is to work with national and regional government authorities to develop coordinated messaging led by the authorities themselves.

*Output Assumption 5: Local radio and television stations remain open to broadcast environmental messages.* Assumption Met. So far, the local radio and television stations are still supportive of environmental messages.

*Output Assumption 6: POFOMA, Regional Governments, park guards and indigenous organizations are able to prioritize jaguar cases and systematize contacts.* Assumption Partially Met. The case of the jaguar and the jaguar cub suggests that locally these cases are prioritized, but we still need to work at a national level.

*Output Assumption 7: Park guards and indigenous organizations remain committed to combatting IWT.* Assumption Met. See Outcome Assumption 2.

*Output Assumption 8: POFOMA and Bolivian police are able to act upon internet surveillance information.* Assumption Yet to be Met. We are planning a jaguar-specific internet search in coordination with POFOMA in the coming months.

*Output Assumption 9: Local prosecutors are committed to combatting IWT offences following training events completed in Objective 1.* Assumption yet to be Met. Training events will be conducted in the next reporting period.

*Output Assumption 10: Law enforcement and other government agencies involved in combatting IWT coordinate adequately following training and coordination events in Objective 1.* Assumption Partially Met. There are good signs towards this assumption, but again work still to be done to facilitate further coordination.

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

*Impact: Improved local capacity to minimize IWT risks, detect infractions and address trafficking through culturally appropriate communication campaigns and efficient and diverse intelligence networks that protect jaguar strongholds in north-western Bolivia.*

Given the situation in 2018 prior to the beginning of IWT 068 and this follow-on project IWT 080, there has been considerable improvement. Government authorities are now beginning to coordinate actions more effectively, with the latest efforts to combat illegal wildlife trade leading to arrests following seizures. The level of visibility of this problem is also much greater across social media and traditional media forums, and whilst WCS and this project cannot attribute all of this increase our communication campaigns across the two projects have already reached more than one million Bolivians. There is still much to be done but there are significant opportunities with local, regional and national authorities.

#### **4. Thematic focus**

In this project we intend to a) Strengthen law enforcement, and b) Ensure effective legal frameworks. The structured database and record-based and internet-based systematization of data on IWT attends the themes indicated, as does the increase in coordination between government authorities not just in planning, but also realizing action to combat wildlife trade.

#### **5. Impact on species in focus**

Since the 1990s, jaguar populations in Bolivia have gradually recovered in intact wilderness areas for five reasons: 1) creation of a protected area system characterized by large continuous areas, 2) legal recognition of large indigenous territories in which indigenous communities conduct sustainable hunting of jaguar prey, thus maintaining forest cover and jaguar habitat, 3) implementation of sustainable forestry efforts, 4) landscape conservation efforts to integrate these management units and promote further connectivity, and 5) the end of IWT for skins that severely depleted jaguar populations until the end of the 1980s. In 2014, the revelation of the emerging threat of IWT for jaguar teeth, claws, whiskers, and other parts for sale in Asian markets immediately jeopardized this wildlife success story.

Our previous project (IWT 068), and this current follow-up project (IWT 080) aimed to begin to tackle this demand as the most significant recent threat to jaguar populations, before it dramatically reduces existing populations in Bolivia, and develop a model for replication across the region. We developed organizational capacity to reduce the significance of this threat for other wildlife species known to be linked to this speciality market (giant anteaters, marsh deer, Andean bears), and generate general public awareness about the threat of IWT in Bolivia.

In 2019, with parallel funding WCS conducted a jaguar camera trapping survey in Madidi National Park in the Tuichi and Hondo rivers which are two of the most accessible locations in the park and where ecotourism efforts are focused. This 2019 survey can be compared to previous surveys at the same location in 2014, 2012, 2008, 2005, 2002 and 2001. Previous surveys had demonstrated a gradual recovery of jaguar populations following the creation of the park in 1995 and installation of basic management capacity in 1998. We were able to photograph and identify 52 jaguars in 2019, with a population density estimated at 7.15 jaguars/100 km<sup>2</sup>, suggesting that jaguar numbers have remained stable at this location since 2014 despite known IWT cases in the broader region, thereby offering hope in the face of this emerging threat. We will be replicating this study in 2023 within the lifetime of the DEFRA IWT-080 grant.

#### **6. Project support to poverty reduction**

From an economic perspective, jaguars are a principal wildlife tourism attraction, and from a socio-cultural viewpoint, they have immense symbolic value. The Madidi region is one of the top five Bolivian ecotourism locations, dominated by community-based ecolodge tourism, and/or local businesses based out of Rurrenabaque town. Providing further protection for the region's jaguars and associated wildlife contributes significantly to maintaining the local economy. Developing partnerships between government enforcement agencies and indigenous people mitigates the risk of their natural resource management activities being affected by encroachment and invasion by third parties commercially hunting for IWT.

