

Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund Main & Extra: 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 2025

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IWT Challenge Fund Project Information

Scheme (Main or Extra)	Main
Project reference	IWT115
Project title	Demand reduction for threatened tortoises and freshwater turtles in Bangladesh.
Country/ies	Bangladesh
Lead Organisation	Wildlife Conservation Society, Bangladesh Program
Project partner(s)	
IWTCTF grant value	£ 320,000.00
Start/end dates of project	01/07/2022 to 31/03/2026
Reporting period (e.g. April 2024-Mar 2025) and number (e.g. Annual Report 1, 2, 3)	April 2024 - March 2025 (Annual Report 3)
Project Leader name	Md. Zahangir Alom
Project website/blog/social media	
Report author(s) and date	Md. Zahangir Alom

1. Project summary

The illegal trade of tortoises and freshwater turtles (TFTs) poses a significant threat to the survival of several endangered species in Bangladesh, including four Critically Endangered species: the river terrapin (*Batagur baska*), the elongated tortoise (*Indotestudo elongata*), the Asian giant tortoise (*Manouria emys*), and the Assam roofed turtle (*Pangshura sylhetensis*). Based on media monitoring conducted by WCS Bangladesh from 2012 to 2021 more than half of the approximately 34,000 individuals reported from illegal trade incidents involved TFTs. Based on the nature of the seizures Bangladesh acts as a source, transit, and consumer of TFTs (unpublished WCS media data).

Efforts in Bangladesh to combat TFT trafficking have predominantly focused on capacity building and strengthening law enforcement. Although these initiatives have led to an increase in seizures and, in some instances, arrests, the demand for TFTs remains high. Law enforcement has primarily targeted low-level traders, with others quickly filling the void left by arrests. These efforts have not significantly improved the outlook for TFTs.

To ensure the long-term conservation of TFT species in Bangladesh, there is an urgent need to address the country's role as a consumer through targeted behaviour change initiatives aimed

at reducing the demand for these species alongside efforts to address legislative gaps that will help to strengthen enforcement. This project aims to understand and address the drivers of TFT consumption in Bangladesh, including socio-economic factors, to inform targeted efforts to reduce demand and support efforts to prevent illegal wildlife trade (IWT).

The project conducted market surveys and media monitoring to identify current trends and key locations involved in the illegal trade of TFTs. It completed Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice (KAP) surveys to inform the development of a targeted behaviour change strategy to reduce TFT demand in two divisions (administrative areas) in Bangladesh (Figure 1). A behaviour change campaign is being implemented in these divisions, with the impact of the campaign measured through consumer interviews. The approach, results, and lessons learned will be shared with other countries where TFT demand is also impacting the conservation of these species, including India. The project will inform similar efforts in India and aims to establish connections with relevant agencies in India to initiate collaboration between the two countries on this issue.

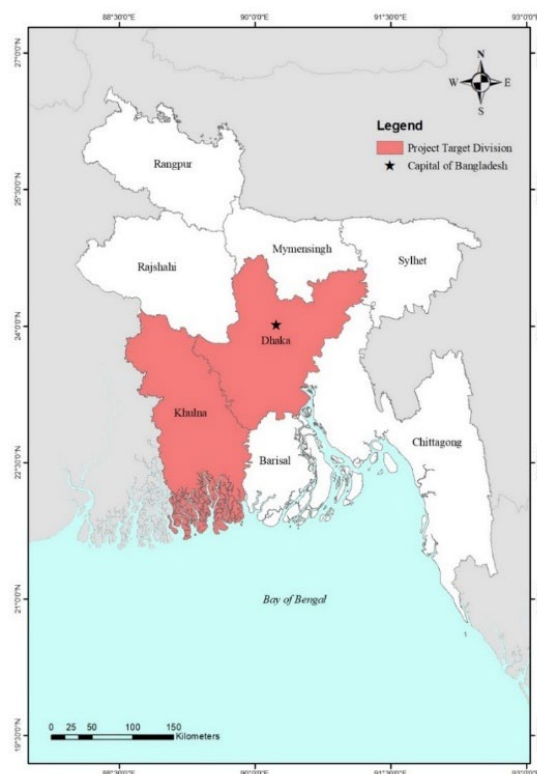


Figure 1: Divisions (red) selected for project implementation.

2. Project stakeholders/ partners

WCS Bangladesh is the lead implementer on this project. There are no formal partners (following the definition of Defra IWT CF). Project activities are supported by the Bangladesh Forest Department (BFD) as a key stakeholder. We maintain regular communication with our Focal point, the Conservator of Forests, Wildlife and Nature Conservation Circle, BFD, through phone and email correspondence to keep them informed and seek their guidance as needed.

BFD officials gave input to the planning of the project activities, including the market and KAP surveys, participating in training events organised for staff and volunteers from the different universities in Dhaka. Officials also participated in events reviewing the behaviour change strategy. Participation in training enabled them to understand the methodologies used during project activities, and findings of the surveys were shared through workshops with BFD.

Two BFD officials were also involved in awareness raising activities with religious leaders, school-teachers, and school children, and the Director of the Wildlife Crime Control Unit (WCCU) of BFD inaugurated the event that launched the campaign.

We maintain regular communication with our BFD Focal point, the Conservator of Forests, Wildlife and Nature Conservation Circle through phone and email correspondence to keep them informed and seek their guidance as needed.

The local communities in the selected divisions are also important stakeholders in the project. Within these communities the project in particular engaged, through consultations, orientations and awareness raising events, with opinion leaders, including religious leaders, school teachers, and local councilors (local government). Direct awareness raising events were also held with households (including consumers and natural resource collectors) and school children.

3. Project progress

3.1 Progress in carrying out project activities

Progress on activities was consistent during the reporting period (April 2024-March 2025, Year 3) as outlined against each activity and the agreed project logframe (Annex 1) and timeline, which was approved in December 2022 and revised in December 2024 (Annex 4). There is no proposed update to the timeline in this report.

Output 1: Behavioural change strategy developed for reducing the demand for TFTs based on improved understanding of market dynamics and consumer motivations.

Activity 1.1: Media search and data analysis to identify TFT consumption and trade hotspots and continue monitoring of seizures.

Media data on the illegal trade of TFTs has been collected throughout the project, including the current reporting period. Fifteen media reports were recorded between 01 April 2024 and 31 March 2025. These reports involved 5,307 individual animals, all of whom were alive (Table 1). Yearly incidents are shared in the project standard indicators table (Annex 3).

Table 1: Summary of incidents of illegally traded TFT species recorded through media reports from 01 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

Common Name	Scientific Name	IUCN Red List Status	Number of Individuals reported (April 2024 – March 2025)	Number of Species Incidents
Indian eyed turtle	<i>Morenia petersi</i>	EN	1,343	3
Indian Peacock softshell turtle	<i>Nilssonina hurum</i>	EN	136	1
Narrow-headed softshell turtle	<i>Chitra indica</i>	EN	43	1
Indian flapshell turtle	<i>Lissemys punctata</i>	VU	1,827	11
Indian roofed turtle	<i>Pangshura tecta</i>	VU	1,937	12
Unidentified species			21	1
TOTAL			5,307	29

Activity 1.2: TFT market surveys.

TFT Market surveys were completed in Year 1 and Year 2. No market surveys were scheduled for Year 3. Market surveys will be conducted in the final year of the project (Year 4) to help detect any impact of the campaign.

Activity 1.3: Develop and finalise map of TFT consumption and trade hotspots and consult with key stakeholders.

Activity completed in Year 1. See Year 1 Annual Report.

Activity 1.4: Develop pre and post KAP survey in consultation with the key stakeholders.

Activity completed in Year 1. See Year 1 Annual Report.

Activity 1.5: Conduct pre-KAP survey in identified TFT consumption and trade hotspots.

Activity completed in Year 1. See Year 1 Annual Report.

Activity 1.6: Meeting with the Forest Department to share pre-KAP survey results.

Activity completed in Year 2. See Year 2 Annual Report.

Activity 1.7: Develop a draft TFT demand reduction behaviour change strategy in consultation with BFD and stakeholders.

Activity completed in Year 2. See Year 2 Annual Report.

Activity 1.8: Consultation workshop/meeting with Forest Department for approval of TFT demand reduction behaviour change strategy.

Activity completed in Year 2. See Year 2 Annual Report.

Activity 1.9: Analyse the KAP survey data to identify socio-economic drivers of illegal trade and consumption and prepare summary report.

Activity completed in Year 2. See Year 2 Annual Report.

Activity 1.10: Repeat market surveys throughout project to monitor any drop in size of market to support indication of reduced demand.

A TFT market survey will be conducted in Year 4 (Q3). Results from this survey will be used, along with other data collected through the project, to measure any change in the presence of TFTs in open markets. The surveys will be conducted in the same markets as Year 1 and Year 2 in surveys.

Output 2: Behaviour change strategy implemented resulting in measurable changes to knowledge, attitudes and practices of TFT consumers, and lessons learned to improve future campaigns.

Activity 2.1: Develop awareness raising key messages and materials.

During the reporting period we developed, tested, modified and finalized a range of TFT awareness materials in Bangla. These materials included posters, flyers, booklets, stickers, t-shirts and fridge magnets. A number of different stickers were designed including three different messages aimed at deterring people from consumption of TFTs and an additional message indicating a pledge to become a turtle guardian). The activities designed as part of the campaign were piloted in Q3 of the reporting period. Feedback from the pilot campaign was then considered with modifications made before the campaign was implemented in Q4 of the reporting period (Annex 9). Implementation was successful despite initial delays due to political unrest and governance challenges at national and local levels.

Building on lessons from the pilot campaign the communication approach was expanded and a 'Pot Song' conveying the key messages was developed. A Pot Song is a local form of dramatic song using rhythmic storytelling, and was adopted, based on local stakeholder suggestions, to engage with community members. We finalized radio scripts containing key messages, which

were broadcast on community radio (*Radio Nalta*) to expand the reach of the campaign and implemented miking (loudspeaker) scripts and organised public announcement sessions.

