

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: 30th April 2023

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IWT Challenge Fund Project Information

Project reference	IWT089
Project title	Building effective responses to illegal wildlife trade across Central Asia
Country/ies	Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan
Lead Partner	Fauna & Flora International (FFI)
Project partner(s)	TRAFFIC International, Institute of Zoology (National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan), Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity Kazakhstan (ACBK), The Institute of Zoology and Parasitology (Biological Division of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tajikistan), State Customs Service (Kyrgyz Republic), Ministry of Natural Resources, Ecology and Technical Supervision (Kyrgyz Republic)
IWTCF grant value	£ 556,999
Start/end dates of project	01/10/2021 – 31/03/2024
Reporting period (e.g. April 2022-Mar 2023) and number (e.g. Annual Report 1, 2, 3)	April 2022 – March 2023 Annual report 2
Project Leader name	Matthew Lowton
Project website/blog/social media	
Report author(s) and date	Akylai Kabaeva, Matthew Lowton, Madina Tuekelova, Zhainagul Bekenova, Elena Bykova, Bakytbek Tokubek Uulu, Solimshoh Akbarshoh

1. Project summary

This project is supporting national and regional efforts to tackle the trafficking of species along key trade routes and exit points in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan (Figure 1). This is done by

identifying trade hotspots and routes; improving understanding of key traded species; strengthening inter-agency communication and capacity to intercept trafficked wildlife products in strategic transboundary locations; and reducing wildlife trafficking through effective and deterrent criminal justice pathways.



Figure 1. Map of Central Asia, shows the 4 countries covered by the project; Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

This project is working to build and support effective responses to IWT, promoting a transboundary approach, targeting strategic locations to be identified through activities under Output 1, namely 1.2 and the collection of preliminary baselines of IWT data and the subsequent production of national reports on key hotspots and trade routes across the region. Future reports will show in detail areas identified as hotspots for trafficking and trade. These trade maps will be produced by FFI and project partners.

This project is improving the current understanding of the extent of wildlife trafficking in the region. Historically low baselines on wildlife trafficking data is due in part to a lack of systematic data collection and sharing policies/protocols for IWT incidences by LEAs across the region. However, the relatively small amount of available evidence collated by this project and through previous work (including anecdotal accounts), highlights illegal trade in a number of high value Endangered and Vulnerable Species, such as Saker Falcon (*Falco cherrug*), Saiga (*Saiga tatarica*) and Snow Leopard (*Panthera uncia*) respectively, as well as species that have historically occurred at high densities but which now are being traded at large quantities, legally and illegally, such as the Steppe tortoise (*Testudo horsfieldii*). Working closely with LEAs and government ministries, Fauna & Flora International (FFI) and project partners are engaging with key decision-makers, promoting formal and informal communication between agencies, nationally and at a transboundary level. Working across agencies, including the provision of training and mentoring, is building political will to combat IWT and is promoting greater, more coordinated proactive responses against IWT, informed by systematically collected and analysed IWT data.

2. Project stakeholders/ partners

As the lead organization working across four different countries, FFI recognizes the importance of strong partnerships and regular communication with national project partners: TRAFFIC, the Institute of Zoology of the Academy of Science of Uzbekistan, and the Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity of Kazakhstan. Detailed descriptions of each project and key government partners can be found in Annual Report 1. To ensure effective communication beyond email correspondence, FFI conducts monthly meetings with national partners to exchange project updates, identify priority activities, and determine the best ways to execute those activities. Additionally, FFI arranges meetings with partners for specific activities or events to discuss logistics and necessary steps in more detail. A OneDrive folder is also available for all partners to access reports, meeting recordings, pictures, and other relevant documents. FFI and project partners maintain regular communication with national law enforcement or other government agencies through, technical working groups, in-person meetings, email, and international group chats on WhatsApp. For example, there is a group chat for national SMART specialists and rangers from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. Upon request, FFI and project partners provide project activity reports to governmental bodies such as the Ministry of Natural Resources, Ecology, and Technical Supervision.

FFI Kyrgyzstan and FFI IWT Programme Manager Matt Lowton have opportunistic in person meetings with representatives of the UK and US Embassies regarding this and another IWT project funded by INL to provide project updates. Furthermore, the embassy representatives will be invited to the regional meeting scheduled for July 4-6, where TRAFFIC, FFI, and other project partners will present IWT reports and other interim results of the project.

3. Project progress

3.1 Progress in carrying out project Activities

1.1 Host 3 national workshops for law enforcement officers (LEOs) to sensitise agencies to the project and support coordinated and collaborative responses to IWT nationally

The workshop in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan held on March 30th, 2022 (described in the Annual Report 1) was followed by the national workshop organized jointly with our partners – the Institute of Zoology and Ekomaktab and took place in Tashkent, Uzbekistan on May 31st, 2022. The workshop in Tashkent was attended by 28 people (6 women, 22 men) from 13 organizations, including the National Academy of Science of Uzbekistan, the National Central Bureau of Interpol Uzbekistan, the State Customs Committee, State Committee for Ecology and Environmental Protection, State Committee of Forestry (SCEEP and SCF were restructured and now are under the Ministry of Natural Resources), the National Cynology Centre under the State Customs Committee of Uzbekistan, General Prosecution Office, as well as partner organizations – FFI, TRAFFIC, IOZ, Ekomaktab. Out of 28 workshop participants, 18 attendees (16 men, 2 women) filled the Likert questionnaires. Almost 95% of participants (17 out of 18) agreed that illegal wildlife trade is a significant issue that has to be addressed in the country. Less than 40% of participants (7 people) stated that IWT was not included in their curricula and almost 28% felt they lacked knowledge of IWT. Also, the questionnaire showed that there was little communication between national agencies or neighboring countries on IWT issues.

Another introductory national workshop in the country took place in Dushanbe, Tajikistan on June 3rd, 2022. 16 people (15 men, 1 woman) from such organizations as Customs Services, National Academy of Science, Drugs Control Agency, Forestry Agency, Committee for the Environmental Protection, Ministry of Internal Affairs and GIZ participated in the discussion of the ongoing work and practices on combatting illegal wildlife trade in the country. At the beginning of the meeting, attendees were also offered to answer the same Likert questionnaire that was used in Bishkek and Tashkent. Considering that only half of the participants agreed to fill it in, it is difficult to say if their responses can fully reflect the situation in the country. According to the results, all participants see IWT as a serious problem in Tajikistan, however, IWT is not included in the present curricula of their training academies. Similar to Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, attendees from Tajikistan pointed out that there is no communication between agencies or countries in the region that is focused on combatting illegal wildlife trade.

These three national workshops (Annex 4.1) were productive and a necessary first step to introducing the project and partners, and as an initial networking platform between national law enforcement agencies and partners, covering a total of 87 people (17 women, 70 men) from 30 relevant governmental and non-governmental organizations. During all three workshops, FFI made a presentation about the project goals as well as about the wildlife trade as a global issue, while partner organization TRAFFIC presented information on the importance of wildlife trade data, data collection, and data sharing, as well as an introduction to the Trade in Wildlife Information eXchange (TWIX) platforms. The connections made during the workshops enable us to communicate more efficiently with governmental bodies and organise more effective regional meetings. These meetings also served as important initial information gathering exercises identifying gaps in national responses to IWT.

1.2 Host one regional training workshop for 20 law enforcement officers on IWT data collection, management and analysis.

Due to socio-political turmoil in Kazakhstan, tensions on the border between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, and the restructuring of key governmental bodies in Kyrgyzstan, the regional workshop had to be postponed. Therefore, it was decided in consultation with partners to postpone the regional meeting

until Y2 and instead conduct national meetings in Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan to establish contacts and build trust with national governmental agencies while introducing the project to them. The relevant changes were made to the log frame and submitted accordingly.

The regional workshop is now scheduled for July 4-6th, 2023, tentatively in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. FFI has secured the venue and accommodation for participants, while TRAFFIC is developing the preliminary agenda of the workshop and preparing reports on IWT data, guidelines on best practices for IWT data management, and legal analysis to present during the workshop.

1.3 Collect preliminary baseline IWT data and produce a report on key hotspots and trade routes across the region.

As highlighted in the first annual report initial collection of data was delayed due to unforeseen complications in the recruitment process for the project partner leading this activity. The collection of preliminary baseline IWT data started in July 2022 and was completed in November 2022. Partner organisation TRAFFIC together with other partner organisations designed questionnaires and conducted surveys on IWT data collection and storage mechanisms of national LEOs. In total 18 organisations participated in the survey. These are:

- Uzbekistan (6 organisations): Tashkent Zoo; National Central Bureau (NCB) INTERPOL; Specialized Customs Complex “Tashkent AERO”; Border Service of the State Security Service; Institute of Zoology of the Academy of Science; State Committee of Ecology and Environmental Protection (SCEEP)
- Tajikistan (3 organisations): Customs Service; Eco-police; Forestry Enterprise
- Kyrgyzstan (4 organisations): NGO NABU; Biotechnology department of Academy of Science; Phytotechnology department of Academy of Science; Forestry Service
- Kazakhstan (5 organisations): Association of Hunters “Tabigat”; Law Enforcement University; Police; Eco-police; State Enterprise “Okhotzoprom”

TRAFFIC and partner organisations also collected information on officially registered IWT cases in each four countries by contacting national LEOs. Information was provided by 20 LEAs:

- Uzbekistan (6 organisations): Tashkent Zoo; National Central Bureau (NCB) INTERPOL; Specialized Customs Complex “Tashkent AERO”; Border Service of the State Security Service; Institute of Zoology of the Academy of Science; State Committee of Ecology and Environmental Protection (SCEEP)
- Kazakhstan (6 organisations): Border Service of the National Security Committee; Inspections of Committee of Forestry and Wildlife of the Ministry of Ecology, Geology and Natural Resources; National Security Committee; Police; State Enterprise “Okhotzoprom”; Agency of Financial Monitoring
- Tajikistan (4 organisations): National Academy of Science; Customs Service; Eco-police; Forestry Agency
- Kyrgyzstan (4 organisations): Academy of Science; NGO NABU; General Prosecutors Office; Forestry Service

TRAFFIC also staff conducted, open-source online surveys in the four target countries to supplement the illegal wildlife trade data gathered. Between January and February 2023, TRAFFIC conducted several days of online surveys for open-source reports of illegal trade incidences and seizures involving selected species of fauna and flora listed in the CITES Appendices and the national Red Books. TRAFFIC also worked on an analysis of TRAFFIC Wildlife Trade Information System (WiTIS) data to further supplement the data gathered above. WiTIS is a database managed by TRAFFIC containing incidents involving wildlife seizures, poaching and law enforcement action, in addition to market monitoring and actionable information. The results of the WiTIS will be also included in the IWT report. Furthermore, TRAFFIC is also in the process of interviewing governmental agencies from the Netherlands and Namibia to provide useful examples of how other countries manage illegal wildlife trade collection, analysis and sharing.

