

Biodiversity Challenge Funds Projects Darwin Initiative, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, and Darwin Plus Half Year Report

Note: If there is any confidential information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website, please ensure you clearly highlight this.

Submission Deadline: 31st October 2023

Project reference	IWT 080
Project title	Expanding Local Intelligence Networks to Combat Jaguar IWT in Bolivia
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Bolivia
Lead partner	Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)
Partner(s)	National Protected Area Service (SERNAP), Tacana Indigenous People Council (CIPTA), Tacana Indigenous Women Council (CIMTA), Tsimane-Moseten Regional Council (CRTM), Forestry and Environmental Police (POFOMA), Pando Departmental Autonomous Government (GAD), Beni GAD, Trinidad Municipal Autonomous Government (GAM) Los Santos Reyes GAM, Santa Rosa del Yacuma GAM, Madidi National Park and Integrated Management Natural Area (PNANMI), Pilón Lajas Biosphere Reserve and Indigenous Territory (RBTCO), Beni Biosphere Reserve & Biological Station (EBB), Rhukanrhuka Municipal Protected Area (APM), APM Pampas del Yacuma, APM Ibare-Mamoré.
Project leader	Robert Wallace
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	HYR5
Project website/blog/social media	www.wcsbolivia.org

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

We obtained new IWT data from our project partners, particularly the Departmental Autonomous Government of Beni, for inclusion into the most current and comprehensive IWT database available for Bolivia. We are now preparing a report on jaguar trafficking for Bolivia.

Drawing on this data, we supported the General Directorate of Biodiversity and Protected Areas (DGBAP) from the Ministry of Environment and Water, which serves as Bolivia's CITES management authority, in preparation for the September Meeting of Jaguar Range States in Cuiaba, Brazil, a requirement under CITES Decision 19.111 approved during the CITES COP 19. WCS assisted the DGBAP and the National Museum of Natural History (MNHN), the national CITES scientific authority, to complete a questionnaire and prepare a national presentation addressing jaguar trafficking and related threats (<https://thejaguarhub.com/>). WCS took part in the event as observers and jaguar trafficking experts, offering technical insights during various sessions and discussions (Annexes 1-2). The meeting report, summarizing outcomes and recommendations, will be presented during the CITES Standing Committee meeting in November 2023 (Annex 3). Key recommendations include a request for the CITES Secretariat to establish a modular system to monitor the illegal killing of jaguars and the illicit trade in their parts and derivatives, and the creation of an intergovernmental platform and cooperation mechanism to enhance jaguar conservation efforts.

Activity 1.2. Conduct annual training events for 30 targeted prosecutors, government officials, park guards, police, customs and post office staff attendees on combatting wildlife trafficking.

We consolidated partnerships through subgrants with 13 institutions across three departments (La Paz, Beni and Pando): **(Subnational governments)** GAD Beni (Annex 4), Municipal Autonomous Government

(GAM) Trinidad (Annex 5), GAM Los Santos Reyes (Annex 6), GAM Santa Rosa del Yacuma (Annex 7), **(Protected Areas)** Madidi National Park and Integrated Management Natural Area (PNANMI) (Annex 8), Pilón Lajas Biosphere Reserve and Indigenous Territory (RBTCO) (Annex 9), Beni Biosphere Reserve & Biological Station (EBB) (Annex 10), Rhukanrhuka Municipal Protected Area (APM) through GAM Reyes, APM Pampas del Yacuma through GAM Santa Rosa del Yacuma, APM Ibare-Mamoré through GAM Trinidad. **(Indigenous organizations)** T´simane Mosen Regional Council (CRTM) (Annex 11), Tacana Indigenous People Council (CIPTA) and Tacana Indigenous Women Council (CIMTA) (Annex 12).

With GAD Beni, we organized the Training Workshop on Illegal Wildlife Trafficking (Annex 13) aimed to enhance the technical and legal knowledge of the Departmental Secretariat for the Environment and Natural Resources staff, with a focus on jaguars and strategies to combat wildlife trafficking in the Beni department. The first day was exclusively for Secretariat staff, with 30 participants (21 women, 9 men). On the second day, we expanded the audience to include invited institutions like GAM Trinidad, POFOMA, municipal firefighters involved in wildlife rescue, and the Autonomous University of Beni, totaling 60 participants (31 women, 29 men).