Activity 2.2: Documentary film on reducing TFT consumption.

The film was modified from being a documentary to an [animated film](#) and a [promotional video](#) focused on the conservation of TFTs. The videos were designed to engage a diverse audience, including children, young adults, and adults considered to be potential consumers. The production of the TFT film was completed in Q2 and it was integrated into the campaign. It was used during the pilot phase (Q3) and the final campaign (Q4) as part of the awareness-raising events to engage communities and encourage people not to consume TFTs.

Activity 2.3: Design TFT consumer demand reduction campaign.

The TFT campaign was initially planned for Q1 of the reporting period but was rescheduled to Q3 due to delays imposed by political unrest linked to the student-civilian protests in Bangladesh. Despite this challenge, we completed the pilot campaign in Q3 and implemented the main campaign activities in Q4 (Activity 2.4).

A team of 18 interns and five WCS staff conducted the pilot campaign in Batiaghata, Amirpur, and Baliadanga unions (rural councils, the smallest administrative unit, typically each covers 8-10 villages) within Batiaghata upazila (sub-district) in Khulna district (one of 10 districts within Khulna division). The five-day pilot campaign was designed to test delivery of the key messages. The pilot sites selected were villages readily accessible from Khulna city and with a high non-Muslim population and moderate TFT consumption practices (mean 2.1 TFT-consumption-occasions per year per non-Muslim household) found during the baseline KAP study. A number of methods selected for implementation from the behaviour change strategy were tested: door-to-door campaigns, consultations with religious leaders, miking, film shows, school programs, and turtle-themed race events.

The effectiveness of communication materials was reviewed through a survey on the fifth day of the pilot (Annex 9). The final campaign activities were modified based on the experience of implementation during the pilot, assessments and feedback received from the target communities. The area of miking coverage was increased and attempts were made to improve sound clarity after feedback received from the pilot campaign and because only 25% of respondents noted they had heard the miking. The number of school programs was increased to maximise the number of students who received the campaign messages. The pot song was added and scheduled to be included in the film show events because participants found stand-alone film shows were not so attractive and suggested adding a cultural show would be more entertaining and attractive for them. A QR code linking to the TFT animation film was added to posters and booklets to increase access to campaign resource materials based on participant feedback.

Activity 2.4: Execute campaign in identified TFT consumption and trade hotspots.

WCS Bangladesh conducted the campaign from 1 to 12 February 2025, across unions identified as hotspots for TFT consumption in Satkhira, Khulna, Madaripur, and Gopalganj districts (areas with a relatively high non-Muslim population, and with a relatively high incidence of TFT consumption found in the baseline KAP survey) (Annex 10- table 1). Activities were implemented in one upazila in each district and two unions in each upazila. Campaign activities focused on the delivery of three key messages developed to influence consumers of TFT to change their behaviour. During the pilot campaign, four WCS staff and 18 student interns were selected, trained, and equipped to deploy campaign activities, forming the core team for the main campaign in February 2025. During implementation of the main campaign, two BFD officials accompanied the core team strengthening BFD's engagement and official recognition of the campaign. Activities were implemented through collaboration with religious leaders, school officials, and local authorities. The awareness activities were implemented and involved five WCS staff members, two BFD representatives, 18 interns, and five to eight local assistants (based on local needs) in each district. The three strategic key messages of behaviour change awareness campaign include-

- i. the health risks of consuming TFTs,
- ii. the legal consequences of TFT consumption, and
- iii. the ecological and cultural values of TFT species.

The campaign was given the overall title "Love Turtles, Leave Them Wild" and activities engaged with local non-Muslim residents, religious (Hindu) leaders, school-teachers and students through household visits, consultation and awareness raising meetings, entertainment programs, and educational activities identified and developed as part of the TFT behaviour change strategy (Figure 2). We visited 1,254 non-Muslim households encouraging families to reconsider TFT consumption and we engaged with 3,318 students through school programs featuring quizzes and prizes.

Film screenings and pot songs (folk performances) engaged over 5,000 people, delivering TFT conservation messages through the traditional storytelling and rhythmic music and animated film. Forty-three turtle-themed race events were held with 992 participants, blending education with excitement. TFT messages were broadcast by community radio, which has an audience of over 330,000 listeners and the reach of the campaign was widened through loudspeaker announcements delivered from mechanized three-wheeler vehicles ("miking") along 574 km of local roads across eight unions. It is estimated that most people in the target unions and some adjacent areas were exposed to the three key messages for TFT conservation through these different methods.

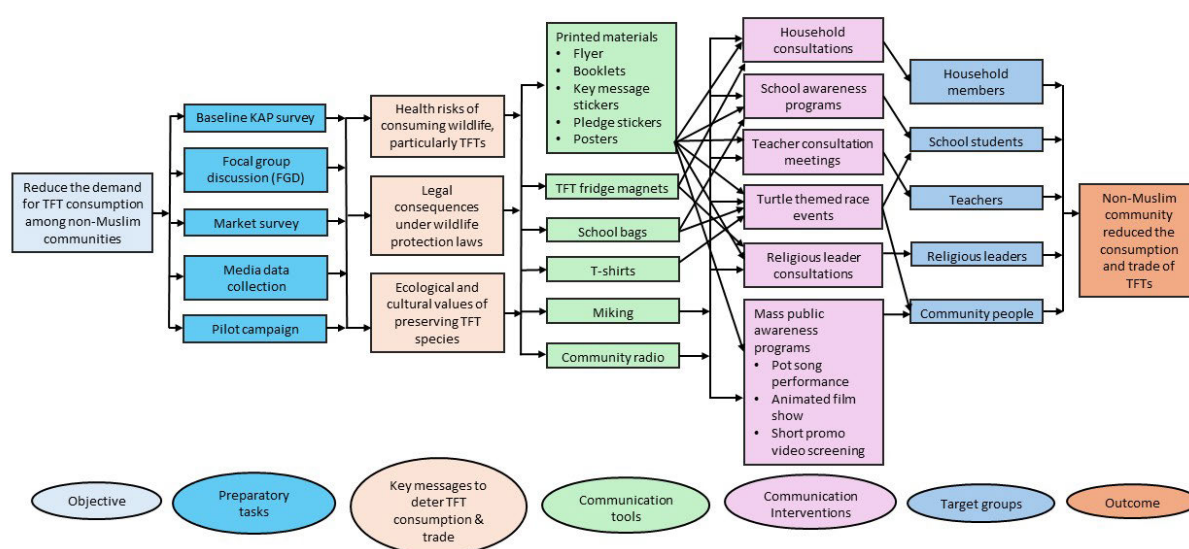


Figure 2: TFT campaign stages and activities.

Activity 2.5: Organize and hold two journalist training workshops.

Activity completed in Year 2. See Year 2 Annual Report.

Activity 2.6: Conduct post-KAP surveys in the areas where TFT demand reduction campaign took place.

This activity was initially planned for Year 3 Q4; however, due to political instability in the country, the campaign was delayed to Year 3. The mid-term KAP survey was conducted after the pilot campaign in Year 3 Q3 with the results used to adjust the final campaign activities. The KAP survey included religious leaders, school-teachers and students, government officials, household members, and randomly selected people exposed to the TFT campaign.

The post-campaign KAP survey has been rescheduled for Year 4 Q3 following the full campaign rollout. This schedule has been adopted so that respondents' reports of TFT

consumption over the previous 12-months refer largely to a post-campaign period and include the festival period, as this is when TFT consumption traditionally peaks.

Output 3: Establish collaboration for behaviour change for TFTs through sharing of the approach between wildlife managers, law enforcement officials and development agencies in Bangladesh and India on successes and failures in demand reduction.

Activity 3.1: Organise two virtual meetings between India and Bangladesh.

Activity completed in Year 2. See Year 2 Annual Report.

Activity 3.2: Organise an in-person workshop at Bana Bhaban in Bangladesh with participation by forest officials from Bangladesh and India.

This activity was initially planned for Year 3 Q1 but was delayed due to the national elections in India, which prevented Indian government staff from travelling. It was rescheduled for Year 3 Q2, however, political unrest in Bangladesh led to further complications. After the former Bangladesh Prime Minister fled to India, the Indian government imposed restrictions on issuing visas for Bangladeshis, and political and diplomatic links between India and Bangladesh deteriorated. Given this context and the extended timeline required for approvals and visas, it became evident that conducting the workshop would not be feasible.

As a result, this activity was cancelled following a change request (Annex 6) approved by Defra in December 2024 (Reference N0364, Annex 8). We are exploring options to share lessons learned from the project and facilitate continued transboundary dialogue between India and Bangladesh.

Activity 3.3: Organise an in-person workshop at Aranya Bhaban in India with participation by forest officials from Bangladesh and India.

This activity was originally planned for Year 3 Q4. The ongoing political tensions between the Government of India and the interim government of Bangladesh impacted the planning and implementation of this activity. It was decided that it would not be feasible to conduct the workshop within the project timeline given this situation and the length of time it takes for approvals and visas, if they were to become available.

In December 2024 a change request was submitted requesting approval to cancel this activity, including the necessary financial adjustments. This request was approved by Defra (Annex 8). WCS will explore opportunities for virtual exchanges between government agencies of India and Bangladesh and will share the results of our work with organizations that could benefit from sharing insights and lessons from this project.

Activity 3.4: Distribute summary report on socio-economic drivers of involvement in illegal trade and consumption with stakeholders including development agencies.

Activity completed in Year 2. See Year 2 Annual Report.

Activity 3.5: Share TFT consumer demand reduction campaign strategy and model with WCS India and other organisations.

Activity completed in Year 2. See Year 2 Annual Report.