All the information outlined above will be analysed and synthesized into two separate reports; an assessment of the illegal wildlife trade in Central Asia; and the wildlife trade data collection practices in Central Asia. These reports will be presented at the regional meeting planned for July 2023.

1.4 Mentor national focal points to analyze IWT data and produce annual reports on priority species and trade routes.

While collecting IWT data in Kyrgyzstan, TRAFFIC and FFI observed that state agencies did not store, manage or analyze information about seizures thoroughly or in a complete manner. Upon being contacted by MNRETS for support in creating a unified database for CITES permits, FFI consulted with TRAFFIC, who had rich expertise in the development and management of such databases. Now, TRAFFIC is working closely with MNRETS to develop a database that not only manages CITES permits but also stores and analyzes information about wildlife seizures (see more details in sections 1.5 and 2.1).

In Uzbekistan, after consulting with TRAFFIC for the collection of IWT data, IOZ continued to analyze the data and produced two reports on illegally traded animal species and trade routes. The first report covers vertebrates, including four fishes, 29 reptiles, 32 birds, and 27 mammals, while the second report is focused on invertebrates such as 49 insects, spiders, and hydrations (*Artemia*). According to the results of the reports, the most traded illegal import/export species among vertebrates are the Central Asian tortoise, muskrat, red deer, saiga antelope, and saker falcon. The detailed analytic report on IWT data on the illegal trafficking of wild vertebrate animals is found in Annex 4.2. Among the most traded invertebrates are insects, which are mainly used for pest control or kept in insectariums, butterfly parks, and private collections as exotic tropical insects such as butterflies and beetles. The report on the illegal trade of wild invertebrate animals can also be found in Annex 4.3. IOZ has also compiled a list of traded species used for both international and domestic markets to better understand the scale and purpose of the trade. Additionally, IOZ is planning to complete lists of traded species of reptiles, birds, and invertebrates (Annex 4.4).

In Tajikistan outreach with law enforcement agencies highlighted that no data on wildlife trafficking is kept in a digital centralized manner. FFI was shown the filing system for the hard copies of reports on environmental crime, including wildlife trafficking, by the Forestry Agency but given the capacity of the project and the limited number of computers available, especially in relation to the Ecopolice who have one computer for the whole department, the ability to analyse existing data is limited. In addition to this the project was informed that annual data on environmental crime and wildlife trafficking offences is input on a Microsoft word table template over last years data, which is deleted after printing out a paper copy, so there is no long term annual digital datasets available. Tajik attendance is planned for a workshop to be held in July 2023, led by TRAFFIC, on data collection, management, analyses and sharing.

In Kazakhstan, ACBK together with Panthera, have hired a person who will be working closely with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources on data management and analysis.

1.5 Support LEAs (including prosecutors) to implement existing inter-agency agreements in place in Kyrgyzstan (with Panthera) and in Kazakhstan (with ACBK)

In Y1 MNRETS expressed interest in potentially developing a new binding inter-agency agreement on IWT data sharing and collaboration to address wildlife crime. Through further discussions and technical working groups in December 2022, MNRETS reached out to FFI seeking assistance in creating a database and data sharing platform for legal and illegal trade incidences to be used between Customs, Border service, the Prosecutors Office, and MNRETS. During an initial meeting, it was determined that the database would primarily be used to manage CITES permits and to store information regarding the seizure of illegally traded wildlife. As a result, it was essential to involve agencies such as the Customs Service, Border Service, and other governmental bodies involved in addressing IWT cases. MNRETS took the lead in developing and signing an Agreement or MoU with these agencies to facilitate data sharing and communication on IWT. In February 2023, FFI signed an MoU with MNRETS to progress the work. To advance this effort, FFI has decided to concentrate on forming a technical working group in Kyrgyzstan that includes representatives from MNRETS, Customs Service, Border Service, National Academy of Science, General Prosecutors Office, and other pertinent agencies (see more under activity 2.1).

1.6 Facilitate a bilateral agreement for IWT data sharing between Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan.

The protests that occurred in Kazakhstan at the beginning of 2022, along with changes in government staff and the postponement of a regional workshop, posed challenges for promoting a bilateral agreement between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan on issues of IWT. To begin addressing this issue, FFI

notified the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kyrgyzstan about the project's activities, stressing the significance of collaboration and data sharing between the two countries. The importance of this collaboration was emphasized at various meetings, such as the one on "Service dogs in the fight against illegal trade in wildlife" held in Almaty, Kazakhstan in May 2022, which was jointly organized by the Kyrgyz NGO Ilbirs Foundation, ACBK, and FFI. The topic of data sharing between the two countries was also brought up at other regional meetings under the project, including the SMART regional meeting held in Almaty in November 2022 and the regional sniffer dog training in March 2023. Additionally, ACBK and Panthera plan to hire an analyst to collect data on illegal trade in Kazakhstan, which will facilitate data exchange between Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan.

FFI will continue to emphasize the importance of a bilateral agreement for wildlife trade data-sharing between Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan and explore the possibility of developing and signing such an agreement at upcoming regional meetings in the two countries.

2.1 Establish and facilitate technical working groups in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to develop calls to action on IWT.

In Uzbekistan, a working group has been established comprising the State Committee of Ecology and Environmental Protection, EkoMaktab (FFI's partner under the INL project), the Institute of Botany, the Institute of Zoology, the General Prosecutor's Office, the State Customs Committee, the Committee of the State Border Protection, the National Central Bureau Interpol - Tashkent, and Tashkent Zoo. The first meeting of this interagency working group took place in Tashkent on August 16th, 2022, attended by 25 representatives from the aforementioned organizations. The primary objectives of this meeting were to review the project activities, introduce the IWT data collection methods provided by TRAFFIC, and assess the needs of each organization for a more effective response to IWT issues in the country. To gauge current data collection and analysis practices and knowledge, the working group members were asked to complete a questionnaire. The results revealed that the infrastructure for IWT data collection and analysis is fragmented, i.e., the collected data is neither analyzed nor shared between agencies. To facilitate communication within the working group, a chat group was created on Telegram.

In Kyrgyzstan, as mentioned in section 1.5, the technical working group is focused on creating a unified database that will enable the MNRETS, Customs Service, and other relevant governmental bodies to exchange information about the CITES permits issued by MNRETS and seizures on the borders. Therefore, three meetings were held with MNRETS, FFI, TRAFFIC, and other governmental bodies. The first two meetings were dedicated mainly to discussing the governmental agencies to be invited to join the technical working group. The last meeting was organized by FFI on March 9, 2023, and was attended by 15 representatives from MNRETS, Customs Service, General Prosecutor's Office, Academy of Science, TRAFFIC, and an IT company (Annex 4.5). During the meeting, TRAFFIC delivered a presentation on the electronic CITES and TWIX system, followed by the IT company's presentation of the website previously developed for protected areas, after which the needs and capacities of each agency were discussed. As a result, it was decided to create a team of IT departments from the agencies, TRAFFIC, and the IT company within the working group, responsible for developing the terms of reference for the database and addressing other technical issues. Additionally, FFI created a group chat on WhatsApp for more efficient communication.

2.2 Promote results from 1.2 to >30 high-level officials at national IWT meetings in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan and through national media.

Following discussions with our project partners, it has been determined that a presentation of our IWT reports, best practice guidelines, and other interim results will take place on July 4th, 2023, one day prior to the regional meeting. This will enable us to reach a wider audience of officials from all four countries.

The results of the national workshop in Tashkent, Uzbekistan were covered in the official Telegram channel of the Academy of Science of the Republic of Uzbekistan (O'zbekiston Respublikasi Fanlar akademiyasining rasmiy telegram kanali), with more than 700 followers; on the official website of the State Committee on Ecology and Environment Protection <https://www.uznature.uz/ru/site/news?id=2685>; as well as on the national media [Nuz.uz](https://www.nuz.uz) and [Янги Узбекистон](https://www.yangiuzbekiston.uz).

2.3 Engage with regional LEA initiatives (e.g. CARICC) to promote incorporation of IWT within their programmes.

On May 24th, ACBK and Fauna and Flora International met with a representative from the Central Asian Regional Information Coordination Centre (CARICC) in Almaty, Kazakhstan. CARICC is responsible for combatting illicit trafficking of drugs and psychotropic substances in the region that includes Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Russia and Azerbaijan. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the ongoing work of CARICC and to explore opportunities for collaboration on wildlife trade issues. While CARICC expressed interest in such collaboration, they reported that the transboundary program was currently underfunded, resulting in the suspension of many activities. Nevertheless, both parties agreed to stay in touch in case an opportunity for cooperation arises.

In Kyrgyzstan, FFI made contact with the country office of UNODC, which informed them of their project on wildlife trade and expressed an interest in discussing it further. Unfortunately, despite attempts to arrange a meeting, no response was received from the UNODC office. However, in March 2023, FFI's Project Manager, Akylai Kabaeva, received an invitation from Senior Consultant of Wildlife Crime Research and Trend Analysis Branch of UNODC, Steven Broad, to participate in an online survey to identify emerging issues related to IWT as part of their research for the publication of the UNODC Wildlife Crime Report. FFI was pleased to contribute to the survey by providing available information about the issues surrounding IWT in Central Asia.

On September 29, 2022, the TRAFFIC team in Europe and Central Asia had a meeting with representatives of the BOMCA project in Central Asia. BOMCA is the flagship and largest EU-funded Programme in the region. The BOMCA project is organizing a workshop for customs services and other national agencies on combating the contraband and illegal transporting the weapons and extended an invitation to TRAFFIC to present the project and combating illegal wildlife trade. The details of the cooperation will be discussed in nearest future. In January 2023, the TRAFFIC team in Europe and Central Asia met with representatives from the EU Commission, Directorate General International Partnership (INTPA), Mr. Aymeric Roussel, International Aid/Cooperation Officer. During the meeting, TRAFFIC team presented INL and IWTCF projects in Central Asia and the project partners involved in implementing the activities. TRAFFIC and INTPA representatives agreed to keep in touch and seek for future collaboration.

2.4 Host regional IWT meeting (with high-level LEA/CITES/CMS/Chinese officials) to share project outputs and develop a roadmap for improved regional action and coordination post- project.

