

Biodiversity Challenge Funds 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 2022

Project reference	IWT084
Project title	Tackling Illegal Wildlife Trade in the Nigeria-Cameroon Green Corridor
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Nigeria
Lead partner	Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)
Partner(s)	Africa Nature Investors Foundation (ANI) Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism, Bauchi State Nigeria National Park Service
Project leader	Andrew Dunn
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	HYR3, October 2022
Project website/blog/social media	Twitter: @WCS_Nigeria and @ANI_Foundation

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 end September).

Output 1. Improved understanding of IWT within the Green Corridor through community surveys and gathering of intelligence from communities, and Nigerian and Cameroonian agencies.

Activity 1.1 Conduct community baseline surveys and gathering of IWT intelligence.

In Yankari Game Reserve (YGR), we are planning a Basic Necessities Survey (BNS) in selected local communities to measure levels of poverty, to provide essential information about people's well-being from their own perspective and to provide a baseline against which to measure the impact of the project and changes in wellbeing over time. The BNS survey in Yankari is scheduled to start November 2022.

In Gashaka Gumti National Park (GGNP), a survey of nomadic pastoralists was completed by ANI in July 2022 to better understand the socio-economic context of the nomadic pastoralist communities using the park (the sedentary pastoralist communities had already been surveyed during the previous survey). The survey found that there are three key groups of pastoralists using the park: 1) ten enclave communities living within the park who are mostly semi-nomadic Fulani who move their cattle around the park on a seasonal basis; 2) another 21 semi-permanent, semi-nomadic pastoralist camps located within 2 km of the park boundary who use the park as a "grazing reserve"; 3) fully nomadic Fulani herders who come from other parts of Nigeria as well as from Cameroon and the Central African Republic. Key recommendations from the report include:

- Establish regular dialogue meetings between herders and farmers to improve access of the Fulani to agricultural land during the dry/fallow season. This will relieve some of the pressure to enter the park for grazing.
- Establish and invest in protected grazing areas outside the boundaries of the park to provide suitable grazing alternatives.
- Work with traditional institutions and pastoral leaders to improve knowledge and understanding of the semi-nomadic and fully nomadic Fulani.
- Select, train, and employ pastoralists from communities in and around the park as rangers. This will strengthen the relationship between the park and the Fulani who have historically had little dialogue with the park.
- Establish schools and health services in selected communities outside the park, ensuring enrolment of pastoralist children.
- Visit the 'home bases' of the migrant herders and meet their elders to educate them about the implications of sending cattle to graze inside GGNP – and work with them to find workable alternative solutions.

Activity 1.2 Training and mentoring of informant network around YGR and GGNP.

In YGR we mainly rely on a network of 18 elephant guardians to provide intelligence on illegal activity around the reserve. Rangers on off-duty, not actively engaged on patrol work are also a major source of local intelligence, all of whom live in the surrounding communities.

In GGNP, following the extensive community engagement during the social surveys over the last year, we have continued to engage with traditional leaders and other key individuals in the communities to gather intelligence on IWT and to identify potential individuals in each community who might be part of the informant network. This is a slow process requiring trust building, but much progress has been made in the identification of individuals some of whom have already started to provide solid intelligence pertaining to poaching activities and illegal wildlife trafficking.

Activity 1.3 Gathering of IWT intelligence from Cameroon.

IWT intelligence from Cameroon was used to develop the Transboundary Wildlife Trafficking Report (activity 1.5 below).

Activity 1.4 Gathering of IWT intelligence from Nigerian agencies.

GGNP: in September ANI and Gashaka Gumti National Park convened all relevant security agencies around the park to share intelligence and develop a strategy towards addressing security issues in the area and related IWT activities (for more information see activity 3.4 below).

Activity 1.5 Produce a Transboundary Wildlife Trafficking Report.

A preliminary Transboundary Wildlife Trafficking report has been drafted and we plan to update the report regularly as more information becomes available.

Activity 1.6 Produce an alternative livelihood strategy for communities surrounding YGR and GGNP.

In YGR, we have been working with farmers to reduce the impact of human-elephant conflict. This has involved the establishment of a pilot bee-hive fence with 10 farmers along the boundary of the reserve designed to keep elephants from straying onto local farms and damaging crops. Honey produced from these bee-hives is also an important source of income.

In GGNP, capacity building was provided for 8 women's livelihood groups (originally established in 2021 with support from ANI; approximately 200 women in total). The training included gender empowerment, sustainable agriculture, and value chain and cooperative financial management. Further training for the 8 women's groups to improve knowledge on shea nut processing, packaging, and exportation is planned.

In September, Roshan Renewables visited GGNP to discuss the provision of fuel-efficient stoves (already provided for YGR on a different grant) and the manufacture and sale of briquettes from agricultural waste for use in the stoves. They met with the women's groups as part of their

scoping trip to explore other options for collaboration and livelihood opportunities (besides shea processing).