Output 4: Bangladesh's national wildlife protection laws strengthened for TFT protection.

Activity 4.1: Prepare background document and draft proposal for listing all the threatened TFT species under the Wildlife Act, 2012.

This activity was completed in Year 1. WCS continues to follow up with the BFD on progress in reviewing the document and support needed to ensure this moves to the next step in the process to list all threatened TFT species under the Wildlife Act.

Activity 4.2: Prepare a proposal to clarify definitions of Schedule I and II protected species in the Wildlife Act, 2012.

This activity was completed in Year 1. WCS is following up with the BFD.

Activity 4.3: Follow-up meetings and engagement with BFD on proposals to list threatened TFT species and clarify definitions of Schedule I and II protected species in the Wildlife Act, 2012.

This activity is progressing as planned. WCS is continuing to follow up with the BFD. A lawyer has been assigned to support this process and the next steps, including advocacy at the ministry level.

Activity 4.4: Prepare a proposal to add regulatory directives from the Wildlife Act, 2012 to the Import Policy Order under the Imports and Exports (Control) Act, 1950 and submit it to Customs.

A proposal to add regulatory directives from the Wildlife Act, 2012 to the Import Policy Order under the Imports and Exports (Control) Act, 1950 has been drafted and submitted to the BFD. BFD forwarded the request to the Customs Agency for official endorsement. The draft was attached to the Year 2 half year report. WCS will continue to follow up with BFD and Customs to check on progress for the proposed additions to the Import Policy order.

Activity 4.5: Follow-up with Customs Agency through meetings and engagement on the proposal.

This activity is progressing slowly. However, BFD is revising the entire Wildlife Act, where the proposal mentioned in 4.4 is addressed. During this reporting year, three meetings have been held with Customs, where the proposal was discussed.

3.2 Progress towards project Outputs

Output 1: Behavioural change strategy developed for reducing the demand for TFTs based on improved understanding of market dynamics and consumer motivations.

This output was delivered in Year 2 of the project. In Year 1 we identified several consumption and trade hotspots for TFTs (Indicator 1.1). Combined with insights from the baseline KAP survey and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) a deeper understanding of the consumer groups and their motivations was developed (Indicator 1.2) and the behaviour change strategy was drafted, reviewed and completed.

Households that eat TFTs tend to be larger and better-off compared with the average for the area, involved more in farming, and 73% have one or more members with secondary or higher education. The motivations behind TFT consumption were found to be predominantly driven by taste preferences and novelty rather than cultural or religious factors, although consumption is associated with family gatherings and festivals. While some respondents professed belief in the traditional medicinal benefits of TFTs, actual reported medicinal use was infrequent. The behavioural change strategy aimed at reducing TFT demand (Indicator 1.3) was finalised in Year 3 after review by BFD.

Output 2: Behaviour change strategy implemented resulting in measurable changes to knowledge, attitudes and practices of TFT consumers, and lessons learned to improve future campaigns.

KAP surveys conducted in Year 1 and 2 informed the development of the behaviour change strategy, which aims to address the underlying drivers of demand for TFT species. Messaging and interventions were developed to target key consumer groups (non-Muslim communities) and address the underlying drivers of demand for TFTs.

In Year 3, a TFT campaign was piloted and revised based (Q3) and then implemented in Q4. It is too early to measure any changes in Year 3 as a result of the campaign, although surveys to assess reactions to the pilot campaign gave positive qualitative indications of changes in

knowledge and attitudes. A survey to assess the impact of the campaign is scheduled in Year 4 with results to be compared with the baseline KAP survey results to measure changes.

Output 3: Establish collaboration for behaviour change for TFTs through sharing of the approach between wildlife managers, law enforcement officials and development agencies in Bangladesh and India on successes and failures in demand reduction.

This output focussed on collaboration between Bangladesh and India, particularly including sharing of the successes and failures in reducing demand for TFTs through the campaign.

We established initial collaboration between the Bangladesh Forest Department (BFD) and regional stakeholders on behaviour change strategies for TFTs and sharing of market and KAP survey results.

We initiated discussions between WCS-India and WCS Bangladesh to explore the best methods for engaging government officials in India. The aim of these discussions would have been to raise awareness about the illegal trade of TFTs and promote behaviour change approaches. This activity was initially planned for the first quarter of Year 3 but was delayed due to the national elections in India, which prevented Indian government staff from traveling. It was subsequently rescheduled for the second quarter of Year 3; however, political unrest in Bangladesh further impacted the activity.

With strained relations continuing between the two countries, the face-to-face activities planned were cancelled and a change request was submitted and approved (Annex 8). We continue to explore alternative approaches to share lessons learned from the project and facilitate continued transboundary dialogue between India and Bangladesh.

Output 4: Bangladesh's national wildlife protection laws strengthened for TFT protection.

Progress had been achieved under Output 4, marked by the submission of three draft proposals aimed at enhancing the protection of threatened TFT species through legislative amendments and regulatory integration. These proposals include: (i) listing all threatened TFT species under the Wildlife Act, 2012, (ii) clarifying definitions of Schedule I and Schedule II protected species within the same Act, and (iii) integrating regulatory directives from the Wildlife Act, 2012 into the Import Policy Order under the Imports and Exports (Control) Act, 1950. Progress on this Output stalled during Year 3 due to the political unrest in Bangladesh. An interim government was established, but with no parliament in place, the interim government has no power to pass laws. This has delayed the process of amending the concerned Acts, Schedules and orders. Towards the end of Year 3 efforts were re-started to engage the relevant agencies and ministries to advance these proposals further, with the aim of having these instruments prepared ready to be passed/adopted when there is a government in place enabled to do this.

3.3 Progress towards project Outputs

Progress has been made towards achieving the project outputs, despite delays due to political instability in Bangladesh. Awareness campaigns have engaged households, students, and community members through diverse activities, with extensive outreach (Output 1). A behaviour change strategy was developed (Output 2), informed by market, media and KAP surveys. Output 3 has established initial collaboration between the Bangladesh Forest Department (BFD) and stakeholders in India, although this activity was unable to continue through in person meetings and efforts are continuing to establish connections. Output 4 has progressed with the submission of three draft legislative proposals aimed at strengthening wildlife protection laws, with continuous engagement to advance these proposals. Overall, the project is on track to achieve the majority of its outputs.

3.4 Progress towards the project Outcome

Progress has been made toward achieving the project's outcome. Data collected to support development of the behaviour change strategy has provided a deeper understanding of market dynamics and consumer motivations. This was used to inform a campaign that has engaged thousands of households and communities living in four target districts where there was a

relatively high level of TFT consumption. Assessment of changes in consumption are scheduled for Year 4.

The campaign and wider sensitization of BFD through the project are hoped to improve support for the conservation of TFT species. Although this is unlikely to include planned legislative change within the project lifetime due to changes in government that took place in Year 3.

A reduction in trade will be assessed by comparing results of market, media and KAP surveys during Year 4 with data from previous years.

Initial collaborations between the Bangladesh Forest Department and WCS India and WCS Bangladesh were established but now face political and international relations challenges. Formal bilateral meetings on TFTs are no longer feasible, but it is hoped that evidence based virtual dialogue will be possible.

3.5 Monitoring of assumptions

Assumption 1: Behavioural change can be detected through standardized interviews at the beginning and end of the project.

Comment: This assumption continues to hold true.

Assumption 2: Self-reported consumption of TFTs is a reliable measure of actual consumption levels. Market surveys, media reports, and detections can accurately provide an indication of scale of trade.

Comment: This assumption appears to hold true.

While it is difficult to assess whether TFT consumption was accurately reported in the KAP surveys. There was no indication that respondents hid their practices in interviews, and TFT consumption was quite widely reported (e.g., 42% of the households said that they consumed TFTs in the last 12 months). Also, the impact assessment of the pilot TFT campaign showed similar indications that respondents were quite open to sharing the TFT consumption response.

During Year 2, we conducted surveys in 188 local markets across 16 districts and identified the presence of open TFT trade in 20 of these markets. This finding aligns with the increase in TFT demand during Hindu festivals. and supports the assumption that such surveys can provide an indication of the scale of trade.

Media reports recorded through the project also provide an indication of the scale of the trade. In Year 3 WCS documented 5,307 TFTs across 29 seizures. These numbers are similar to previous years and there is no indication that this is not a reliable way to look at the scale of the trade. (Year 2 - 2,049 TFTs during 32 seizures; Year 1, 2,807 TFTs in 18 seizures).

Assumption 3: A decrease in observed trade through market surveys can be used to indicate reduced demand.

Comment: This assumption remains unchanged.

The results of the Year 2 market survey have provided an indication of the level of trade in open markets at that time. While actual trade levels might be higher than recorded in the market surveys it is too early to indicate this assumption is not correct as we are yet to complete market surveys post the delivery of the campaign. If the campaign has reduced demand, we would expect to see lower numbers of TFTs in the market. This will not be possible to validate until the post campaign KAP surveys, and the next round of market surveys has been completed.

Assumption 4: Target audience will respond positively to messaging.

Comment: This assumption remains unchanged.

The discussions from the focus group reviews of the three key messages indicate that these messages could effectively influence behaviour, particularly regarding the health risks associated with pathogens that may be present when handling or consuming TFTs. This is also

supported by feedback from the pilot campaign in Year 3. We will be able to further investigate this assumption in Year 4 during the final KAP survey.

Assumption 5: Trade does not go “underground” to the extent that the sale and consumption of TFTs cannot be detected through market surveys, media reports, and confiscations and arrests by government officers.

Comment: This assumption remains for the project, although initial results appear to indicate that the trade may have already moved underground.

The limited number of TFTs identified during the market surveys suggests that the trade may have already moved to “underground”. This was further confirmed by data acquired from the KAP surveys, given the number of animals detected in market surveys and the levels of consumption recorded from the KAP results.