This activity is due to Year 3. Following the discussion with TRAFFIC and other partners, it was decided that the participation of Chinese and CITES experts will be more crucial and useful at the regional meeting planned for July 2023. Therefore, in 2024 we will aim to have another closure regional meeting of smaller scale.

3.1 Creation of IWT training modules and refinement following delivery and participant feedback.

This activity is now fully funded by the complementary project "Strengthening Capacity and Fostering the Will to Combat Wildlife Crime in Central Asia" funded by INL.

In September 2022, the Terms of Reference (ToR) for an international expert who would lead the development and delivery of modules on wildlife trade were developed and advertised. The position of international consultant was offered to Gohar Petrossian, an Associate Professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York. Gohar is a globally recognized expert on wildlife crime prevention and has considerable experience and knowledge of working on wildlife trade issues. In addition to this, Gohar is a fluent Russian speaker, making interaction with national consultants easier and more effective. After several online meetings with national consultants and project partners, four modules were developed, which can be adapted according to the needs and interest of Law Enforcement Officials (LEOs) in each of the four project countries.

In November, Gohar Petrossian presented a needs assessment, proposing the outline of the modules. The training materials consist of four modules: 1. Wildlife Crime: an Overview; 2. Wildlife Crime Prevention: Foundations; 3. Wildlife Crime Prevention: Application and Practical Tools for Law Enforcement; 4. Assessment of Wildlife Crime Prevention Strategies. Each module will have a duration of

approximately four hours. In February, Gohar Petrossian presented the overview of the modules to project partners and developed a resource guide of 75 publicly available online wildlife crime-related training materials. The draft of Modules 1 and 2 was completed in March 2023, and the draft versions of Module 3 and 4 in April. These drafts are currently under review by project partners. The slides of the draft module presentations are available in Annex 4.6. Gohar Petrossian plans to attend the regional meeting in July 2023 and conduct a 2-day demo training of Module 3 and 4 for project partners. The modules will then be presented to trainers of the LEAs academies to allow them to test and assess the content and mode of delivering the training materials. Additionally, the modules and their delivery will be adapted according to the needs of LEAs in each country.

ACBK in Kazakhstan decided to develop modules with a focus on CITES, as requested by LEAs. A draft of four modules of the program, test, and recommended literature has been prepared. Two online meetings were held with consultants to discuss the program and lectures, and ACBK continues to coordinate, supplement, and improve the draft of the modules.

3.2 Creation of a facility in Uzbekistan dedicated to the storage of CITES specimens and IWT specific training for LEO's

As outlined in AR1, IOZ had planned to establish a facility for the storage of CITES items and training on IWT. However, due to the war between Russia and Ukraine in March 2022, the Uzbek government halted all improvements and procurement of technical equipment for state facilities. Consequently, IOZ's allocated funds for furniture and equipment were restricted and frozen in their bank account. Nonetheless, IOZ has identified a furniture company suitable for furnishing the training center. Recently, on April 5th, 2023, IOZ was granted permission to purchase the necessary equipment. IOZ intends to use the facility during the summer of 2023 for training law enforcement agencies on key species identification, as detailed in section 3.3.

3.3 Train 150 frontline officers (50/country in Kyrgyzstan Uzbekistan and Tajikistan) in detection of traded species and enforcement of CITES legislation; distribute IWT messaging (e.g. posters) to 75 checkpoints

IOZ is set to conduct two sets of trainings in Uzbekistan during the summer of 2023. The first training will last for one and a half days and will be held at the end of June 2023. The focus will be on training the trainers and a few students from LEAs academies on the identification of CITES species. IOZ is designing detailed posters featuring 48 species (17 native, 19 exotic, and 12 animal derivatives) that are frequently traded in Uzbekistan. The design of the posters in Russian can be found in Annex 4.7. Additionally, IOZ is preparing the second edition of the Guide for the CITES specimens for customs and border services of the Republic of Uzbekistan, in both Uzbek and Russian languages. The guide, which was first published by UNDP Uzbekistan in 2022, has been given permission for editing and distribution by FFI and IOZ to incorporate the new IWT analysis. The second training, which is scheduled for three days in August 2023, will be based on the training modules designed by Gohar Petrossian (activity 3.1) and will be held jointly with the partner organization under the INL project.

In Kyrgyzstan, a training for LEAs will also be conducted, utilizing training modules developed by Gohar Petrossian. The training is planned for September to October 2023 and will include materials adapted from the species identification training in Uzbekistan.

In Tajikistan meetings have been held with Mr Davlatali, Deputy Head of Forestry Agency, who has experience of training for LEAs in Tajikistan on environmental crime and wildlife trafficking. Mr Davlatali has expressed his support for the projects aim to strengthen awareness and capacity in Tajikistan on IWT and has made himself available to help with the delivery of training in Tajikistan in September/October 2023 in conjunction with a colleague also from the Forestry Agency.

3.5 Catalyse national SMART programmes in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan through a regional workshop.

Under a complementary project funded by INL, FFI collaborated with project partners IOZ and Ekomaktab in Uzbekistan to organize a workshop on the SMART platform and its advantages. The workshop aimed to introduce the SMART platform to rangers and management of protected areas in Uzbekistan, share the experience of its implementation in neighboring countries such as Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, and demonstrate how to use SMART on smartphones and prepare data for analysis. The workshop took place

in Tashkent, Uzbekistan from October 26th to 28th, 2022, with 42 participants including 3 women and 29 men. The participants comprised of six representatives from Kazakhstan, including three SMART specialists and trainers from partner organisation ACBK, two individuals from PAs staff (Aksu-Jabagly; Sairam-Ugam), and one expert from UNDP involved in rolling out SMART in Kazakhstan. Two participants were from Kyrgyzstan's Ministry of Natural Resources, Ecology and Technical Supervision (MNRET), and Sarychat-Eertash Reserve. There were also three FFI staff members, six representatives from the SCEEP of Uzbekistan, and 25 rangers and managers from PAs of Uzbekistan, including Chatkal State Biosphere Reserve, Gissar State Reserve, Saigachiy Complex Reserve, and National Nature Park "Southern Ustyurt". Pictures are available in Annex 4.8.

FFI also provided support for SMART training in Uzbekistan, which was provided by the Succow Foundation to rangers from Saigachy Reserve in conjunction with staff and rangers from South Uysturt National Park. This support included the provision of six Blackview smartphones with the necessary SMART software and model with individual preferences for local patrolling in Saigachy, including GIS data.

Furthermore, FFI, in partnership with ACBK, held a four-day regional workshop in Almaty from November 21st to 24th, 2022. The workshop aimed to facilitate the exchange of experience on the implementation and use of SMART in protected areas of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. The participants, comprising of 35 individuals, including seven women and 28 men, were from PA staff, SMART implementers, and governmental representatives from all four countries. Twenty participants were from Kazakhstan, including the Ministry of Ecology, Geology and Natural Resources, Katon-Karagay State National Nature Park (SNNP), Irgiz-Torgai Reservation, Jongar-Alatau SNNP, Kolsay koldori SNNP, Tarbagatai SNNP, Karatau State Nature Reserve (SNR), Markakol SNR, Aksu-Jabagly SNR, Sairam-Ugam SNNP, Almata SNR, State enterprise "Okhotzooptom," UNDP Kazakhstan, and ACBK. Ten participants were from Kyrgyzstan, including MNRET, Khan-Tengri State Nature Park, Sarychat-Eertash SNR, NGO "Ilbirs," and FFI KG. There were also two participants from Tajikistan, including the Department of International Relations of PAs and FFI TJ, and one participant from UNDP Uzbekistan.

The workshop included presentations from each protected area about their experience of using SMART, including difficulties and their solutions on the first day, and practical sessions such as visiting the nearby Kaskelen gorge and tracking the route on smartphones on the second day. The third day of the training was dedicated to final discussions and followed by group work of rangers and SMART specialists to share and explore more about the technical aspects of SMART (pictures in Annex 4.8). This was also an opportunity to form a community of SMART specialists to supply technical support and strengthen the capacity of regional specialists.

3.6 Support training in IWT detection of 9 sniffer dog teams based at strategic checkpoints across the region

As stated in AR1, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was necessary to be signed with the Customs Service for the procurement of sniffer dogs and improvement of the cynology training facility at the Specialized Customs in Kyrgyzstan. The MoU was submitted in July, but the complex bureaucratic system within the Customs Service has resulted in it still being under review by the Legal Department. In October 2022, FFI signed a contract with Evgenii Mashenko, the head of the Dog Training Department at the Specialized Customs. Mr. Mashenko recommended the purchase of new dogs after the decommissioning of two dogs previously trained on CITES species, which was planned for the beginning of 2023. If the MoU is signed in the coming month, the procurement of dogs and improvement works of training facilities will commence in late Spring to early Summer 2023.

On March 13-14, 2023, FFI and ACBK organized a two-day practical workshop at the Cynology Center of the Agency on Financial Monitoring of Kazakhstan. The workshop was attended by representatives from the custom services of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Georgia, and the Czech Republic. The aim of the event was to exchange experiences in working with service sniffer dogs among the customs services of these countries. During the workshop, three service dogs from Kyrgyzstan were introduced to the scent of derivatives (bear paw and saiga horn), and all 22 participants (nine women and thirteen men) shared their experiences and discussed practices in the use of service dogs. Pictures can be found in Annex 4.9.

Representatives from the Cynology Center of the Customs Committee under the Ministry of Economy and Finance of Uzbekistan were also invited to the training. In February 2023, IOZ, in collaboration with NGO Ekomaktab, visited the National Cynology Centre of the Customs Committee, and agreements on cooperation were reached. NGO Ekomaktab sent the necessary invitation letters, booked air tickets for two staff members, and two sniffer dogs. The Ministry of Economy and Finance approved their participation. However, a day before departure, the Security Council denied their travel due to inconsistency in actions between the Customs Committee and the National Cynology Centre. Other opportunities for collaboration with the Cynology Center are currently being discussed.

3.7 Review performance of trained officers and recognise outstanding achievement of four through awards presented at 2.4.

This activity is due to Year 3.

3.8 Establish contact lists of IWT experts and share with LEOs to enable mentorship post-project

Workshops, meetings, and training sessions present valuable opportunities to network and introduce project partners and experts to each other. These gatherings frequently lead to the formation of online chat groups on messaging platforms like WhatsApp and Telegram, which serve as spaces for ongoing communication, information-sharing, and knowledge exchange. Examples include regional SMART expert groups and technical working groups in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.