We work with the representative organizations of the Tacana, Tsimane, and Mosen communities (CIPTA, CRTM), supporting ongoing efforts to safeguard the rights of 6,000 indigenous people over their indigenous lands and wildlife. For example, jaguars are poached within the Greater Madidi Landscape, so the project worked with park guards and indigenous organizations to develop intelligence networks, coordinating with protected area and indigenous territory control and vigilance systems.

From a food security perspective, these isolated indigenous communities rely on small-scale agriculture, household gardens, fishing, and traditional subsistence hunting. Previous studies demonstrated that Tacana hunting is sustainable, but this sustainability could be threatened by



increasing commercial hunting for IWT purposes. Evidence reveals that interest from the new Asian markets is not confined to jaguar parts, with smaller amounts of red brocket deer and marsh deer penises in demand, as well as collared and giant anteater claws. Hunters targeting jaguars opportunistically take other wildlife species either for IWT purposes or potential commercialization of bush meat. Therefore, increased IWT driven hunting will jeopardize community livelihoods and put additional strain on the participatory mechanisms local communities have designed and implemented to patrol and control access to indigenous territories. Thus, by addressing the emerging threat of commercial hunting of jaguars and other wildlife by third parties for IWT purposes, and increasing control and vigilance of wildlife resources, the project contributed to the overall vision of the indigenous communities of maintaining forest cover and sustaining wildlife populations which are sustainably used in certain areas within the indigenous territories.

The livelihoods of the indigenous communities rely on subsistence agriculture, natural resource management of products such as wild cacao and spectacled caiman, and ecotourism. Since 1999, WCS has provided long-term support for 60 community-based natural resource projects across 123 individual communities, the majority of which are indigenous communities. WCS currently supports 20 community projects representing 1,180 families in the Greater Madidi Landscape. These projects rely on exclusive access to forest resources using spatially explicit management plans and community regulated extraction regimes. Thus, a control and vigilance system that reduces IWT issues in the indigenous territories better protects other resources that currently significantly improve local livelihoods. In summary, by supporting control and vigilance activities, including patrolling, both within indigenous territories and the protected areas that overlap them, the project helped safeguard the natural resources that indigenous people have formally committed to managing in a sustainable manner.

The immediate willingness of indigenous leadership and communities to meet about the threat of IWT in the region, then develop public declarations regarding their support to efforts to combat IWT during the IWT 068 grant is a demonstration of the resonance and importance of the above arguments.

## **7. Consideration of gender equality issues**

When addressing IWT threats, women play leading roles in households and retain considerable ability to influence local decision-making about the wild sourced resources they use and buy. Therefore, targeted communication and outreach campaigns are considering the role of women, improving our understanding of the trafficking problem and its potential consequences for women and men, while promoting women's engagement in supporting authorities to combat IWT.

The indigenous community-based natural resource management activities mentioned above are also implemented with special attention to gender equality. For example, over 15 years, the Tacana indigenous organization (CIPTA) has been able to show a significant increase in women's participation in capacity building activities and indigenous leadership, and a corresponding increase in the percentage of women partners in sustainable natural resource management initiatives, from 15.4% between 2001-2005 to 36.8% between 2011-2015.

Finally, in working with authorities to bring criminals to justice, we may also help to reduce potential direct and indirect threats to local communities from the operations of organized crime networks, which disproportionately affect women and children because of their links to human traffic networks related to prostitution.

## **8. Monitoring and evaluation**

Firstly, the national database on illegal wildlife trade that we have developed in association with 45 different institutions allows us to contextualize the efforts of our partners that we are supporting, for example, the recent operations by POFOMA. The database is also shared with POFOMA and the Ministry of the Environment and Water. In the IWT 068 project we shared how the database had provided the data from the Bolivian government for the a CITES Jaguar Report. Similarly, in April 2022 the same database was used to inform a Bolivian government report for CITES on trafficking of two species of *Chelus* turtles.

Secondly, as a WCS program in the Andes-Amazon-Orinico region, in 2018 we committed to a series of social and traditional media indicators for our general conservation efforts including combatting wildlife trade, allowing us to pull the indicators relevant to the IWT 080 project with relative ease.

Thirdly, as a WCS program we have developed conceptual models and results chains for our different strategies (n=10), including combatting wildlife trade, and crucially we have framed these models and results chains within the official structure of the Bolivian government's response to illegal wildlife trade.