While we were able to identify instances of TFT trade through media reports, ongoing market surveys and fluctuations in media seizure reports may not serve as reliable indicators of shifts in demand and trade patterns. Assuming that respondents' willingness to disclose TFT consumption remains constant, the impact-KAP survey should offer a measure of altered consumption.

Assumption 6: Willingness to share experiences and knowledge between Bangladesh and India on demand reduction of TFTs will be supported by wildlife agencies of both countries. No further restrictions as a result of new COVID-19 variations.

Comment: This assumption remains true, despite the impacts of political instability in Bangladesh.

The online meetings in Year 2 and sharing between WCS country programs were promising, and there remains a willingness to share experiences and knowledge between the two countries. The ability to build on the initial exchanges has been impacted by external, unforeseen forces, which have directly impacted the face-to-face meeting of officials planned for Year 3. Due to the political regime change in Bangladesh in Y3, the in-person meetings between India and Bangladesh have been cancelled as approved in the Change Request submitted in December 2024 (Annex 6 & 8).

Assumption 7: TFT market dynamics and consumer motivations can be fully understood and addressed in the behaviour change strategy.

Comment: This assumption remains unchanged.

We feel that consumer motivations have been understood from the baseline KAP surveys and can be addressed through the behaviour change strategy. This will be verified in Year 4 through the results of the post campaign KAP survey. The market surveys and FGDs in Year 4 will also provide insights into market dynamics.

Assumption 8: Consumers can be identified and are willing to participate in research on motivations. Consumers honestly report on their consumption and demand.

Comment: Assumption remains unchanged.

In Year 2, we successfully identified consumers through a baseline KAP survey. A number of respondents reported that they had consumed TFTs within the past year. While it is challenging to determine if all respondents were completely honest, the high level of self-reported consumption suggests that there is no issue with willingness to disclose this information. It's possible that some individuals may have consumed TFTs but chose not to report it, or perhaps they did so more frequently than indicated. Nevertheless, the openness of many respondents is a positive sign.

Assumption 9: Self-reported levels of consumption indicate a drop in actual consumption and demand. Enforcement by government agencies remains a priority and data can be accessed.

Comment: The assumption remains correct at this time. We will be able to comment on this assumption in Year 4 after conducting the impact KAP survey.

Assumption 10: WCS can obtain government approval of the behaviour change strategy in Year 1 or 2.

Comment: Assumption remains correct. WCS received approval from BFD for the strategy. further

Assumption 11: Analysis of TFT market survey and KAP survey data can be completed and a report on socio-economic drivers can be prepared.

Comment: This assumption continues to hold true.

Although we have been unable to identify the specific socio-economic drivers of consumption in the key consumer groups, we have been able to confirm that TFTs are perceived more as luxury or prestige food items and are now relatively expensive. Consumers tend to be in higher socio-economic groups. The surveys also indicated that TFT consumption in the target areas was not directly linked to religious practices but is primarily associated with taste preferences during celebrations at the conclusion of festivals.

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

The original anticipated impact of the project was - improved conservation prospects for threatened tortoises and freshwater turtles in Bangladesh through a targeted behaviour change campaign to reduce consumption and exploitation.

Contribution to Higher-Level Impact on Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT): During Year 3, the project finalized the TFT behaviour change strategy, tested the pilot campaign, and implemented the campaign in eight unions across four upazilas identified as high TFT consumption areas. From the pilot testing, we found that methods including miking, school awareness programs, and consultations with household and religious leaders had the potential to encourage people to change their behaviour. The introduction of pot songs, animated film shows, pledge stickers, and other tools including radio programs, posters, booklets, and flyers, has also supported the efforts to sensitising the target audience to the need to conserve TFTs. We will conduct a KAP assessment in Year 4 to measure the impact on people's behaviour and TFT consumption, approximately 12 months after the campaign.

In Year 2 the project organised two journalist trainings covering how journalists could sensitize the public to reduce illegal TFT trade and consumption. It is hoped that the combined efforts of journalists, and the campaign will bring about societal change in districts with high TFT consumption, thereby reducing the illegal trade and consumption of TFTs in districts with high TFT consumption, thereby reducing the illegal trade and consumption of TFTs.

The KAP study confirmed that TFT consumers are generally not the poorer members of the community. The project aimed to (a) reducing TFT demand and prevent minority non-Muslim communities from being vulnerable to law enforcement efforts against TFT consumption and trade; and (b) intended to identify any disadvantaged traders or TFT catchers in the campaign area who might be adversely affected by reduced demand and law enforcement, and then help them access alternative livelihood support programmes. However, because of delays in conducting the campaign due to political instability, (b) was not possible.

4. Thematic focus

This project aligns with two IWT Challenge Fund themes:

- **Reducing demand for IWT products:** In Year 3 we implemented the TFT demand reduction behaviour change campaign developed in previous years.
- **Ensuring effective legal frameworks and deterrents:** Information has been provided to the BFD, and the project will continue to offer technical support for the revision of the law and schedules.

5. Impact on species in focus

The primary objective of the project is to improve conservation of TFTs by reducing the demand for threatened species. While the project specifically highlights four Critically Endangered species, the river terrapin (*Batagur baska*), elongated tortoise (*Indotestudo elongata*), Asian giant tortoise (*Manouria emys*), and Assam roofed turtle (*Pangshura sylhetensis*), it is anticipated that a reduction in demand will positively impact a broader array of globally threatened TFT species present in Bangladesh.

Should demand for these species reduce, it is expected that poaching activities aimed at supplying the trade will also decrease. It remains too early to detect an impact on the species from this work. Behaviour change typically requires time to shift attitudes and behaviours. The media monitoring, market surveys, and KAP surveys conducted throughout the project will provide an indication of a reduced level of trade, but further work will be needed to assess the impact on the populations of these species.

6. Project support for multidimensional poverty reduction

The results of the KAP surveys are consistent with existing literature indicating that TFT consumers in Bangladesh come from religious and ethnic minorities. The campaign activities were developed targeting individuals who fall within these groups. By changing the behaviour of these groups, so they move away from consumption of TFTs this is also expected to reduce the risk these groups face from confrontation with law enforcement agencies over illegal consumption of TFTs.

The market surveys conducted to date did not reveal specialist TFT traders active at markets. The extent that poor people (including women) are involved in the supply chain including providing TFTs through direct contact remains unclear. The KAP surveys indicated that TFTs consumed or traded mainly come from nearby wetlands, with some caught by consumers and some caught by local fishers as an incidental part of their catch. No specialist TFT-catchers have not so far been identified but it should be noted that the project activities were not designed to allow for the identification of specialist collectors.

If the mid-term KAP survey or interaction with local people during the campaign reveals a potential impact on poor traders or TFT catchers, then it was planned to work with local institutions to link them with opportunities for alternative livelihood support in Year 4. However, this was not possible partly due to reduced time available after the campaign was delayed by political instability, but also because involving BFD in the campaign resulted in it undertaking enforcement activities and in one case confiscating TFTs and prosecuting a trader which prevented any measure to change that person's livelihood activities.

Indirectly, the behaviour change campaign aims to increase understanding and awareness of the importance of conserving TFTs (for example their role as scavengers) for the wider benefit of wetland ecosystems which these communities depend on for more general ecosystem services. Impact can only be expected in Year 4 when behaviour change campaigns are implemented.

7. Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

In Year 3, the TFT behaviour change campaign was designed and implemented in four districts, carefully considering Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI). The campaign integrated the IWT Challenge Fund's core GESI principles throughout all stages.

Rights (Legal and Customary): The campaign addressed the legal context surrounding the illegal TFT trade, emphasizing that the species is protected by law. Legal awareness sessions were held through miking, school events, and religious leaders' engagement to inform men and women of their rights and responsibilities under the Wildlife (Conservation and Security) Act, 2012. The baseline KAP indicated limited perception of a customary (cultural) right to catch TFTs among non-Muslims, and customary practices were addressed (see next paragraph).

Practice (Attitudes, Customs, & Beliefs): Recognising that TFT is traditionally viewed as a delicacy consumed during Hindu festivals—primarily by higher-income groups—the campaign challenged these social norms. In the baseline KAP few respondents said that religious beliefs or celebration of festivals depend on TFTs, but 45% would change traditional practices if it helped the environment and 85% said they follow their puja committee’s advice when celebrating festivals. Accordingly, the campaign worked with local religious leaders who committed, after dialogue on the plight of TFTs, to advise their communities not to consume TFTs. Messaging targeted deep-rooted beliefs by highlighting the ecological and health risks (including zoonotic diseases) linked to TFT consumption, aiming to shift long-standing attitudes within both men and women.

Environment (Stressors & Vulnerability): The campaign was tailored to vulnerable communities where economic and environmental stressors increase the risk of engaging in the illegal wildlife trade. By offering information through accessible channels (e.g., community miking, community radios, local schools, and religious gatherings dealt by the respective trained religious leaders), the campaign ensured vulnerable and minority populations were not left behind.

Roles and Responsibilities (Time, Space & Labour): Communication activities and surveys were scheduled at flexible times and locations to accommodate women and men’s roles and time constraints. For example, female field staff interviewed or consulted with women, ensuring comfort and trust during household surveys. Female interns helped organise the girls’ race events and school awareness programs in girls’ schools, while men were engaged through separate sessions when appropriate.

Representation (Participation, Inclusion & Power): The campaign promoted balanced participation through gender-disaggregated engagement. The household-focused consultations took place in 1,254 households comprising 6,772 members, of these 1,693 were women. During the TFT behaviour change campaign pot-song and TFT animation film shows, we reserved seats for women to preserve their right to watch the show and ensured safety by engaging interns to secure the place. Public events such as pot-song, film shows, and turtle races were attended by 2,575 male and 1,598 female attendees. In the school awareness programs, out of 3,318 children, 1,507 were girls. During the 15 school-teacher consultation meetings, 112 women teachers, and 265 male teachers participated. Collaboration with local stakeholders, including the Bangladesh Forest Department, helped identify effective outreach methods to reach women—such as through female interns and school-teachers—ensuring they were not excluded from key messaging.