3.9 Handover training materials to law enforcement academies for integration into curricula post-project

This activity is due to Year 3.

4.1 In four hotspots, research potential application of crime prevention (e.g. wildlife guardians, informal sanctions)

Training modules for LEAs (see 3.1), introduce the concept of crime prevention and explore how it can be implemented by LEAs in Central Asia. As part of the LEO training (see 3.3), which is based on these modules, FFI and project partners will conduct research (through questionnaires, feedback, and observation) to determine if there is any interest, willingness, and capacity to apply crime prevention strategies.

4.2 Introduce crime prevention approaches to 20 individuals who have influence over IWT projects in a regional seminar

This activity is due to Year 3.

3.2 Progress towards project Outputs

Output 1: Law enforcement response to IWT in Central Asia is informed by data, analyses and knowledge shared between agencies both in country and between range states.

Indicator 1.1: Preliminary analysis of key regional IWT hotspots and routes identified by end of Y1, further developed in Y2 and Y3 through trained focal points.

- It was established through the national workshops that there were no centralised storage or sharing of information on IWT between LEAs within all countries. Considerable outreach and engagement with LEAs across all countries has enabled a baseline of data to be collated by FFI, TRAFFIC and project partners. This data now is being analysed to create a report the current status, scale, trends and hotspots for IWT across the region . The reports will be completed by July 2023.

Indicator 1.2 Four national focal points (one per country) demonstrate ability to collect and analyse IWT data by end of Y2.

- With no existing centralised structure in place in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan or Uzbekistan for the collation and management of IWT it has been difficult to identify specific focal points within

LEAs. The regional workshop planned for July will provide training on IWT data management and analysis to an audience formulated from LEAs across all countries. Through this workshop identification of potential focal point leads to initiate IWT data analysis in all countries will be conducted.

- IOZ prepared reports on trade in invertebrates, vertebrates and the list of the most traded species and trade routes in Uzbekistan.
- In Kyrgyzstan, TRAFFIC is collaborating with MNRETS on creation and management of the WT database.

Indicator 1.3 Existing inter-agency data sharing agreements in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan are actively used by end of Y2.

- The inter-agency data sharing agreements signed previously is not in force due to restructuration of some state agencies. Within the technical working group FFI is facilitating MNRETS to develop and sign an agreement with Custom and Border Services on wildlife trade data sharing through unified database.

Indicator 1.4 LEAs in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan agree in principle to promote inter-agency collaboration on IWT by end of Y3.

- The inter-agency collaboration in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan is being promoted through the technical working group. There are no official inter-agency agreements in two countries at place.

Indicator 1.5 Bi-lateral cooperation (in addition to data sharing in 1.3) between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan demonstrated through at least two bilateral meetings/workshops and ongoing communications by end of Y3.

- FFI and ACBK are promoting the collaboration of state agencies between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan on IWT through the regional workshops. From October 2022 to April 2023 there were three regional meetings, where representatives from state agencies from Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan cooperated with one another.

Output 2: Greater priority is given to addressing IWT at a national and regional level.

Indicator 2.1 Number of LEAs in each country that commit increased staff or resources to IWT activities (including data sharing) over the course of the project.

- In Kyrgyzstan, MNRETS will be storing and managing the IWT data within the new unified database, the creation of which is supported by FFI and TRAFFIC. Customs, Border Service and General Prosecutors Office also declared their interest to collaborate with FFI and other project partners to address IWT issues.
- In Uzbekistan the Customs cynology department have shown great interest and engagement with project activities and have expressed commitment to invest in developing a specific programme for sniffer dogs to combat IWT in Uzbekistan. FFI is working with Ekomaktab to identify needs to support capacity development for the training and care facility for sniffer dogs and the potential procurement of sniffer dogs for the department.

Indicator 2.2 Increased mentions of IWT in national media pre- and post- project.

- Between January and February 2023, TRAFFIC conducted several days of online surveys for open-source reports of illegal trade incidences and seizure for all four countries. In Year 3, FFI will produce a summary table.
- In Uzbekistan project partners supported coordination of a meeting hosted by the US Embassy in January with 21 journalists, 11 women 10 men, aimed at raising awareness amongst journalists on the need to prevent IWT. There have been a documented 13 news stories in Uzbek media on wildlife trade issues.

Indicator 2.3 Feasibility to incorporate IWT into CARICC (or other relevant regional law enforcement initiatives) evaluated by end of Y2.

- FFI, ACBK, TRAFFIC had a meeting with CARRIC, BOMCA, the EU Commission, Directorate General International Partnership (INTPA) and discussion with UNODC to explore opportunities for collaboration.

Indicator 2.4 Declarations and commitments made to increase action on IWT at national (Y2) and regional meetings (Y3).

- In Kyrgyzstan, after the national event in Bishkek in March 2022 and other regional and national meetings, there was an increased interest from the Customs, Border Services and General Prosecutors Office in addressing IWT issues on a national level (i.e., receiving training on species identification, reviewing the legislation on wildlife trade and if necessary, propose amendments in the relevant national laws). In July 2023 FFI UK hosted the State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection (SCEEP) (now the Ministry of Natural Resources) of the Republic of Uzbekistan with the Chairman, Mr Narzullo Naimovich Oblomuradov Chairman in personal attendance with other SCEEP representatives. At this meeting the MoU between FFI and SCEEP was formally signed. The signing ceremony received wide level of coverage in national media in Uzbekistan being reported on more than 3 different Uzbek websites

Output 3: 150 LEOs at critical trade routes in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan have improved capacity to detect and respond to IWT.

Indicator 3.1 IWT training modules developed and available in four languages by end of Y1.

- The draft version of four modules were completed in March-April 2023 and now are being reviewed by the project partners. The final versions of modules will be translated before the regional workshop in July 2023.

Indicator 3.2 Documented increase in knowledge of LEOs to detect and respond to IWT, as assessed by pre- (Y2) and post-training testing (Y3).

- The Likert questionnaires were distributed during the national workshops in Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, which will serve as a baseline for the post-training testing.

Indicator 3.3 Number of IWT-trained sniffer dogs in service in strategic checkpoints across Central Asia increase from 25 to 34 by end of Y3, with commitments made in 3 countries to increase deployment post-project.

- Within the complementary INL project, ACBK supported four-month (August – December 2022) training of 3 new sniffer dogs of the Border Service of the National Security Committee of the Republic of Kazakhstan and purchased the necessary equipment.
- During the two –day regional sniffer dog training organized by FFI, ACBK and other partners, in March 2023, 3 sniffer dogs from the Specialized Customs of Kyrgyzstan were introduced to smells of saiga horn and bear paw.

Indicator 3.4 Increased number of IWT items intercepted and investigated by trained officers at end of Y2 and Y3.

- As highlighted under indicator 1.1 ascertaining a baseline for any IWT incidents has proved challenging across all countries requiring engagement and outreach with a wide range of LEAs. With this data now collated and being analysed for an inclusion in a report on IWT in region a rough baseline on historic incidences will be formulated. In Y3 FFI and project partners will reach out to now established contacts within LEAs to obtain any new records of IWT incidences and interceptions.

Indicator 3.5 Increased number of examples of effectively reporting and sharing IWT data from LEOs to their superiors / other agencies by end of project compared to Y1 baseline.

- As indicated in the AR1, our findings in Kyrgyzstan show that usually IWT cases are reported to Ministry of Internal Affairs, or in some cases to MNRETS. Often these cases are dropped by the Prosecutors or the MIA, therefore, FFI will be delivering training on protocols, evidence handling and proper reporting.
- FFI and project partners have through project meetings and workshops highlighted the importance of data sharing between LEAs. It is evident from research and outreach that data sharing between LEAs in all countries is limited. Telegram, Whatsapp groups and technical

working groups are serving as useful mechanisms to improve relations between LEAs and encourage informal communication channels on IWT issues between LEAs nationally.

Indicator 3.6 At least 12 government officials have improved capacity to develop and roll-out SMART in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

- 62 rangers and officials from Kazakhstan (23), Uzbekistan (25), Kyrgyzstan (12), Tajikistan (2) received training on SMART platform within this and complementary project funded by INL in 2022.

Output 4: Crime prevention strategies are understood and valued as an additional approach to tackling IWT by relevant stakeholders across all four countries.

Indicator 4.1 Local knowledge and attitudes on IWT, law enforcement and wildlife guardianship is available to inform application of crime prevention approaches.

- National consultants provided available information to Gohar Petrossian for development of modules on crime prevention.

Indicator 4.2 20 decision-makers, NGO staff and PA managers have better knowledge and positive attitudes towards use of crime prevention strategies by Y3.

This output will commence in Y3.

3.3 Progress towards the project Outcome

Outcome: Law enforcement agencies from four countries across Central Asia are demonstrating improved capacity to detect, respond to and prevent IWT and are collaborating to counter IWT on a regional scale.

Notwithstanding the challenges that FFI and its partners encountered at the outset of 2022 due to socio-political instability in the region, the majority of the planned activities were successfully executed. These activities included national workshops in Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan, regional trainings on SMART and sniffer dogs, as well as the collection of IWT data to produce comprehensive reports.

0.1 Annual records of IWT data and outcomes are more comprehensive and systematically collated across all four countries by end of Y3 compared to baselines collected in Y1.

Baseline IWT data collection conducted by TRAFFIC and partners in Year 2 confirmed that the IWT data is not systematically collected, stored or analysed by LEAs in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan. In Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan IWT data is collected, but the access to this information is restricted to other organisations.

0.2 At least 20 law enforcement agencies (LEAs) across all four countries are increasingly collaborating on IWT by end of Y3.

Regional and national workshops and technical working groups organized by FFI and partners were an opportunity for rangers, sniffer dog trainers and other governmental officials for building contacts, share expertise and skills. In total, 228 representatives (48 women, 180 men) from LEAs and state agencies from all four countries were covered by these workshops, training and technical working groups.

0.3 Learning from Kazakhstan on collecting IWT data is shared with Kyrgyzstan and leads to regular transboundary collaboration by end of Y3.

Regional meetings organized within the project gives opportunity to LEOs from Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan to communicate and collaborate, i.e. experience exchange on SMART.

0.4 At least 150 law enforcement officers (LEOs) (>10% women) at critical trade routes / hotspots across all four countries routinely search and record. Instances of IWT by end of Y3.

These trainings will take place in Y3. Training in Uzbekistan is planned for Summer 2023, in Kyrgyzstan – September 2023 and in September/October in Tajikistan 2023 followed up with further training in 2024.