Output 2. Improved levels of border control between Nigeria and Cameroon by promoting training and capacity building of local enforcement agencies which results in more arrests by law enforcement agencies.

Activity 2.1 Facilitate inter-agency training courses for Customs, Police, Army and NESREA.

A training course for Customs was held in Yola in March 2022.

Activity 2.2 Provide logistical support for IWT operations within the Green Corridor by the Nigeria Customs Service.

Based on contacts made at the Yola workshop (activity 2.1 above) we are in the process of identifying individuals within the Customs Service with the potential to act as local champions. We plan to provide logistical support to such champions to enable them to gather intelligence along the major trafficking routes in Taraba and Adamawa States.

Activity 2.3 Provide support for investigations and prosecutions

In YGR we have signed a retainer agreement with a local law firm to support prosecution of individuals arrested for wildlife crimes in the Yankari Game Reserve. Under this agreement, the law firm provides legal support for the prosecution of all poachers arrested inside Yankari Game Reserve. Prosecution, particularly of high-profile wildlife crimes will create a strong deterrent to potential offenders.

Output 3. Improved levels of security and stability for the region by fostering inter-agency collaboration and establishing security partnerships between 2 protected areas and local communities.

Activity 3.1 Organise ranger training in YGR and GGNP

In YGR, in-house refresher training for rangers is planned for October 2022. More intensive refresher training by Conservation Outcomes is planned for May/June 2023.

In GGNP, refresher training of all the rangers was carried out in May/June 2022. The training covered a wide range of skills including national park law, human rights, community negotiation, animal tracking, first aid, etc. Conservation Outcomes are currently conducting basic field ranger training for a fresh intake of 40 rangers from the surrounding communities from October – December 2022.

Activity 3.2 Purchase of essential field equipment for rangers in YGR and GGNP.

Yankari rangers have been provided with new field equipment and apparel (purchased with the support of the IWT fund and other donors).

GGNP rangers have also been provided with replenished clothing, boots, bush-hat, belt, water bottle, backpack, tent, sleeping mats and GPS trackers.

Activity 3.3 Provide support for law enforcement patrols by rangers in YGR and GGNP.

In YGR, all ranger patrols use SMART for monitoring law enforcement effort. During the reporting period a total of 68 ranger patrols (4,080 patrol man days) covering a total distance of 8,435 km were completed during the period. A total of 20 arrests were made including 14 people for hunting offences and 6 for livestock grazing. All were successfully prosecuted. Patrol presence acts as a strong deterrent to criminals that may consider using the reserve as a hideout for illegal activities.

In GGNP systematic patrols continued to be carried out across the southwestern third of the park. During the wet season, the rate of arrests has decreased, possibly due to the patrols acting as a deterrent but also probably due to the rains which make poaching activities in the park more difficult. Nevertheless 929 km were covered on foot patrols and 97 arrests were made of various individuals including poachers (hunting for the bushmeat trade), loggers (targeting rosewood) and illegal cattle herders. 28 poachers' camps were removed, and confiscations included 5 guns, 48 cutlasses, 2 chainsaws, 6 motorcycles, 3 pick-up trucks, 90 m³ of hardwood timber.

Activity 3.4 Formation of Conservation Security partnerships in YGR and GGNP.

In YGR, we continue to maintain a close relationship with key local stakeholders to share information and exchange solutions to local security challenges. WCS is working closely with the Alkali LGA Security Council which comprises of the LGA Chairman, traditional rulers, army, police, immigration, DSS, federal road safety commission, Nigeria civil defence corps and WCS. Ensuring that YGR is kept free of bandits and kidnappers is an important function of the Yankari rangers.

In GGNP, ANI and Gashaka Gumti National Park chaired a meeting in September that included Nigerian Army, police, National Civil Defence Corps, Gashaka Local Government, traditional rulers, and government registered community security representatives. During the meeting participants shared intelligence and agreed to work together to develop a strategy for addressing security issues and related IWT activities in the region. It was agreed that these meetings will be held every 3 months. We plan to chair a similar coordination meeting for Toundo LGA covering the north of the park at the beginning of November.

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.

YGR: levels of insecurity are worsening in many of the communities surrounding Yankari, particularly to the south (towards Plateau and Taraba States) where there have been several local kidnappings for ransom, with gangs seeking to use Yankari as a safe hideout.

GGNP: the survey of nomadic pastoralists (activity 1.1) revealed large numbers of semi-permanent, semi-nomadic settlements living along the northern border of the park. The northern park sector is being used as an unofficial grazing reserve and the livelihood strategy for GGNP will have to focus much more on pastoralism issues than previously anticipated.

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

Discussed with NIRAS-LTS: No

Formal Change Request submitted: /No

Received confirmation of change acceptance No

Change request reference if known:

4a. 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: £

4b. 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.

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

No.

If you are a new project and you received feedback comments that requested a response (including the submission of your risk register), or if your Annual Report Review asked you to provide a response 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 NIRAS-LTS International through a Change Request. **Please DO NOT send these in the same email.****

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**