Resources (Access & Control of Assets and Services): The project developed outreach materials to improve the community’s understanding of legal and natural resources by sharing knowledge about wildlife protection laws and how communities can benefit from sustainable alternatives. Engaging both men and women equally aimed to ensure fair access to information and empower all participants to act as advocates for wildlife conservation.

- **Social Inclusion and Intersectionality**

The project actively considered how identities such as gender, age, and class affect participation. Outreach activities included children and youth via school campaigns (e.g., over 3,300 school children were reached), and involved religious leaders and teachers to ensure messages were spread across all community levels. Special attention was paid to ensuring that women, often excluded from public discussions, were meaningfully included through tailored engagement.

- **Lessons Learned and Challenges (Past 12 Months)**

A key lesson learned was adjusting the program schedule for female participants’ inclusion. During the pilot of the TFT campaign, we scheduled our very first film shows to start after sunset. At that initial event, we noticed that female participants had concerns about their safety and the possibility of returning home securely after the show. As a result, many of them left before the film began. To address this issue, we later adjusted the program schedule to start earlier, before sunset, allowing all female participants to enjoy the pot-songs and film show comfortably.

GESI Scale	Description	Put X where you think your project is on the scale
Not yet sensitive	The GESI context may have been considered but the project isn't quite meeting the requirements of a 'sensitive' approach	
Sensitive	The GESI context has been considered, and project activities take this into account in their design and implementation. The project addresses basic needs and vulnerabilities of women and marginalised groups, and the project will not contribute to or create further inequalities.	X
Empowering	The project has all the characteristics of a 'sensitive' approach whilst also increasing equal access to assets, resources and capabilities for women and marginalised groups	
Transformative	The project has all the characteristics of an 'empowering' approach whilst also addressing unequal power relationships and seeking institutional and societal change	

8. Monitoring and evaluation

This project employs various internal systems and processes to monitor and evaluate its progress and impact on a regular basis. We developed a detailed monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan in response to feedback provided from the Year 1 annual report, which outlines specific indicators, targets, and data collection methods for each outcome, output, and activity (Annex 3).

The project team tracks progress by conducting interviews with community members, and collects data on the number of people reached through the awareness-raising activities. The project team also analyses data on the number of illegal trade incidents and seizures of freshwater turtles and tortoises to assess the effectiveness of their interventions in reducing demand for these species. The baseline and impact surveys will also allow evaluation of the impact of the project. Analysis and reporting will be shared with stakeholders including BFD and local community organisations.

There have been no significant changes to the M&E plan over the reporting period. If necessary, the project team will adjust the data collection methods to ensure more accurate and reliable data. Behavioural change may take longer to materialise and translate to reduced consumption and trade than the project duration. Monitoring media reports of IWT is a long-term commitment and program of WCS and will continue after the project ends. WCS will also include costs for future monitoring in any future project development.

9. Lessons learnt

During Year 3, the project has gained valuable insights that have strengthened our approach and informed future planning and implementation.

What worked well:

- The campaign execution ran smoothly, and the pilot campaign raised awareness about the illegality and risks of TFT consumption. Culturally relevant tools like pot songs, turtle races, and storytelling events captured public interest and increased community engagement.

- Gender-sensitive approaches, such as using female field staff to engage women in surveys and discussions, led to better participation and more open dialogue, particularly in conservative areas.
- Partnerships with schools and religious leaders provided strong entry points to community members, especially among youth and faith-driven communities.

What didn't work well:

- Initial public events saw low female turnout due to mobility restrictions and social norms. This was later addressed by organizing smaller, community-based sessions in more accessible venues.
-

What we would do differently:

- Based on the KAP baseline data, we found that television is the most widely accessed medium used by our target audience. We produced an animated film and video and attempted to have these shown by local cable operator channels, but were unable to secure broadcast options as even broadcasting short promotional videos incurs significant costs.
- After completing the campaign, we realised that there are still more unions within the same districts with substantial non-Muslim population to cover to engage potential TFT consumers through direct interventions like school campaign and film shows. Ways to cost-effectively make use of the materials developed by the project to reach more unions and upazilas could have been explored, for example by partnering with local NGOs and community groups to deliver messages. We believe that follow-up funding initiatives are necessary to address this gap and ensure the campaign is effective.
- Rather than just a short intensive campaign, it would be better to have a longer engagement and consistently reinforce the key TFT behaviour change messages within the community.

How we are using these lessons:

- We will continue to use miking and distribute flyers every other month in the selected campaign areas to spread TFT conservation messages and promote TFT conservation messages to deter consumption.

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

The feedback from the Year 2 annual report was received and well noted. The feedback included two questions requesting further details and clarification (responses were given in the Year 3 half yearly report and included here in summary with any updates).

Clarification on the demand reduction strategy and model – is this part of the same document or will a separate one be developed for the model?

The demand reduction strategy (see Annual Report Year 2) and model are part of the same document. The strategy has been finalized and selected activities piloted. The model was then adapted based on the pilot initial pilot has been completed, and the strategy has been updated with this. The updated model is included as Annex 11 to this report.

Further develop the strengthening of the exit strategy with clear objectives and actions for how to achieve them.

To strengthen the exit strategy, the project will share the results of the campaign, and the model developed as part of the strategy with other countries and organisations for use with other species. We have built local capacity and continue to encourage local ownership of the work through collaboration. This aims to extend the project's positive conservation impacts beyond the project duration and benefit other globally threatened and CITES-protected species. The project team is also working to expand the project through securing additional funds to allow activities to be implemented in other areas and through this we will secure funding to continue monitoring impacts in the areas covered under this project. The project team had secured a three-year grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to continue TFT behaviour change work in Bangladesh. However, under the current US Administration and Executive

Orders the funding is no longer available. WCS will continue to look for funding opportunities to continue and expand this work.

11. Risk Management

Over the reporting period the project has encountered several risks that required adaptation and strategic response.

New Risks: A major new risk that emerged in Year 3 Q2, was the political instability in Bangladesh, including widespread disruptions and safety concerns due to national-level unrest which ultimately led to the overthrow of the then government and the establishment of an interim government. This significantly impacted our ability to conduct certain activities, particularly cross-border engagements. In the risk register this is mentioned under 'Political unrest' section.

Adaptations to Project Design: As a result of this instability, a planned bilateral meeting between Bangladesh and India was cancelled. A Change Request was submitted and approved by the IWT Challenge Fund (Annex 6-8). The funds allocated for the meeting were reallocated to strengthen the campaign activities, enabling expanded outreach and greater community engagement during a period when travel and coordination with external partners was not feasible. The reallocation of funds was used to deepen local impact, particularly in public awareness and campaign activities. WCS will continue to monitor the political situation and maintain flexibility in implementation to ensure the project remains resilient and adaptive.

Risk Register: An updated risk register (Annex 5), reflecting newly identified risks and revised mitigation strategies, was submitted with the Change Request in December 2024 and also with this Annual Report.

Moving forward, we will continue to monitor the political situation and maintain flexibility in implementation to ensure the project remains resilient and adaptive.

12. Scalability and durability

The project has established a solid foundation for scalability and long-term impact by integrating a behaviour change approach within community events, gaining commitments from local religious leaders to promote changed behaviour, and adding support from local schools. Key stakeholders, including household members, journalists, teachers, religious leaders, and local authorities, have been consistently involved and are now well-informed and it is hoped they will continue to advocate to reduce the illegal trade of TFTs. The project engaged the public and this may shift social norms, particularly regarding TFT consumption during festivals by utilising culturally relevant outreach methods such as turtle races, folk songs, and school campaigns.

The campaign developed adaptable and low-cost materials and tools, making them attractive for wider adoption in other regions. The involvement of the BFD and their ongoing interest in and support for the project provides an opportunity to potentially scale up these efforts. The adaptive management approach to the project including the reallocation of resources following the need to cancel the in-person Bangladesh-India meeting due to political instability enabled the expansion of efforts.