0.5 Profile of IWT and novel strategies (i.e. crime prevention) increases among decision-makers across all four countries by end of Y3.

This indicator will be assessed in Y3.

3.4 Monitoring of assumptions

Outcome Assumptions:

Assumption 1: IWT continues to become a higher priority for governments in general and LEAs in particular in Central Asia.

Comment: This assumption holds true. There is a clear interest from governmental bodies to be engaged in trainings, meetings and other project activities. Some agencies (State Committee of Ecology and Environmental Protection in Uzbekistan; Ministry of Natural Resources, Ecology and Technical Supervision and Customs Service in Kyrgyzstan) initiated signing MoUs with FFI.

Assumption 2: Political will for collaboration on IWT issues does not diminish.

Comment: The assumption holds true. In March 2022, at the beginning of the project FFI informed and received support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Presidential Office in Kyrgyzstan in introducing and inviting other LEAs and governmental bodies for collaboration, highlighting the importance of the transboundary project to address IWT issues in the region. To these days, MFA supports FFI in signing agreements and MoUs. In Uzbekistan the Ministry of Natural Resources has signed a formal MoU with FFI and continues to support with organisation and coordination of meetings and project activities in Uzbekistan.

Assumption 3: Corruption does not undermine ability of LEOs to make and report IWT seizures.

Comment: The assumption holds true. Corruption is still an issue for governments of Central Asian countries, FFI and project partners monitor the situation in the country to avoid being affiliated with the institutions or individuals involved in corruption cases.

Assumption 4: Funding for LEAs does not significantly decrease as a result of COVID-19 related economic downturns.

Comment: The assumption holds true. During our work with LEAs, FFI or partner organisation did not receive any information on decrease of funding due to COVID-19. However, In March 2022 the government of Uzbekistan prohibited any improvement works or procurement of equipment for the state-owned facilities, including training facility of our project partners Institute of Zoology, due to war between Russia and Ukraine. This restriction has been lifted only in April 2023.

Assumption 5: Application of capacity building and training leads to a measurable increase in IWT detection, and LEAs are able and willing to share information on detection success post-training

Comment: The assumption holds true. During the collection of IWT data by TRAFFIC for national report, LEAs who engaged in the previous national workshops and meetings, were open to provide the available information.

Output assumptions:

Assumption 6: LEAs are willing to allocate focal points to dedicate time on IWT data management and analysis.

Comment: The assumption holds true. In Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, FFI and IOZ promote better practices of data management and analysis through the work with technical working groups. In Kazakhstan, ACBK together with Panthera, hires a person who will be working closely with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources on data management and analysis.

Assumption 7: LEAs maintain interest in improved data sharing.

Comment: The assumption holds true. In Kyrgyzstan, Ministry of Natural Resources, Ecology and Technical Supervision contacted FFI for a support on developing unified database for sharing CITES permits information and IWT data between MNRETS and other agencies such as Customs.

Assumption 8: Interest in bilateral collaboration between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan is maintained.

Comment: The assumption holds true. Representatives from LEAs and other governmental agencies from Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan regularly meet during the regional meetings and workshops where FFI and project partners promote the importance of bilateral cooperation.

Assumption 9: IWT continues to increase as a priority for LEAs in Central Asia.

Comment: The assumption is true. Please see assumption 1.

Assumption 10: Funding for LEAs does not significantly decrease as a result of COVID-19 related economic downturns.

Comment: The assumption holds true. Please see assumption 4.

Assumption 11: LEAs make this number of officers (and the target number of women officers) available for training.

Comment: The assumption holds true. All LEAs expressed their interest in IWT trainings.

Assumption 12: Improved detection rate is sustained throughout project.

Comment: It is difficult to assess this assumption at this point of the project. beyond the initial confidence in the assumption at the time of grant proposal submission

Assumption 13: Corruption does not undermine ability of LEA officers to make and report IWT seizures.

Comment: The assumption holds true. Please see assumption 3.

Assumption 14: Staff turnover of LEA officers is limited.

Comment: This assumption is partially true. Restructuring of governmental bodies or reappointment of the high –level officials in Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan is often followed by the changes in the staff members of agencies. For instance, in March 2023, the replacement of the Minister of the Ministry of Natural Resources in Kyrgyzstan led to changes in some positions. For this reason, FFI and project partners aim to work with more stable middle management staff, with experience and authority.

Assumption 15: National governments maintain interest in the rollout of SMART.

Comment: The assumption holds true. During the regional SMART training all four countries expressed their interest in expanding SMART to other PAs or promote implementation of SMART (in Tajikistan). MNRETS in Kyrgyzstan is planning to increase the number of staff or create a new department which will be focused on SMART rollout in the country.

Assumption 16: Community members maintain the willingness to discuss sensitive topics with researchers.

Comment: This assumption holds true.

Assumption 17: Interest in learning and developing alternative approaches to traditional law enforcement remains high among decision-makers.

Comment: The assumption holds true. During the meetings with the vice-chairmen of the Customs in Kyrgyzstan, there was always an interest in collaboration and learning about IWT.

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

Project impact: Populations of species threatened by illegal trade across Central Asia recover in response to reduced poaching and trafficking brought about by effective and coordinated law enforcement responses

It is difficult at this stage to accurately report progress towards the higher-level impact on illegal wildlife trade and poverty alleviation. The objective of this project is to enhance the awareness and interest of law enforcement and other state agencies in addressing IWT concerns in the region. Our observations have shown that, as a result of increased feedback and engagement from LEAs and other relevant governmental bodies, there has been an increase in their understanding of IWT issues and willingness to

collaborate on addressing these issues. FFI's wider programme of work (including actions funded by Defra's Darwin Initiative) is working to support sustainable livelihoods and is facilitating community-based enterprises to generate measurable improvements in aspects of wellbeing.

4. Thematic focus

The project directly contributes to the IWTCF theme of "Strengthening Law Enforcement" theme, which involves enhancing the capacity of LEOs to combat IWT. In pursuit of this objective, FFI and its partners are conducting training on CITES, species identification, establishing technical working groups to address priority issues in each country, and introducing new tools such as crime prevention and SMART. FFI is also focused on creating a platform that promotes efficient communication and collaboration among LEAs. This project will strengthen the capacity of law enforcement agencies (LEAs) to protect populations of threatened species by providing training to law enforcement officers (LEOs) at priority trade hotspots and routes and through setting up mechanisms to continue capacity building post-project. Law enforcement is also being improved by enhancing collaboration and information sharing between LEAs beyond the wildlife sector across the countries covered by the project. Cross-border and regional cooperation is strengthened through the delivery of regional and national workshops attended by representatives from countries connected through IWT and through efforts to promote formal bi-lateral collaboration. Representatives from all countries will be brought together at the end of the project to develop a roadmap for increased action for IWT, which we anticipate will be the first step towards a formalised network for regional enforcement. Recent engagement with the Prosecutor Offices, initially in Kyrgyzstan, to sensitise LEAs to the current and new legislation, will aid capacity along the criminal justice chain. The project will also expose LEAs to different approaches to law enforcement, such as by raising awareness of crime prevention methods

5. Impact on species in focus

This project exerts a meaningful impact on the most commonly traded species in Central Asia, including the steppe tortoise, saker falcon, saiga, and snow leopard. By means of raising awareness, providing training on species identification, and enhancing the enforcement of laws, the project is effectively tackling the illegal trade of animals, plants, their parts, and derivatives in the region. It is difficult within the capacities of this project to be able to report specific positive impacts on species populations in focus.

6. Project support to poverty reduction

The project concentrates on Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, which are low-income countries with underfunded initiatives and institutes devoted to biodiversity issues. Hence, support from local and international NGOs and donors is critical for wildlife conservation in these areas. The project indirectly contributes to reducing poverty in the region by providing training to local rangers on biodiversity monitoring and patrolling using SMART systems. It also offers eco-police training on various subjects concerning IWT and other wildlife-related crimes. Moreover, it supports Customs and Border Services in improving their ability to train sniffer dogs on traded species.

7. Gender equality and social inclusion

In Central Asia, law enforcement officers (LEOs) are predominantly male. However, FFI is committed to promoting gender diversity and makes every effort to involve more female officers wherever possible. Of the total number of LEOs who participated in the project's training and meetings, 21% were women, which amounts to 48 out of 228 participants.

Please quantify the proportion of women on the Project Board ¹ .	Around 67% in the Project Board are women: 2 women (FFI Project Manager and Programme Assistant)
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¹ A Project Board has overall authority for the project, is accountable for its success or failure, and supports the senior project manager to successfully deliver the project.

	1 man (FFI Programme Manager in IWT)
Please quantify the proportion of project partners that are led by women, or which have a senior leadership team consisting of at least 50% women ² .	80% (4 out of 5) project partners are women led organisations. ACBK, IOZ, TRAFFIC, Ekomaktab (partner under co-funded INL project) are managed by women. FFI Tajikistan is led by man.

8. Monitoring and evaluation

The efficacy of the project activities is assessed through a thorough examination of the pre and post-training questionnaire outcomes, as well as anecdotal evidence. Additionally, the number of agreements, memoranda of understanding, and work produced by the technical working group is employed to gauge the prioritization and engagement of LEAs at a national level.

In February 2023, FFI's Monitoring and Evaluation team conducted two sets of two-hour training sessions for FFI staff and project partners to assess the advancement of the project, deliberate on encountered difficulties, and explore prospective solutions.

Measuring direct impact of project activities on improved conservation, and population, status of species can be challenging with results inherently requiring long term investment and engagement, not only with enforcement but also with the monitoring of trafficked species abundance and population range changes. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) have been central to the project design with engagement ongoing through frequent consultation with an FFI M&E specialist during the first year, a relationship that will be maintained in subsequent years. Likert questionnaires have been developed and customised for utilisation with attendees for workshops and training events to help evaluate impact of these events on participants understanding, confidence and experience of working on IWT. These will be repeated during project delivery.

Under output 1 activity 1.2, and subsequently 1.3, the research and analysis of historic and current IWT data the projects M&E framework aims to validate the effectiveness of training and awareness raising activities under outputs 2 and 3. Positive changes in the number and frequency of IWT incidences from the baseline created under 1.2 will enable cautious causal attribution to activities delivered to strengthen national capacity to detect, deter and interdict IWT.

With a significant focus on capacity building the selected indicators are designed to measure the follow-on application of training and the continued utilisation of data produced by the project. The effectiveness of trainings will be measured through approaches such as the Kirkpatrick Training Evaluation Model. With activities relating to direct training to take place in year 2 and 3 the projects M&E process is collecting baselines of existing policy and procedures currently used by LEAs, in relation to tackling illegal wildlife trade, as well as IWT related knowledge, understanding and practice of individual LEOs engaged with the project. These baselines will provide the ability to measure individual and agency indicators.