With GAM Trinidad, we organized a Training Workshop on Illegal Wildlife Trafficking (Annex 14), with 45 participants (18 men, 27 women) including personnel from the Environment Secretariat, Tourism Unit, Heritage and Culture Unit, Forestry Unit, and the Mayor's Office. The primary goal was to enhance the technical and legal knowledge of GAM Trinidad's staff concerning IWT, with a specific focus on jaguars. The workshop also aimed to identify future CWT actions within their municipality and the APM Ibare-Mamoré under their jurisdiction. Key priorities identified included strengthening IWT control in markets and craft shops, developing communication materials and activities for ranchers, neighborhood associations, and local communities around Trinidad, signs for tourist areas within APM Ibare-Mamoré, and enhancing tourist guide capabilities.

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

We supported the DGBAP and a Senator in the development and defence of the Bill 129-21 C.S. Protection and Conservation of the Andean Condor, which incorporates an additional provision that typifies IWT as a crime in the Penal Code of Bolivia. This bill successfully passed in the congress chamber (Annex 15), and will be considered in the Senate in October 2023.

WCS provided legal guidance to the General Prosecutor's Office for prosecuting IWT cases following our signed agreement. We focused on supporting prosecutors to use the crimes of Destruction and Deterioration of Natural Heritage (Art. 223 Penal Code) and Biocide (Art. 350 Penal Code), which is crucial as many of them face significant challenges when handling IWT cases. These challenges often hinder their ability to effectively conduct criminal defense actions and thereby impede the necessary investigative and follow-up processes required to secure convictions. WCS supported the following cases: a) a suspect accused of trafficking jaguar cubs and exotic wildlife in Cochabamba, b) the death of an Andean bear cub in Chuquisaca, suspected to be linked to IWT, c) the discovery of exotic ostriches in La Paz, d) the trade and consumption of wild meat by a municipal authority in La Paz, e) preparation of supporting documents for the Sentencing Judge of Guayaramerin, Beni, in environmental crimes with a focus on IWT, for a meeting in Guajará Mirim, Rondonia, Brazil, and f) poisoning of 6 Andean condors in Chuquisaca.

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.

In celebration of the International Day of Biological Diversity, at the POFOMA Departmental Directorate in La Paz, WCS and POFOMA revealed striking murals depicting iconic Bolivian species targeted by IWT and delivering critical CWT messages. At the unveiling ceremony, the British Ambassador, Jeff Glekin, highlighted the importance of safeguarding endangered species, especially the jaguar. Positioned in a bustling urban area, these murals will enhance the visibility of POFOMA and effectively engage a broad audience. The event was further enriched by indigenous artist Alwa, who delivered a captivating urban music performance (Annex 16).

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.

Celebrating the International Day of Indigenous Peoples, CIPTA, CIMTA, and WCS jointly unveiled artistic mural within CIPTA's headquarters in Tumupasa, serving as a powerful tribute of the history and enduring efforts of the Tacana people in safeguarding their natural heritage and their profound commitment to biodiversity conservation. It also emphasizes their resolve to combat IWT, with a symbolic focus on the jaguar as an iconic species. The event was accompanied by the rich traditions of Tacana music and dance, drawing participation from approximately 100 people and six local communicators and press representatives (Annex 17).

In September, CIMTA and CIPTA hosted a festival in Tumupasa disseminating messages on biodiversity protection, environmental conservation and the fight against illegal wildlife trafficking, all while celebrating

the rich Tacana cultural heritage. One of the most popular attractions, particularly among children, was the "Nature Route" game set in the Tacana territory. This interactive experience, developed by CIPTA, CIMTA, and WCS, revolved around the theme of countering wildlife trafficking. Children constructed and colored jaguar masks, and engaged in discussions about the jaguar's significance to the Tacana people (Annex 18).

EBB and WCS collaboratively created two radio spots, addressing jaguar trafficking, general IWT and illegal fishing (Annex 19), which continue to be aired on local radio stations.

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.