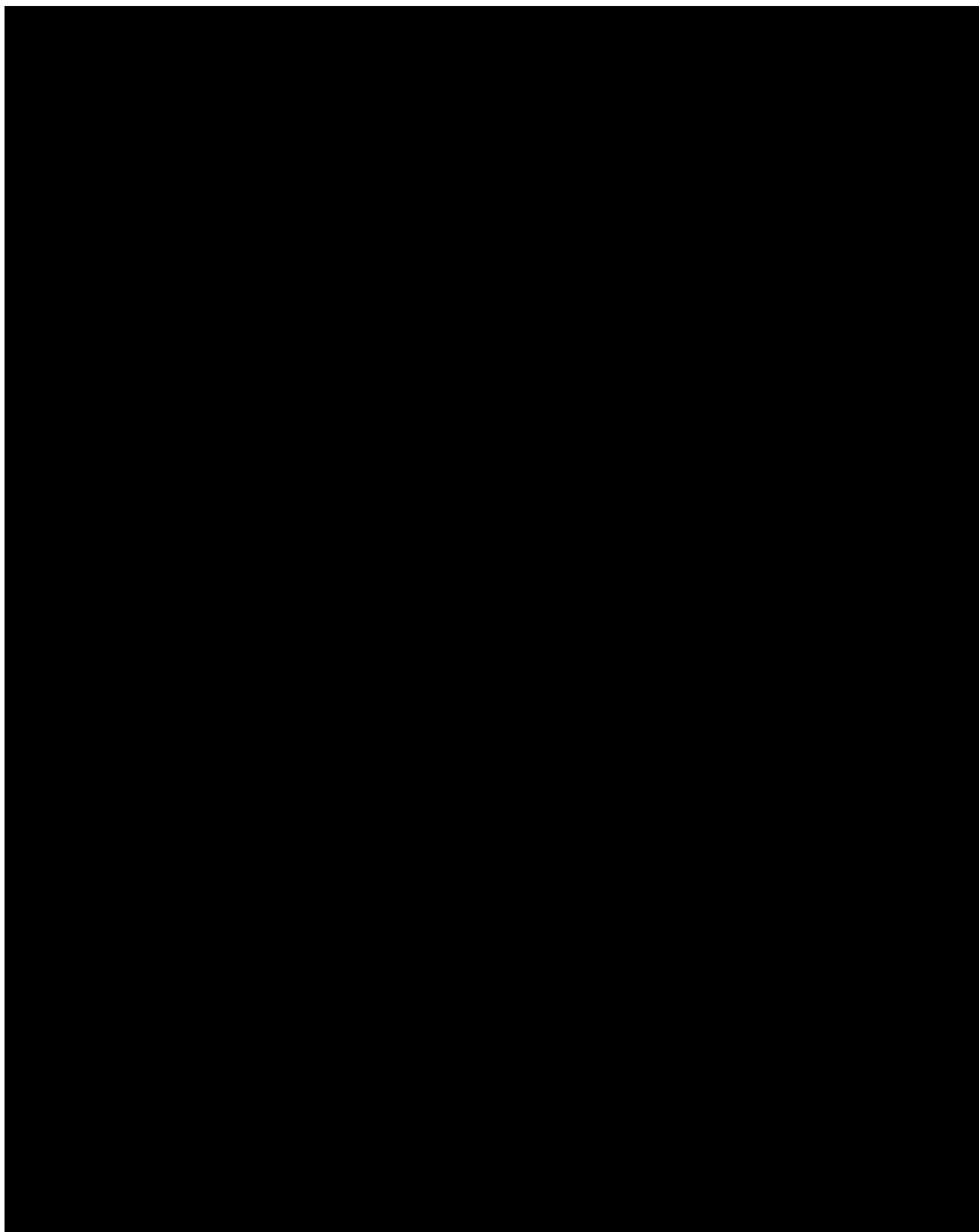
To ensure sustainability, the project's exit strategy is focused on fostering community ownership and integrating TFT awareness into ongoing local education and through religious leaders. Both initiatives are essential for maintaining awareness beyond the project's duration and the project has made progress on this approach throughout its implementation.

Initial responses to campaign messages indicate increasing local recognition that the TFT trade is not only illegal but also harmful to biodiversity and public health, but the impact KAP survey will determine if this translates to behaviour change. Partnerships with the BFD and local law enforcement continue to strengthen, with local officials increasingly including TFT in discussions about wildlife crime. These shifts in knowledge and stakeholder alignment position the project for a lasting legacy.

13. IWT Challenge Fund identity

Throughout the project, the support of the IWT Challenge Fund and the contribution of the UK Government was recognised following the guidance provided. The IWT Challenge Fund logo was prominently displayed across all major campaign materials, including banners, posters, flyers, booklets, stickers, fridge magnets, school bags, water bottles, t-shirts, banners, and event backdrops. Public events included an acknowledgement of the IWT Challenge Fund's support. Social media posts, local news coverage, and project documentation also referenced the UK Government's role in funding the activities.

14. Safeguarding



15. Project expenditure

Table 1: Project expenditure during the reporting period (April 2024-March 2025)

Project spend (indicative) since last Annual Report	2024/25 Grant (£)		2024/25 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	£121,969.00	£121,969.00			

Table 2: Project mobilised or matched funding during the reporting period (1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025)

	Secured to date	Expected by end of project	Sources
Matched funding leveraged by the partners to deliver the project (£)			US Fish and Wildlife Service, and WCS private unrestricted funding
Total additional finance mobilised for new activities occurring outside of the project, building on evidence, best	N/A	N/A	

practices and the project (£)			
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16. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere

None.

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 to edit and use the following for various promotional purposes.

In Year 3, the project made progress, took actions towards improvements in shifting public attitudes and behaviour towards tortoise and freshwater turtle (TFT) species through awareness raising campaigns. The campaigns reached more than 10,000 people across four districts identified as areas of high-consumption (Satkhira, Khulna, Madaripur, and Gopalganj) using a culturally tailored mix of community events, media outreach, and educational engagement. Highlights included cultural events, dramatic pot songs, school competitions, community radio programs, and public exhibitions - all designed to challenge the social norms that have traditionally accepted freshwater turtle consumption.

A feature of the Year 3 campaign was the active involvement of local journalists and religious leaders, whose trusted voices helped spread awareness about the illegality of turtle trade, the conservation status of TFT species, and associated health risks from preparing and eating wild meat including TFTs. In total 84 journalists participated in sensitization workshops in Year 2, resulting in regular media coverage of TFT issues in Year 3 on print and broadcast platforms. Hindu religious leaders pledged to become turtle guardians, and it is hoped they will continue to spread conservation messages during major religious festivals.

The project advocated for effective enforcement through proposed changes to regulations and awareness-building among law enforcement agencies led to increased discussions on TFT-related offences and community-level monitoring.

Image, Video or Graphic Information:

File Type (Image / Video / Graphic)	File Name or File Location	Caption including description, country and credit	Social media accounts and websites to be tagged (leave blank if none)	Consent of subjects received (delete as necessary)
Image 1	Image 1 TFT campaign Miking vehicles in campaign areas.JPG	Miking vehicles in campaign areas, Bangladesh, WCS Bangladesh		Yes
Image 2	Image 2 TFT campaign Decorated miking vehicle driving the campaign forward.JPG	Decorated miking vehicle driving the campaign forward, Bangladesh, WCS Bangladesh		Yes

Image 3	<u>Image 3 TFT campaign Interactive Awareness Session with Household members.jpg</u>	Interactive Awareness Session with Household members, Bangladesh, WCS Bangladesh		Yes
Image 4	<u>Image 4 TFT campaign Interns described resource materials they handed over to the household members and described the three key messages to stop consuming TFTs.JPG</u>	Image_4_TFT campaign_Interns described resource materials they handed over to the household members and described the three key		Yes
Image 5	<u>Image 5 TFT campaign Students are enthusiastically participating in the school program session.JPG</u>	Students are enthusiastically participating in the school program session, Bangladesh, WCS Bangladesh		Yes
Image 6	<u>Image 6 TFT campaign Students enthusiastically participate in a quiz session.jpg</u>	Students enthusiastically participate in a quiz session, Bangladesh, WCS Bangladesh		Yes
Image 7	<u>Image 7 TFT campaign One-hour meeting with teachers following school program to encourage them about TFT conservation.jpg</u>	One-hour meeting with teachers following school program to encourage them about TFT conservation, Bangladesh, WCS Bangladesh		Yes
Image 8	<u>Image 8 TFT campaign Children enjoying turtle-themed race event.jpg</u>	Children enjoying turtle-themed race event, Bangladesh, WCS Bangladesh		Yes
Image 9	<u>Image 9 TFT campaign Girls participating in "Rabbit Race" in race session.JPG</u>	Girls participating in "Rabbit Race" in race session, Bangladesh, WCS Bangladesh		Yes
Image 10	<u>Image 10 TFT campaign The audience engaged and enjoyed the lively pot song performance.jpg</u>	The audience engaged and enjoyed the lively pot song performance, Bangladesh, WCS Bangladesh		Yes

Image 11	<u>Image 11 TFT campaign The film screening engaged the audience and sparked enthusiastic participation.jpg</u>	The film screening engaged the audience and sparked enthusiastic participation, Bangladesh, WCS Bangladesh		Yes
Image 12	<u>Image 12 TFT campaign The religious leader meetings were marked by active participation.jpg</u>	The religious leader meetings were marked by active participation, Bangladesh, WCS Bangladesh		Yes
Image 13	<u>Image 13 TFT campaign One-hour meeting with teachers following school program to encourage them about TFT conservation MG 3353 112514.jpg</u>	One-hour meeting with teachers following school program to encourage them about TFT conservation, Bangladesh, WCS Bangladesh		Yes

Annex 1: Report of progress and achievements against logframe for Financial Year 2024-2025

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2024 - March 2025	Actions required/planned for next period
Impact <i>Improved conservation prospects for threatened freshwater turtles and tortoises (TFTs) in Bangladesh through a targeted behaviour change campaign to reduce consumption and exploitation</i>		Steps towards an understanding of consumer behaviours and market dynamics for TFT in Bangladesh.	
Outcome Reduction in consumption of TFTs in Bangladesh as a result of behaviour change of consumers, sharing of lessons learned and increased protection of threatened species.	0.1 A 30% reduction in consumption of TFTs amongst targeted consumers (n=2,000) by Y4Q4 from project baseline.	0.1 We will report on this indicator in Y4Q4. Baseline has been developed.	None required. We will arrange two cross-country visits for Indian Forest Department and Bangladesh Forest Department in Y3. We had to cancel this activity due to political unrest in Bangladesh and changed relations between India and Bangladesh. A change request (December 2024) was submitted to reallocate the funds from this activity to the TFT demand reduction behaviour change campaign.
	0.2 A 30% reduction in the number of threatened TFTs traded in Bangladesh by Y4Q4 from project baseline.	0.2 We will report on this indicator in Y4Q4. Baseline has been developed.	
	0.3 Bangladesh and India share lessons learned and information on efforts to change the behaviour of TFT consumers through at least 2 annual meetings.	0.3 WCS Bangladesh and India started sharing information, such as lessons learned from WCS India about the TFT market survey they conducted in the District of North 24 Pargana. WCS Bangladesh also shared TFT market survey reports with WCS India.	
Output 1 Behavioural change strategy developed for reducing the demand for TFTs based on improved understanding of market dynamics and consumer motivations.	1.1 TFT consumption and trade hotspots identified by Y1Q4.	1.1 TFT consumption and trade hotspots identified. Y1 Annual report.	
	1.2 A KAP survey is conducted to increase knowledge on consumers and market dynamics for TFTs including identification of baselines, target consumer groups and their motivations for consumption by Y2Q2.	1.2 A baseline KAP survey completed. Y2 Annual report.	