Monitoring and evaluation will depend on a degree of self-reporting from participating LEOs and will rely on the project team maintaining good relationships and communications with participating LEOs to ensure that data on capacity and practice is maintained throughout the project.

Production of IWT specific modules for law enforcement academies and their subsequent embedding within the standardised training curricula is measurable against the output. More challenging is being able to measure how these directly deliver outcome 3 in the lifetime of the project depending on where an individual is deployed and how long an individual takes to be fully trained before placement. Likewise measuring the number of LEOs, 150, at critical trade routes in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to have received

² Partners that have formal governance role in the project, and a formal relationship with the project that may involve staff costs and/or budget management responsibilities.

training requires a level of assumption that this training will directly improve capacity to detect and respond to IWT.

To support the collection of data needed to measure progress against each indicator, the project is working closely with the FFI Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning team to deliver the M&E plan, detailing, and adapting, the quantitative and qualitative information needed to establish baselines, the frequency of data collection and developing frameworks to verify progress against indicators and outputs.

9. Lessons learnt

Sufficient time allocation. Based on experience from the previous year, we have come to understand the significance of allowing sufficient time for the preparation process of the trainings. As a result, FFI and its partners now initiate discussions about the concept of a training or any other event at least three months prior. This allows for ample time to prepare and send out official initiation letters, ensuring the participation of LEOs, particularly for events held at a regional level.

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

FFI has responded to many of the comments raised with raised in the previous annual report review (AR). On the 16th of December 2022 it was formally raised, within a change request, to LTS that FFI would be interested in reinstating the 36 month delivery timeline, as raised within the review, which was reduced by 6 months to a 2.5 year project from 3 years. No direct response to this part of the change request has yet been obtain. Conscious the original request was early in the project to be requesting reinstatement of the 36 month delivery timeline FFI will raise this again with LTS now that the project is within its final year.

In response to SMARTening indicators, the project manager with other FFI UK staff went through all indicators highlighted within the AR1 review and identified SMARTer alternatives (annex 4.9). Due to oversight these have not yet been formally changed through a change request and FFI will prioritise this after report submission.

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of a number of indicators relating to IWT regionally within Central Asia has proven challenging especially with the creation of a baseline for a number of indicators, specifically 2.1, 2.2, 3.4, 3.5. Part of this has been the difficulty in gaining confidence from LEAs to share information relating to IWT combined with there being a lack of any centralised formalised data sharing system relating to IWT for LEAs nationally or regionally. The project has worked closely with the FFI M&E team to regularly assess the projects progress and ability to effectively monitor and evaluate project activities. This has involved the facilitation of an After Action Review (AAR) with all project partners in March 2023 and the planning for an in person Wildlife Trade Design and Impact learning exchange across FFI's wildlife trade project globally. This is being planned for late 2023 with a key outputs to identify best practice organisationally for M&E specifically associated with indicators relating to IWT and wildlife trade projects with the view of creating a suite of appropriate indicators and M&E methods for current and future wildlife trade projects. In relation to the development of an M&E tracker referenced in the AR1 review a standardised template was developed to help project partners and FFI record data against specific activities and outputs (seen annex 4.10).

Due to the curtailment of the project length combined with significant socio-political and economic unrest and instability across the region in 2022, some of which continue to impact project activities, inherently an adaptive management approach has been taken with project deliverables and outputs. As such these changes are reflected within the project timeline with revisions and updates occurring to the project timeline as and when needed.

11. Risk Management

In October 2022 a Project Risk Register was created for the submission of half year report. In the intervening 5 months no new risks have arisen with some of the risks downgraded. No significant adaptations have been made to the project design since the Risk Register was created (Annex 4.11).

12. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere

N/A

13. Sustainability and legacy

Last year proved to be highly productive in terms of raising awareness about the project and its work on IWT. Through workshops, meetings, and technical working groups, FFI and project partners not only introduced LEAs to the project and IWT in general, but also identified the challenges faced by LEAs in the region. Collaborative discussions were held on the necessity, needs, and opportunities to address these issues. LEAs demonstrated a keen interest and willingness to collaborate with FFI and project partners in order to increase their capacity in various areas such as reviewing and identifying gaps in existing national legislation, suggesting necessary amendments based on project findings, improving detection and seizures through species identification training for LEOs and CITES permission system, and training more sniffer dogs. Given the limited number of projects on IWT or wildlife crime in the region, FFI, ACBK, IOZ, and TRAFFIC have emerged as key players, often being contacted and invited to share their expertise in IWT in Central Asia.

14. IWT Challenge Fund identity

Throughout presentations and meetings, the crucial role played by IWTCF is consistently emphasized and duly recognized. The project's deliverables are consistently accompanied by the project logo and concise details about IWT Challenge Fund. This practice extends to the enhancement of the sniffer dog training facilities where a sign bearing the fund's logo and information will be installed at the entrance.

15. Safeguarding

Has your Safeguarding Policy been updated in the past 12 months?	Yes
Have any concerns been investigated in the past 12 months	No
Does your project have a Safeguarding focal point?	Yes <i>Senior HR Adviser (International), HR, Ema Infante</i> [REDACTED] <i>Programme lead -Matthew Lowton</i> [REDACTED]
Has the focal point attended any formal training in the last 12 months?	Yes FFI has an internal Learning Management System, which enables online training in policies and procedures and all FFI staff are required to attend compulsory safeguarding training, including: Safeguarding essentials; FFI's Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy
What proportion (and number) of project staff have received formal training on Safeguarding?	Past: 75% 9 Planned: 25% 3
Has there been any lessons learnt or challenges on Safeguarding in the past 12 months? Please ensure no sensitive data is included within responses.	
NA	
Does the project have any developments or activities planned around Safeguarding in the coming 12 months? If so please specify. FFI has an internal Learning Management System, which enables online training in policies and procedures and all FFI staff are required to attend compulsory safeguarding training, including: Safeguarding essentials; FFI's Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy	

16. Project expenditure

Table 1: Project expenditure during the reporting period (April 2022-March 2023)

Project spend (indicative) since last Annual Report	2022/23 Grant (£)	2022/23 Total actual IWT Costs (£)	Variance %	Comments (please explain significant variances)
Staff costs (see below)				
Consultancy costs				
Overhead Costs				
Travel and subsistence				
Operating Costs				
Capital items (see below)				
Others (see below)				
TOTAL	£210,274	£210,271		

These are provisional figures that may change

Table 2: Project mobilising of matched funding during the reporting period (1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023)

	Matched funding secured to date	Total matched funding expected by end of project
Matched funding leveraged by the partners to deliver the project.		
Total additional finance mobilised by new activities building on evidence, best practices and project (£)		

17. OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements or progress of your project so far (300-400 words maximum). This section may be used for publicity purposes

I agree for the Biodiversity Challenge Funds Secretariat to publish the content of this section.

File Type (Image / Video / Graphic)	File Name or File Location	Caption, country and credit	Online accounts to be tagged (leave blank if none)	Consent of subjects received (delete as necessary)
				Yes / No
				Yes / No
				Yes / No
				Yes / No

				Yes / No
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Annex 1: Report of progress and achievements against logframe for Financial Year 2022-2023

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2022 - March 2023	Actions required/planned for next period
<p>Impact</p> <p>Populations of species threatened by illegal trade across Central Asia recover in response to reduced poaching and trafficking brought about by effective and coordinated law enforcement responses.</p>			
<p>Outcome</p> <p>Law enforcement agencies from four countries across Central Asia are demonstrating improved capacity to detect, respond to and prevent IWT and are collaborating to counter IWT on a regional scale.</p>	<p>0.1 Annual records of IWT data and outcomes are more comprehensive and systematically collated across all four countries by end of Y3 compared to baselines collected in Y1.</p> <p>0.2 At least 20 law enforcement agencies (LEAs) across all four countries are increasingly collaborating on IWT by end of Y3.</p> <p>0.3 Learning from Kazakhstan on collecting IWT data is shared with Kyrgyzstan and leads to regular transboundary collaboration by end of Y3.</p> <p>0.4 At least 150 law enforcement officers (LEOs) (>10% women) at critical trade routes / hotspots across all four countries routinely search and record instances of IWT by end of Y3.</p> <p>0.5 Profile of IWT and novel strategies (i.e. crime prevention) increases among decision-makers across all four countries by end of Y3.</p>	<p>0.1. TRAFFIC with the help of FFI and other project partners collected the existing IWT data from LEAs of all four countries.</p> <p>0.2. 20 organisations from all 4 countries provided available IWT data.</p> <p>0.3. Representatives from Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan participated in four regional workshops on experience exchange.</p> <p>0.4. Training materials on species ID were prepared to be delivered in summer-autumn 2023.</p> <p>0.5. Modules materials on crime prevention were developed and are being reviewed by the project partners.</p>	<p>The IWT reports based on the collected information is being analysed and will be presented at the regional meeting in July, 2023.</p> <p>The training of LEOs will take place in June,2023 in Uzbekistan; in September-October 2023 in Kyrgyzstan.</p> <p>The demo-training of modules will be presented to project partners and key trainers from LEAs in July, 2023.</p>
<p>Output 1.</p>	<p>1.1 Preliminary analysis of key regional IWT hotspots and routes identified by mid-</p>	<p>1.1. The information on IWT hotspots and routes was collected by TRAFFIC. Evidence provided in section 3.2. Reports will be finalised and launched in Y3</p>	

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2022 - March 2023	Actions required/planned for next period
Law enforcement response to IWT in Central Asia is informed by data, analyses and knowledge shared between agencies both in country and between range states.	<p>Y2, further developed in Y2 and Y3 through trained focal points.</p> <p>1.2 Four national focal points (one per country) demonstrate ability to collect and analyse IWT data by end of Y2.</p> <p>1.3 Existing inter-agency data sharing agreements in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan are actively used by end of Y2.</p> <p>1.4 LEAs in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan agree in principle to promote inter-agency collaboration on IWT by end of Y3.</p> <p>1.5 Bi-lateral cooperation (in addition to data sharing in 1.3) between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan demonstrated through at least two bilateral meetings/workshops and ongoing communications by end of Y3.</p>	<p>1.2. The analysis of key regional IWT hotspots and routes in Uzbekistan was completed. Evidence provided in section 3.2. and Annex 4.2;4.3;4.4</p> <p>1.3. FFI and TRAFFIC are working with MNRETS on inter-agency data sharing agreements and database in Kyrgyzstan. More details provided in section 3.2.</p> <p>1.4. Inter-agency collaboration in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan are being promoted through the technical working group meetings. See more in section 3.2.</p> <p>1.5. Four regional meetings took place where Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan LEAs and other governmental agencies participated and exchanged their knowledge and skills in addressing IWT.</p>	
Activity 1.1 Host 3 national workshops for law enforcement officers (LEOs) to sensitise agencies to the project and support coordinated and collaborative responses to IWT nationally		3 national workshops for LEOs were held in Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. More information in Section 3.2.	
Activity 1.2 Host one regional training workshop for 20 law enforcement officers (LEOs) from all four countries on IWT data collection, management and analysis (Y2).		The venue for the regional meeting in July is booked, the agenda and the list of participants are being prepared.	The training will be held on 4-6 July 2023.
Activity 1.3 Collect preliminary baseline IWT data and produce a report on key hotspots and trade routes across the region (Y1-2).		The reports are being prepared by TRAFFIC and will be reviewed by the partners.	The reports will be presented during the regional meeting in July.
Activity 1.4 Mentor four national focal points to analyse IWT data (Y1-3), and support them to update annual reports produced under 1.2 (Y2-3).		IOZ and TRAFFIC are working closely with the governmental bodies in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan on the analysis of the existing data and management of data within the database.	This activity will be delivered more actively by TRAFFIC after the regional workshop.