WCS and GAD Pando solidified their collaboration and signed a framework agreement (Annex 20). GAD Pando declared the jaguar as a Natural Heritage and a departmental symbol on the International Day for Biological Diversity (Annex 21). GAD Pando formally inducted WCS as a member of the Pando Alliance for the Conservation of the Jaguar, which seeks to unite efforts in preserving this iconic species and addressing its primary threats within the department, including combating jaguar trafficking (Annex 22). GAD Pando bestowed WCS with a certificate of appreciation in recognition of our dedicated work in the conservation of Amazonian wildlife in the Department of Pando (Annex 23). In partnership with GAD Pando, we conducted a visit to the Nueva Esperanza community within the Bruno Racua Departmental Reserve, engaging with authorities and inhabitants (79 people: 34 women, 45 men) on IWT technical and legal aspects, emphasizing the CWT role of the Reserve given it lies on the Brazilian border (Annex 24).

We signed framework agreements with the Prosecutor General's Office (Annex 25) and the Agri-Environmental Court (Annex 26), cementing our partnerships and involvement in CWT efforts, and facilitating coordination POFOMA, protected areas, and indigenous organizations.

With GAM Reyes, we identified as priorities control and vigilance and raising awareness about the ecological and cultural value of jaguar and the consequences of IWT within the APM Rhukanrhuka. This new protected area has no park rangers, so CWT activities will be carried out with the support of the tourism, risk management and communication municipal units (Annex 27).

At the Beni Biosphere Reserve (EBB), priorities included control and patrolling efforts and raising awareness about the jaguar's significance and IWT consequences in the protected area and the San Borja town (an IWT hotspot) in Spanish and the T´simane indigenous language (Annex 28).

With GAM Santa Rosa del Yacuma, the focus is on awareness about the ecological, cultural, and economic value of jaguar as a tourist attraction in APM Pampas del Yacuma (Annex 29).

For CRTM, priorities include control and vigilance, awareness about IWT and its consequences, and educating communities about jaguar's ecological and cultural significance through outreach materials and signs, as people don't have access to radio/television/internet (Annex 30).

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.

The RBTCO Pilón Lajas patrolled focusing on IWT with park rangers visiting 9 communities and 145 people (99 men, 46 women). The park rangers gathered information about IWT in Spanish and the T´simane language and raised awareness about this crime and its effects on people and wildlife, particularly the jaguar. They did not find evidence of IWT activities, but they found reports of jaguar predation on livestock and domestic dogs (5 pigs and 1 dog) in 2 communities, and they did control activities on suspicious boats and cars in 7 communities (Annex 31).

PNANMI Madidi completed 16 control and surveillance patrols focusing on IWT. Park rangers did not find evidence of IWT activities, but they identified suspicious men on motorcycles (Annex 32). The park rangers also did an awareness talk on IWT and jaguars for 125 students (65 girls, 60 boys) at the El Tigre Educational Unit in the community of the same name.

On the National Day of Protected Areas, GAM Los Santos Reyes embarked on their "1st Control and Training Caravan". They visited six communities, engaging with 145 people (60 men, 85 women), creating a series of informative and awareness-raising social media posts to support their activities, as well as to educate the public about the significance of the APM Rhukanrhuka and the critical issue of illegal wildlife trafficking, especially the jaguar (Annex 33).

CRTM, together with RBTCO Pilón Lajas, did IWT control and surveillance patrols focusing visiting 6 communities. They did not find evidence of IWT activities, but provided awareness talks on IWT and jaguars in the indigenous T´simane language for local people (Annex 34).

CIPTA did control and outreach visits focusing on IWT visiting 6 prioritized communities and reaching 137 people (84 men, 53 women), presenting CIPTA's self-declaration against signed in our previous IWTCF 068 project and introducing two indigenous territory guards (Annex 35).

2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

The national director of POFOMA experienced an extended hospitalization lasting several weeks. The interim director requested that we postpone most planned activities until the recovery of the director. We redirected efforts to prosecutors to enhance their CWT capacity.

3. Have any of these issues been discussed with NIRAS and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with NIRAS: No

Formal Change Request submitted: No

Received confirmation of change acceptance No

Change request reference if known: N/A

4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023)

Actual spend: £ [REDACTED]

4b. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g. more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this financial year (ending 31 March 2024)?

Yes No Estimated underspend: £

4c. 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 re-budget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a re-budget 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.**

NB: if you expect an underspend, do not claim anything more than you expect to spend this financial year.

5. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to BCF management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

No.

Please send your **completed report** by email to BCF-Reports@niras.com. The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number, followed by the specific fund in the header of your email message e.g. Subject: 29-001 Darwin Initiative Half Year Report**