	1.3 A behavioural change strategy for reducing the demand for TFTs developed in collaboration with and approved by government partners by Y3Q1.	1.3 The strategy has been revised and finalized with input from the government (BFD). Y3 half-yearly report.	
	1.4 Socio-economic drivers of involvement in illegal trade and consumption are identified and a summary report prepared by Y2Q4.	1.4 These are identified and included within the baseline KAP report, see indicator	
Activity 1.1: Media search and data analysis to identify TFT consumption and trade hotspots.		Media search and data analysis were conducted.	Continue media search and analysis.
Activity 1.2: TFT market survey.		Y2 TFT Market Survey covering Hindu festival season (October & November) was completed in Y2Q3 with 330 visits to 188 markets across 16 districts.	Conduct another round of market surveys at a potentially higher demand time in September-November 2025 before Durga Puja and Kali Puja.
Activity 1.3: Develop and finalise map of TFT consumption and trade hotspots and consult with key stakeholder.		Revised maps were developed based on the KAP study report and TFT market survey reports, Activity 1.2. Y2 Annual report.	Update maps as needed, based on additional data collected in Activity 1.1 and 1.2.
Activity 1.4: Develop pre and post KAP survey in consultation with the key stakeholder (e.g., Forest Department (BFD)).		During the Y1 baseline KAP survey method, concept note, questionnaire, and IRB application were developed.	In Y4, the post (impact) survey methodology, design, and questionnaire will be developed based on the pre-survey.
Activity 1.5: Conduct pre-KAP survey in identified TFT consumption and trade hotspots.		KAP surveys were conducted in 320 households with 640 (280 M, 280 F). 15 FGDs were conducted to supplement the KAP findings.	This activity is completed.
Activity 1.6: Meeting with the Forest Department to share pre-KAP survey results.		The Bangladesh Forest Department was informed of the baseline KAP study results in Y2Q4 (please see the Y2 annual report).	Further share Baseline KAP survey results with the Forest Departments of Bangladesh and India. The results were shared with WCS India which was requested to share this with FD India. This activity is now completed.
Activity 1.7: Develop a draft TFT demand reduction behaviour change strategy in consultation with BFD and stakeholders.		A draft of the TFT demand reduction behaviour change strategy document was shared with BFD in a consultation workshop organised in Y2Q4, and their feedback is incorporated into a	The TFT demand reduction behaviour change strategy is now completed and implemented at field level. This activity is now completed.

		revised document (please see the Y3 half-yearly report).	
Activity 1.8: Consultation workshop/meeting with Forest Department for approval of TFT demand reduction behaviour change strategy.		A consultation workshop was organised in March 2024 (Y2Q4).	This activity is completed.
Activity 1.9: Analyse the KAP survey data to identify socio-economic drivers of illegal trade and consumption and prepare summary report.		Through the KAP study questionnaire, we have identified the socio-economic drivers. We could identify things like TFT as considered luxury items for gatherings at the end of festivals and are eaten mainly by better-off people.	This activity is completed.
Activity 1.10: Repeat market surveys throughout project to monitor any drop in size of market to support indication of reduced demand.		We have conducted a Y2 TFT market survey in 188 markets in 16 districts.	We will conduct the third TFT market survey in Y4Q3.
Output 2 Behaviour change strategy implemented resulting in measurable changes to knowledge, attitudes and practices of TFT consumers, and lessons learned to improve future campaigns.	2.1 A minimum of 2,000 people are exposed to targeted behaviour change messaging, including gender and cultural considerations, in local dialects by Y3Q4.	2.1 We will report on this indicator in Y4.	
	2.2 50% increase in number and accuracy of articles on the illegal trade and ecological role of TFTs including the penalties involved in their illegal capture, possession, sale and consumption by Y3Q1 (baseline = 25 articles).	2.2 We are monitoring articles and will report on this indicator in Y3Y4 when ongoing analysis is completed.	
	2.3 15% decrease in consumer self-reported consumption in responses to the behaviour change campaign in a post-campaign KAP survey of at least 200 (50% women) individuals by Y4Q4.	2.3 Baseline data was collected through the KAP surveys. Since the behaviour change campaign was delayed by external political events the post-campaign survey had to be completed shortly after the pilot campaign and was redesigned as an adoption survey to focus on operational lessons and feedback. Any attributable change will be detected by the post-KAP survey and reported in Y4 (see indicator 2.4).	
	2.4 30% decrease in demand and consumption of TFTs linked to the behaviour change campaign in the final KAP survey of at least 200 (50% women) individuals by Y4Q4.	2.4 Baseline data was collected through the KAP surveys, and a repeat impact KAP survey is scheduled for later in Y4 to give sufficient time for practice to change. We will report on this indicator in Y4.	
Activity 2.1: Develop awareness raising key messages and materials.		We have developed the awareness raising key messages based on the KAP survey findings	We have completed, printed and shared the awareness materials in Y3Q3 and after

		and the awareness materials are at the final stage of printing.	piloting these and an adoption survey we have modified and finalized the materials and used these in the main behaviour change campaign. Activity now completed.
Activity 2.2: Documentary film on reducing TFT consumption.		The animated documentary film is in the final stage of development and shall be completed by Y3Q1 as per the revised implementation timetable (Annex 4).	We have received the final version of the TFT animation film and made use of it. Activity now completed.
Activity 2.3: Design TFT consumer demand reduction campaign.		This activity will start in Y3Q1 as per the revised implementation timetable.	This was designed, piloted, assessed in an adoption survey, and revised and then implemented during Year 3. Activity now completed.
Activity 2.4: Execute campaign in identified TFT consumption and trade hotspots.		This activity will start in Y3Q1 Y3Q4 as per the revised implementation timetable.	The campaign was executed in the TFT consumption and trade hotspots. Largely completed, but some follow ups with local stakeholders and leaders to reinforce messages in Y4.
Activity 2.5: Organise and hold two journalist training workshops.		We have completed this activity in Y2Q2 and reported in Y2 half-yearly report.	This activity is completed.
Activity 2.6: Conduct post-KAP surveys in the areas where TFT demand reduction campaign took place.		This activity will start in Y3Q2 Y3Q3 (for adoption survey) and in Y4Q3 (for the impact survey) as per the revised implementation timetable.	Conduct post-KAP surveys using the same protocol as in Y1Q4.
Activity 2.7: Repeat market surveys.		This activity will start in Y4Q3 as per agreed implementation timetable.	Conduct market surveys using the same protocol as in Y1Q4.
Output 3 Establish collaboration for behaviour change for TFTs through sharing of the approach between wildlife managers, law enforcement officials and development agencies in Bangladesh and India on successes and failures in demand reduction.	3.1 Four meetings (virtual and in-person) held between Bangladesh and India on illegal trade of TFTs by Y3Q4.	3.1 Discussions between WCS India and Bangladesh on this topic were initiated. We already have provided two meeting reports on this indicator.	
	3.2 A replicable, adaptable behaviour change model for reducing demand in TFT species is developed by Y2Q1.	3.2 We collected evidence to inform the development of this behaviour change model. We will report on this indicator in Y4 as per the revised timetable.	
	3.3 TFT demand reduction strategy and model shared with colleagues in India by Y4Q2.	3.3 We collected evidence to inform the development of the demand reduction strategy and model. We already have reported on this indicator in Y2.	

	3.4 A summary report on socio-economic drivers of involvement in illegal trade and consumption is shared with development agencies in Bangladesh over emails by Y2Q1.	3.4 We collected evidence to inform the development of this behaviour change model. The baseline-KAP report which includes information on socio-economic drivers of consumption has been shared with BFD in Y2Q4.	
Activity 3.1: Organise two virtual meetings between India and Bangladesh.		We have held two virtual meetings between WCS-India and WCS Bangladesh in the Y2. We will continue to hold these meetings to follow up on activities and strengthen links.	The target is completed, but since in-person meetings had to be abandoned, further virtual meetings may be held in Y4 if feasible.
Activity 3.2: Organise an in-person workshop at Bana Bhaban in Bangladesh with participation by forest officials from Bangladesh and India.		This meeting is due in Y3Q1 as per the revised timetable.	Organize an in-person meeting with BFD and Indian Forest Department as per schedule. Activity dropped.
Activity 3.3: Organise an in-person workshop at Aranya Bhaban in India with participation by forest officials from Bangladesh and India.		This meeting is due in Y3Q4 as per the revised timetable.	Organize an in-person meeting with BFD and Indian Forest Department as per schedule. Activity dropped.
Activity 3.4: Distribute summary report on socio-economic drivers of involvement in illegal trade and consumption with stakeholders including development agencies.		We have finalized the KAP Study summary report, in which we identified the socio-economic drivers of involvement in illegal trade and consumption, and we have started sharing the report with the relevant stakeholders.	Developed the summary report after analysing the baseline KAP survey data and shared with BFD. To be shared further with relevant Law Enforcement Agencies and potential development and livelihood support NGOs working in the target areas.
Activity 3.5: Share TFT consumer demand reduction campaign strategy and model with WCS-India and other organisations		This activity will start in Y3Q1 as per the revised implementation timetable.	We have already shared the baseline KAP survey report with WCS India (Y3Q1).
Output 4 Bangladesh's national wildlife protection laws strengthened for TFT protection.	4.1 All threatened TFT species listed under Wildlife (Conservation and Security) Act, 2012 and the definitions clarified of Schedule I and II protected species by Y4Q4.	4.1 We drafted the TFT species list and submitted the document to BFD for review. We will report on this indicator in Y4, but note that legislative change may not be possible under the interim government.	
	4.2 Customs agency empowered to implement provisions of (Conservation and Security) Act, 2012 by Y4Q4.	4.2 We drafted the relevant legal documents and submitted to respective authorities and will report on this indicator in Y4, but note that legislative change may not be possible under the interim government.	
Activity 4.1: Prepare background document and draft proposal for listing all threatened TFT species under the Wildlife Act, 2012.		Background document and proposal for listing all threatened TFT species under the Wildlife	Follow up with the BFD and the relevant ministry.