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2022 - March 2023	Actions required/planned for next period
Activity 1.5 Support LEAs (including prosecutors) to implement existing inter-agency agreements in place in Kyrgyzstan (with Panthera) and in Kazakhstan (with ACBK) (Y1-2).		FFI is promoting the inter-agency agreements in Kyrgyzstan within the technical working group and database management. MNRETS took an initiative on drafting and agreement to sign with the Customs and other agencies. More details in Section 3.2	TRAFFIC and FFI will continue supporting MNRETS with contacting the state agencies and signing the agreement.
Activity 1.6 Facilitate bilateral IWT data sharing between Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan (in collaboration with Panthera) over the course of three meetings/workshops (Y1-3).		ACBK together with Panthera is hiring and training a person who will be supporting the data collection and analysis within the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Kazakhstan.	In Kyrgyzstan, the data analysts hired by Panthera has been working with MNRETS for a few years. This might facilitate in data sharing between two countries.
Output 2. Greater priority is given to addressing IWT at a national and regional level.	2.1 Number of LEAs in each country that commit increased staff or resource to IWT activities (including data sharing) over the course of the project. 2.2 Increased mentions of IWT in national media pre- and post- project. 2.3 Feasibility to incorporate IWT into CARICC (or other relevant regional law enforcement initiatives) evaluated by end of Y2. 2.4 Declarations and commitments made to increase action on IWT at national (Y2) and regional meetings (Y3).	2.1. More LEAs and state agencies expressed their interest in collaboration to address IWT. Evidence provided in section 3.4. 2.2. This will be evaluated in Y3. 2.3. FFI, ACBK and TRAFFIC had meetings with CARRIC, UNODC, BOMCA to discuss to incorporate IWT into their regional programmes. Evidence provided in Section 3.2. 2.4. FFI signed the MoU with the MNRETS for more efficient cooperation on IWT. The MoU with the Customs Service of Kyrgyzstan is in the process of signing. FFI has also signed an MoU with the Ministry of Natural Resources of Uzbekistan on combating IWT.	
Activity 2.1 Establish and facilitate technical working groups in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to develop calls to action on IWT (Y2-3).		Technical working groups were established in Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan and meeting were held. Evidence provided in section in 3.2.	Database. In Kyrgyzstan, technical working group will continue working on the inter-agency database.
Activity 2.2 Promote IWT reports (1.1) and calls-to-action (2.1) to >30 high-level officials at national IWT meetings in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan and through national media (Y2).			This activity will be combined with the regional workshop in July 2023 and

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2022 - March 2023	Actions required/planned for next period
			supported through inclusion in other training events and national workshops
Activity 2.3 Promote incorporation of IWT within regional LEA initiatives (e.g. CARICC) (Y2-3).		Meetings and discussions with CARRIC, UNODC, BOMCA about incorporation of IWT issues in the regional programmes took place.	FFI and partners will continue raising the importance of including IWT in the regional initiatives.
Activity 2.4 Host regional IWT meeting (with high-level LEA/CITES/CMS/ Chinese officials) to share project outputs and develop a roadmap for improved regional action and coordination post-project (Y3).			This activity will take place in Y3, however some experts will be invited to the regional meeting.
Output 3. 150 LEOs at critical trade routes in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan have improved capacity to detect and respond to IWT.	3.1 IWT training modules developed and available in four languages by mid-Y2. 3.2 Documented increase in knowledge of LEOs to detect and respond to IWT, as assessed by pre- (Y2) and post-training testing (Y3). 3.3 Number of IWT-trained sniffer dogs in service in strategic checkpoints across Central Asia increase from 25 to 34 by end of Y3, with commitments made in 3 countries to increase deployment post-project. 3.4 Increased number of IWT items intercepted and investigated by trained officers at end of Y2 and Y3. 3.5 Increased number of examples of effectively reporting and sharing IWT data from LEOs to their superiors / other agencies by end of project compared to Y1 baseline. 3.6 At least 12 government officials have improved capacity to develop and roll-out SMART in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.	3.1. The draft of IWT training modules were developed and are being reviewed by partners. Evidence provided in Section 3.2. These will be finalised in Y3 and used for training events planned in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in 2023 and 2024 3.2. Will be evaluated in Y3 after training events. 3.3. ACBK and FFI supported the training of 6 sniffer dogs on commonly traded species. Evidence provided in section 3.2. FFI will be procuring sniffer dogs for the specialised customs department in Kyrgyzstan and supporting improvements to cynology department facilities in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in Y3. 3.4. Will be evaluated in Y3. 3.5. It is difficult to assess if the number of reports has increased, due to limited access to such information. More in section 3.4. 3.6. 62 rangers and governmental officials from four countries received training on SMART. Evidence provided in section 3.4. and Annex 4.8	

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2022 - March 2023	Actions required/planned for next period
Activity 3.1 Create IWT training modules and refine following delivery and participant feedback (Y2).		The draft version of the training modules was developed and shared with partners for a review. More in Section 3.2. These will be finalised in Y3 and translated into all languages covered by the project and used for LEO training in Y3	
Activity 3.2 Creation of a facility in Uzbekistan dedicated to the storage of CITES specimens and IWT specific training for LEOs.		The permission to purchase equipment for the storage was finally received by IOZ, and the procurement will start soon. Planned facility improvements are planned to be finished by August 2023	
Activity 3.3 Train 150 frontline officers (50/country in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) to detect traded species and enforce CITES legislation; distribute IWT messaging to 75 checkpoints (Y2-3).		Training will take place in Summer and Autumn 2023. More in Section 3.2.	
Activity 3.4 Train the same 150 officers to use protocols for handling IWT evidence (including transferring animals to rehabilitation centres) and prepare cases for prosecution (Y2-3).		This activity will commence in Y3.	
Activity 3.5 Catalyse national SMART programmes in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan through a regional training workshop (Y2).		Two regional meetings on SMART were organized by FFI, ACBK, IOZ and Ekomaktab, covering 62 rangers and governmental officials from all four countries.	
Activity 3.6 Support training in IWT detection of 9 sniffer dog teams based at strategic checkpoints across the region (Y2-3).		In Kazakhstan ACBK supported the full four-month training of 3 sniffer dogs of the Border service. During the regional sniffer dog training, 3 sniffer dogs from the Customs Service of Kyrgyzstan were introduced to the smell of saiga horn and a bear paw. Evidence provided in Section 3.2. and Annex 4.9 FFI will continue to support Cynology departments in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in Y3 through the procurement of sniffer dogs and supporting improvements to facilities.	
Activity 3.7 Review performance of trained officers and recognise outstanding achievement of four through awards presented at 2.4 (Y3).		Will commence in Y3.	
Activity 3.8 Establish contact lists of IWT experts and share with LEOs to enable mentorship post-project (Y1-2).		The group of experts were created depending on the subject e.g. SMART regional and national experts. Evidence provided in Section 3.2.	
Activity 3.9 Handover training materials to law enforcement academies for integration into curricula post-project (Y3).		This activity is planned for Y3.	
Output 4. Crime prevention strategies are understood and valued as an additional approach to tackling IWT by relevant stakeholders across all four countries.	4.1 Local knowledge and attitudes on IWT, law enforcement and wildlife guardianship is available to inform application of crime prevention approaches. 4.2 20 decision-makers, NGO staff and PA managers have better knowledge and positive attitudes towards use of crime prevention strategies by Y3.	4.1. Within the preparation of training modules, existing knowledge of national LEAs were explored and reflected in the modules on crime prevention strategies. 4.2. This activity will commence in Y3.	

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2022 - March 2023	Actions required/planned for next period
Activity 4.1 In four hotspots, research potential application of crime prevention (e.g. wildlife guardians, informal sanctions) (Y2-3).		The research has been done within the development the training modules on crime prevention through consultations with local LEAs.	
Activity 4.2 Introduce crime prevention approaches to 20 individuals who have influence over IWT projects in a regional seminar (Y3).		Will commence in Y3.	