## **9. Lessons learnt**

Hopefully, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on project activities is now drawing to a close. In this reporting period we have learned the particular effectiveness of social media, online events and even influencers in reaching wide audiences with messaging about jaguars and the threat of IWT during the COVID-19 pandemic. Whilst we are all anxious to return to an in-person dominated project in the next reporting period, it will also be important to assess how we can reach additional people with continued online and social media presence.

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

Not applicable as this is our first annual report for this grant.

## **11. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere**

It is important to mention that in October 2021, the staff with whom we have been coordinating CWT activities in the Ministry of the Environment were replaced. We requested meetings with the new staff in early November in order to continue our CWT efforts in a coordinated manner, and were able to meet with the new team in December 2021 just before the end of year holidays. Although this did delay some progress, the important development is that our coordination with the DGBAP and the Ministry remains close. Similarly, although the head of POFOMA was replaced we continue to closely coordinate activities.

Unfortunately, during the lull between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> COVID-19 waves from late August to mid-October, a period in which WCS was able to conduct biodiversity expeditions and other field activities, the park guards and indigenous leadership were occupied dealing with a spate of forest fires in the region, and so planned workshops could not be scheduled during that period.

## **12. Sustainability and legacy**

This IWT 080 project is a follow-on project to the preliminary funding phase grant (IWT 068), and we are extremely grateful to the UK IWT Challenge Fund from DEFRA for committing to an extended second phase of funding 1. At the same time, we have parallel funding to support a range of activities to combat IWT in Bolivia and the broader region through 2023 from INL and European Union. This sustainability is important at this particular time when it is extremely propitious to seize the opportunities for significant and visible partnerships with the Bolivian government.

The current IWT 080 grant will support and expand our on-the-ground efforts in north-western Bolivia through 2023, which from a legacy perspective, will also allow WCS to measure impacts on jaguar populations in the region at a couple of our long-term monitoring sites (Tuichi-Hondo and Alto Madidi, both scheduled for 2023).

## **13. IWT Challenge Fund identity**

Firstly, this project is producing considerable amounts of social media in which the UK support is recognized. WCS has also supported other actors to develop proposals to the IWT Challenge Fund, specifically for the Titicaca water frog (*Telmatobius culeus*).

WCS is working with national and regional authorities to address the general threat of illegal wildlife trade across the Andes-Amazon region, including Bolivia, with support from the European Union and the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs of the USA (INL), however, the IWT 080 is dedicated to specifically addressing this threat for jaguars.

**14. Impact of COVID-19 on project delivery**

A 3rd of COVID-19 between late April and late July 2021, and a 4th wave between December 2021 and February 2022, restricted field and in-person activities. In addition, the vaccination program reached WCS staff during the same period with second doses applied between June and September depending on age. Thankfully, WCS staff are now fully vaccinated and many have now received booster 3rd doses and 4th doses, which is particularly important in Bolivia since the first available vaccines were the Sinopharm and Sputnik options. The 3rd and 4th doses were mainly AstraZeneca, Moderna, Pfizer and Johnson. This is now facilitating in-person events and fieldwork, and hopefully the rest of 2022 should be able to return to some form of normality. We have been especially careful to minimize risks to our local partners, especially remote indigenous communities.

**15. Safeguarding**

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

If you have answered yes, please ensure these are reported to [ODA.safeguarding@defra.gov.uk](mailto:ODA.safeguarding@defra.gov.uk) as indicated in the T&Cs.

**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 (see below)	██████████	█ ██████████	██████████	Communication Specialist left position in January
Consultancy costs	█ ██████████	█ ██████████	██████████	COVID-19 prevented advance in activity
Overhead Costs	█ ██████████	█ ██████████	██████████	As percentage
Travel and subsistence	█ ██████████	█ ██████████	██████████	COVID-19 prevented advance in activity
Operating Costs				
Capital items (see below)				
Others (see below)				
<b>TOTAL</b>	██████████	█ ██████████	██████████	

**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 (please leave this line in to indicate your agreement to use any material you provide here).

## 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 <b>correct template</b> (checking fund, type of report (i.e. Annual or Final), and year) and <b>deleted the blue guidance text</b> before submission?	X
<b>Is the report less than 10MB?</b> If so, please email to <a href="mailto:IWT-Fund@itsi.co.uk">IWT-Fund@itsi.co.uk</a> putting the project number in the subject line.	X
<b>Is your report more than 10MB?</b> If so, please discuss with <a href="mailto:IWT-Fund@itsi.co.uk">IWT-Fund@itsi.co.uk</a> about the best way to deliver the report, putting the project number in the subject line.	X
<b>Have you included means of verification?</b> You should not submit every project document, but the main outputs and a selection of the others would strengthen the report.	X
<b>Do you have hard copies of material you need to submit with the report?</b> 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.	X
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.	