	(Conservation and Security) Act, 2012 was drafted and submitted by Y2Q2.	
Activity 4.2: Prepare a proposal to clarify definitions of Schedule I and II protected species in the Wildlife Act, 2012, and submit to BFD for taking necessary steps by forwarding it to Ministry, including meetings and discussions with stakeholders.	A proposal to clarify definitions of Schedule I and II protected species in the Wildlife Act, 2012, was drafted and sent to BFD for review in Y1Q4.	Follow up with the BFD and the relevant ministry.
Activity 4.3: Follow-up meetings and engagement with BFD on proposals to list threatened TFT species and clarify definitions of Schedule I and II protected species in the Wildlife Act, 2012.	Three separate meetings with BFD were held in Y2 to follow up on this.	Follow up with the BFD and the relevant ministry.
Activity 4.4: Prepare a proposal to add regulatory directives from the Wildlife Act, 2012 to the Import Policy Order under the Imports and Exports (Control) Act, 1950 and submit it to Customs.	A proposal on regulatory directives for the Wildlife Act, 2012 to the Import Policy Order under the Imports and Exports (Control) Act, 1950 has been drafted and submitted to the BFD for forwarding it to the Customs Authority for official endorsement.	Follow up with the BFD, Customs, and the relevant ministry.
Activity 4.5: Follow-up with Customs Agency through meetings and engagement on the proposal.	Our Legal advisor is in touch with the Customs Agency and following up with the progress of this proposal.	Follow up with the BFD, Customs, and the relevant ministry.

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

Activities

Output 1

Activity 1.1: Media search and data analysis to identify TFT consumption and trade hotspots.

Activity 1.2: TFT market survey.

Activity 1.3: Develop and finalise map of TFT consumption and trade hotspots and consult with key stakeholder.

Activity 1.4: Develop pre and post KAP survey in consultation with the key stakeholder (e.g., Forest Department (BFD)).

Activity 1.5: Conduct pre-KAP survey in identified TFT consumption and trade hotspots.

Activity 1.6: Meeting with the Forest Department to share pre-KAP survey results.

Activity 1.7: Develop a draft TFT demand reduction behaviour change strategy in consultation with BFD and stakeholders.

Activity 1.8: Consultation workshop/meeting with Forest Department for approval of TFT demand reduction behaviour change strategy.

Activity 1.9: Analyse the KAP survey data to identify socio-economic drivers of illegal trade and consumption and prepare summary report.

Activity 1.10: Repeat market surveys throughout project to monitor any drop in size of market to support indication of reduced demand.

Output 2

Activity 2.1: Develop awareness raising key messages and materials.

Activity 2.2: Documentary film on reducing TFT consumption.

Activity 2.3: Design TFT consumer demand reduction campaign.

Activity 2.4: Execute campaign in identified TFT consumption and trade hotspots.

Activity 2.5: Organise and hold two journalist training workshops.

Activity 2.6: Conduct post-KAP surveys in the areas where TFT demand reduction campaign took place.

Activity 2.7: Repeat market surveys.

Output 3

Activity 3.1: Organise two virtual meetings between India and Bangladesh.

~~Activity 3.2: Organise an in-person workshop at Bana Bhaban in Bangladesh with participation by forest officials from Bangladesh and India.~~

~~Activity 3.3: Organise an in-person workshop at Aranya Bhaban in India with participation by forest officials from Bangladesh and India.~~

Activity 3.4: Distribute summary report on socio-economic drivers of involvement in illegal trade and consumption with stakeholders including development agencies.

Activity 3.5: Share TFT consumer demand reduction campaign strategy and model with WCS India and other organisations.

Output 4

Activity 4.1: Prepare background document and draft proposal for listing all threatened TFT species under the Wildlife Act, 2012.

Activity 4.2: Prepare a proposal to clarify definitions of Schedule I and II protected species in the Wildlife Act, 2012, and submit to BFD for taking necessary steps by forwarding it to Ministry, including meetings and discussions with stakeholders.

Activity 4.3: Follow-up meetings and engagement with BFD on proposals to list threatened TFT species and clarify definitions of Schedule I and II protected species in the Wildlife Act, 2012.

Activity 4.4: Prepare a proposal to add regulatory directives from the Wildlife Act, 2012 to the Import Policy Order under the Imports and Exports (Control) Act, 1950 and submit it to Customs.

Activity 4.5: Follow-up with Customs Agency through meetings and engagement on the proposal.

Annex 3 Standard Indicators

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-B07	Number of illegal wildlife products/shipments detected.	Number of illegal TFT products/shipments traded in Bangladesh, detected through media monitoring.	Number	By species	2,807 individuals (18 species incidents)	2,049 individuals (32 species incidents)	5,307 individuals (29 species incidents)	10,163 individuals	N/A (depends on the media)
IWTCF-B20	Number of amendments to national laws and regulations in project countries.	Number of amendments to the Wildlife Act, 2012.	Number	Disaggregated by whether they are on wildlife legislation, serious and organised crime or closing markets.	0	0	0	0	2
IWTCF-B21	Number of policies and frameworks developed or formally contributed to by projects and being implemented by appropriate authorities.	Number of amendments to the Import Policy Order of Customs.	Number	Typology of policy. By new policy or framework vs amended.	0	0	0	0	1
IWTCF-B24	Number of government institutions/ departments with enhanced awareness and understanding of biodiversity and associated poverty issues.	Number of government institutions/ departments with enhanced awareness and understanding of biodiversity and associated poverty issues.	Number	Government institutions (Customs, BFD)	0	0	0	0	2
IWTCF-CO1	Number of people reported with changed behaviour in IWT post-intervention.	Number of TFT consumers self-reported having stopped to consume TFT post demand reduction campaign.	Number	Gender; Age Group; Stakeholder group Categories of IWT behaviour; Typology of surveys.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
WTCTF[1]C02	Number and type of IWT behaviour change	Number of awareness raising material to reduce TFT demand in	Number and volume.	Language (local/other)	N/A	7 drafted (stickers, poster,	11 finalized (Posters-2,800, flyers-11,000, stickers-4,200,	11	10 materials and approximately

	materials produced and distributed.	Bangladesh produced and distributed.		Typology of materials produced (i.e. print media, Radio...).		brochure, ruler, radio program, short video, animation video)	booklet-10,000, fridge magnet-2,500, t-shirt-600, school bag-80, water bottle-60, TFT animation video-1, TFT short video-1)		10,000 copies in total.
IWTCTF-C03	Number of communication channels carrying campaign message.	Number of communication channels carrying TFT demand reduction campaign message.	Number	Typology of communications channel (Radio, miking, audio-video visuals, poster-leaflets	N/A	N/A	6 (Miking, Radio, audio-video visuals-Pot songs, Poster-leaflet-stickers-booklets, t-shirts-schoolbags, religious leaders-school teachers)	6	5
IWTCTF-C04	Number of partners with influence on target audience that have distributed campaign message(s).	Number of partners with influence on target audience that have distributed TFT demand reduction campaign message(s).	Number of partners	Organisation Type; Stakeholder group	BFD	BFD	BFD, social elites, religious leaders, school-teachers, school children, household members	6	6
IWTCTF-C05	Number of people reached with behaviour change messaging (i.e. audience).	Number if people reached with behaviour change messaging on TFT consumption in Bangladesh.	Number	Stakeholder group: Indigenous Peoples, Local Communities, Nationals, public sector, civil society, private sector.	N/A	N/A	14,621 (household members: 6,772, school children: 3,318, teachers: 377, religious leaders: 71, pot song & film show: 4,173)	14,621	10,000
IWTCTF-C06	Number of consumers that have demonstrated the desired behaviour change.	% of target consumers having reduced TFT consumption by the end of the project, from baseline.	Number or %	Gender; Age Group; Stakeholder group	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	30%
IWTCTF-C07	Number of consumers targeted in demand country(ies).	Number of consumers targeted in TFT demand reduction behaviour change campaign in Bangladesh.	Number	Gender; Age Group; Stakeholder group:	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2,500

Table 2 Publications

Title	Type (e.g. journals, best practice manual, blog post, online videos, podcasts, 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)
TFT animation film	Online video	November 2024	N/A	N/A	YouTube	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ne3l0TrykH0&t=21s
TFT short promo video	Online video	January 2025	N/A	N/A	YouTube	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V5LUkSHHSDA

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, scheme, type of report (i.e. Annual or Final), and year) and deleted the blue guidance text before submission?	Yes
Is the report less than 10MB? If so, please email to BCF-Reports@niras.com putting the project number in the subject line.	Yes
Is your report more than 10MB? If so, please consider the best way to submit. One zipped file, or a download option is recommended. We can work with most online options and will be in touch if we have a problem accessing material. If unsure, please discuss with BCF-Reports@niras.com about the best way to deliver the report, putting the project number in the subject line.	No
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.	Yes
Have you provided an updated risk register? If you have an existing risk register you should provide an updated version alongside your report. If your project was funded prior to this being a requirement, you are encourage to develop a risk register.	Yes
If you are submitting photos for publicity purposes, do these meet the outlined requirements (see section 17)?	Yes
Have you involved your partners in preparation of the report and named the main contributors	No
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table fully?	Yes
Do not include claim forms or other communications with this report.	