Annex 2: Project's full current logframe as presented in the application form (unless changes have been agreed)

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
Impact:			
Populations of species threatened by illegal trade across Central Asia recover in response to reduced poaching and trafficking brought about by effective and coordinated law enforcement responses.			
Outcome:			
Law enforcement agencies from four countries across Central Asia are demonstrating improved capacity to detect, respond to and prevent IWT and are collaborating to counter IWT on a regional scale.	<p>0.1 Annual records of IWT data and outcomes are more comprehensive and systematically collated across all four countries by end of Y3 compared to baselines collected in Y1.</p> <p>0.2 At least 20 law enforcement agencies (LEAs) across all four countries are increasingly collaborating on IWT by end of Y3.</p> <p>0.3 Learning from Kazakhstan on collecting IWT data is shared with Kyrgyzstan and leads to regular transboundary collaboration by end of Y3.</p> <p>0.4 At least 150 law enforcement officers (LEOs) (>10% women) at critical trade routes / hotspots across all four countries routinely search and record instances of IWT by end of Y3.</p> <p>0.5 Profile of IWT and novel strategies (i.e. crime prevention) increases among</p>	<p>0.1 Arrest records and databases.</p> <p>0.2 Copies of inter-agency agreements; inter-agency meeting reports; records of packages/data exchanged.</p> <p>0.3 Transboundary meeting reports, attendance records.</p> <p>0.4 Reports from LEAs on application of skills following training.</p> <p>0.5 Attendance of high-level officials in national / regional project workshops; verbal / written commitments to increase IWT action.</p>	<p>IWT continues to become a higher priority for governments in general and LEAs in particular in Central Asia.</p> <p>Political will for collaboration on IWT issues does not diminish.</p> <p>Corruption does not undermine ability of LEOs to make and report IWT seizures.</p> <p>Funding for LEAs does not significantly decrease as a result of COVID-19 related economic downturns.</p> <p>Application of capacity building and training leads to a measurable increase in IWT detection, and LEAs are able and willing to share information on detection success post-training.</p>

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
	decision-makers across all four countries by end of Y3.		
<p>Output 1</p> <p>Law enforcement response to IWT in Central Asia is informed by data, analyses and knowledge shared between agencies both in country and between range states.</p>	<p>1.1 Preliminary analysis of key regional IWT hotspots and routes identified by mid-Y2, further developed in Y2 and Y3 through trained focal points.</p> <p>1.2 Four national focal points (one per country) demonstrate ability to collect and analyse IWT data by end of Y2.</p> <p>1.3 Existing inter-agency data sharing agreements in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan are actively used by end of Y2.</p> <p>1.4 LEAs in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan agree in principle to promote inter-agency collaboration on IWT by end of Y3.</p> <p>1.5 Bi-lateral cooperation (in addition to data sharing in 1.3) between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan demonstrated through at least two bilateral meetings/workshops and ongoing communications by end of Y3.</p>	<p>1.1 Copies of IWT reports and maps.</p> <p>1.2 Training workshop reports and self-reports from focal points.</p> <p>1.3-1.5 Workshop and working group meeting reports and minutes; inter-agency data sharing protocols and action plans.</p>	<p>LEAs are willing to allocate focal points to dedicate time on IWT data management and analysis.</p> <p>LEAs maintain interest in improved data sharing.</p> <p>Interest in bilateral collaboration between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan is maintained.</p>
<p>Output 2</p> <p>Greater priority is given to addressing IWT at a national and regional level.</p>	<p>2.1 Number of LEAs in each country that commit increased staff or resource to IWT activities (including data sharing) over the course of the project.</p> <p>2.2 Increased mentions of IWT in national media pre- and post- project.</p> <p>2.3 Feasibility to incorporate IWT into CARICC (or other relevant regional law enforcement initiatives) evaluated by end of Y2.</p>	<p>2.1 National workshop reports and subsequent verbal/written reports from LEAs on deployment of staff and resources on IWT detection and data sharing.</p> <p>2.2 Systematic news searches for IWT articles in each project year.</p> <p>2.3 Meeting minutes and an evaluation report of existing initiatives, including an analysis of gaps related to IWT.</p> <p>2.4 Workshop reports.</p>	<p>IWT continues to increase as a priority for LEAs in Central Asia.</p> <p>Funding for LEAs does not significantly decrease as a result of COVID-19 related economic downturns.</p>

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
	2.4 Declarations and commitments made to increase action on IWT at national (Y2) and regional meetings (Y3).		
<p>Output 3</p> <p>150 LEOs at critical trade routes in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan have improved capacity to detect and respond to IWT.</p>	<p>3.1 IWT training modules developed and available in four languages by mid-Y2.</p> <p>3.2 Documented increase in knowledge of LEOs to detect and respond to IWT, as assessed by pre- (Y2) and post-training testing (Y3).</p> <p>3.3 Number of IWT-trained sniffer dogs in service in strategic checkpoints across Central Asia increase from 25 to 34 by end of Y3, with commitments made in 3 countries to increase deployment post-project.</p> <p>3.4 Increased number of IWT items intercepted and investigated by trained officers at end of Y2 and Y3.</p> <p>3.5 Increased number of examples of effectively reporting and sharing IWT data from LEOs to their superiors / other agencies by end of project compared to Y1 baseline.</p> <p>3.6 At least 12 government officials have improved capacity to develop and roll-out SMART in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.</p>	<p>3.1 Copies of modules.</p> <p>3.2 Training evaluation sheets.</p> <p>3.3 Sniffer dog workshop reports; LEA deployment data.</p> <p>3.4 Confiscation reports from LEAs.</p> <p>3.5 Interviews with supervisors of trained LEOs.</p> <p>3.6 SMART workshop reports and post-training surveys with trained officials.</p>	<p>LEAs make this number of officers (and the target number of women officers) available for training.</p> <p>Improved detection rate is sustained throughout project.</p> <p>Corruption does not undermine ability of LEA officers to make and report IWT seizures.</p> <p>Staff turnover of LEA officers is limited.</p> <p>National governments maintain interest in rollout of SMART.</p>
<p>Output 4</p> <p>Crime prevention strategies are understood and valued as an additional approach to tackling IWT by relevant stakeholders across all four countries.</p>	<p>4.1 Local knowledge and attitudes on IWT, law enforcement and wildlife guardianship is available to inform application of crime prevention approaches.</p> <p>4.2 20 decision-makers, NGO staff and PA managers have better knowledge and positive attitudes towards use of crime prevention strategies by Y3.</p>	<p>4.1 Copies of the report.</p> <p>4.2 Workshop reports and evaluations by attendees, pre- and post-workshop surveys on knowledge of and attitudes towards crime prevention approaches.</p>	<p>Community members maintain willingness to discuss sensitive topics with researchers.</p> <p>Interest in learning and developing alternative approaches to traditional law enforcement remains high among decision makers.</p>

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
<p>Activities (each activity is numbered according to the output that it will contribute towards, for example 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 are contributing to Output 1)</p> <p>1.1 Host 3 national workshops for law enforcement officers (LEOs) to sensitise agencies to the project and support coordinated and collaborative responses to IWT nationally.</p> <p>1.2 Host one regional training workshop for 20 law enforcement officers (LEOs) from all four countries on IWT data collection, management and analysis (Y2).</p> <p>1.3 Collect preliminary baseline IWT data and produce a report on key hotspots and trade routes across the region (Y1-2).</p> <p>1.4 Mentor four national focal points to analyse IWT data (Y1-3), and support them to update annual reports produced under 1.2 (Y2-3).</p> <p>1.5 Support LEAs (including prosecutors) to implement existing inter-agency agreements in place in Kyrgyzstan (with Panthera) and in Kazakhstan (with ACBK) (Y1-2).</p> <p>1.6 Facilitate bilateral IWT data sharing between Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan (in collaboration with Panthera) over the course of three meetings/workshops (Y1-3).</p> <p>2.1 Establish and facilitate technical working groups in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to develop calls to action on IWT (Y2-3).</p> <p>2.2 Promote IWT reports (1.1) and calls-to-action (2.1) to >30 high-level officials at national IWT meetings in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan and through national media (Y2).</p> <p>2.3 Promote incorporation of IWT within regional LEA initiatives (e.g. CARICC) (Y2-3).</p> <p>2.4 Host regional IWT meeting (with high-level LEA/CITES/CMS/ Chinese officials) to share project outputs and develop a roadmap for improved regional action and coordination post-project (Y3).</p> <p>3.1 Create IWT training modules and refine following delivery and participant feedback (Y2).</p> <p>3.2 Creation of a facility in Uzbekistan dedicated to the storage of CITES specimens and IWT specific training for LEO's.</p> <p>3.3 Train 150 frontline officers (50/country in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) to detect traded species and enforce CITES legislation; distribute IWT messaging to 75 checkpoints (Y-2-3).</p> <p>3.4 Train the same 150 officers to use protocols for handling IWT evidence (including transferring animals to rehabilitation centres) and prepare cases for prosecution (Y2-3).</p> <p>3.5 Catalyse national SMART programmes in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan through a regional training workshop (Y2).</p> <p>3.6 Support training in IWT detection of 9 sniffer dog teams based at strategic checkpoints across the region (Y2-3).</p> <p>3.7 Review performance of trained officers and recognise outstanding achievement of four through awards presented at 2.4 (Y3).</p> <p>3.8 Establish contact lists of IWT experts and share with LEOs to enable mentorship post-project (Y1-2).</p> <p>3.9 Handover training materials to law enforcement academies for integration into curricula post-project (Y3).</p> <p>4.1 In four hotspots, research potential application of crime prevention (e.g. wildlife guardians, informal sanctions) (Y2-3).</p> <p>4.2 Introduce crime prevention approaches to 20 individuals who have influence over IWT projects in a regional seminar (Y3).</p>			

Annex 3 Standard Indicators

Due to limited time and staff annual leave affecting capacity, we have not had the opportunity to complete Annex 3 since its introduction. These will be thoughtfully considered and included in the next reporting deadline.

Table 1 Project Standard Indicators

IWTCF Indicator number	Name of indicator using original wording	Name of Indicator after adjusting wording to align with IWTCF Standard Indicators	Units	Disaggregation	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Year 3 Total	Total to date	Total planned during the project
IWTCF-A01	E.g. People who attended training on skills related to agricultural practices.	E.g. Number of community members who received training on skills related to agricultural practices.	People	Men	20			20	60
IWTCF-D12	E.g. Articles published by members of the project team	E.g. Number of papers published in peer reviewed journals	Number	None	1			1	4

Table 2 Publications

Title	Type (e.g. journals, manual, CDs)	Detail (authors, year)	Gender of Lead Author	Nationality of Lead Author	Publishers (name, city)	Available from (e.g. weblink or publisher if not available online)

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 correct template (checking fund, type of report (i.e. Annual or Final), and year) and deleted the blue guidance text before submission?	X
Is the report less than 10MB? If so, please email to BCF-Reports@niras.com putting the project number in the subject line.	X
Is your report more than 10MB? If so, please discuss with BCF-Reports@niras.com about the best way to deliver the report, putting the project number in the subject line.	Additional supporting docs (>10MB) namely workshop presentations available upon request.
Have you included means of verification? You should not submit every project document, but the main outputs and a selection of the others would strengthen the report.	X
Do you have hard copies of material you need to submit with the report? 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.	No
If you are submitting photos for publicity purposes, do these meet the outlined requirements (see section 17)?	
Have you involved your partners in preparation of the report and named the main contributors	Partners provided activity reports for the first 6 months of the project but have not been involved directly in the writing of the report
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table fully?	X
Do not include claim forms or other communications with this report.	