CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



Seventieth meeting of the Standing Committee Rosa Khutor, Sochi (Russian Federation), 1-5 October 2018

Strategic matters

COMMUNITY AWARENESS ON WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING: ADDENDUM

Background

The Conference of the Parties, at its 17th meeting (CoP17, Johannesburg, 2016), adopted Decision 17.86 on *Community awareness on wildlife trafficking*, as follows:

Directed to the Secretariat

- 17.86 The Secretariat shall subject to external funding: a) contract a consultant to:
 - engage with Parties that reported against Decision 16.85 paragraph c)^{1*} and any other Parties as may be appropriate to identify best practices and challenges experienced by these Parties in their implementation of strategies or programmes to enhance community awareness about the economic, social and environmental impacts of trafficking in wildlife, and to encourage the general public to report wildlife trafficking to appropriate authorities for further investigation;
 - *ii)* conduct a review of existing strategies or programmes to enhance community awareness; and
 - iii) prepare a report on the basis of the findings made through the activities outlined in paragraphs i) and ii) in this decision, together with recommendations, on how to further enhance the effectiveness of such strategies or programmes to enhance community awareness; and
 - b) report progress on the implementation of the present Decision at the 69th and 70th meetings of the Standing Committee.

As noted in Decision 17.86 a) i) above, this decision originated from Decision 16.85 on *Rhinoceroses* (*Rhinocerotidae spp.*), and is intended to focus on rural communities that live in the immediate vicinity of conservation areas in the range states. Awareness raising on wildlife trafficking in destination countries is already covered by the work on demand reduction as mandated by Decisions 17.44 to 17.48. Likewise, capacity building is already covered under Decisions 17.31 to 17.35.

This is the report of the consultant's findings and recommendations.

¹ * China, Greece, South Africa and Zimbabwe – document CoP17 Doc. 68.

Methodology

The Secretariat sent out a questionnaire, prepared in collaboration with the consultant, to all Parties with Notification to the Parties No. 2018/053 of 28 May 2018 (Annex 1) to gather information on strategies or programmes to enhance community awareness about the economic, social and environmental impacts of trafficking in wildlife.

The Secretariat's understanding of the scope of the study as mandated by Decision 17.86 is explained in paragraph 3 of document SC70 Doc. 18. This is however not the understanding of all Parties. Some responses to the questionnaire refer to awareness building and law enforcement capacity building activities in the destination countries.

The Secretariat received 9 responses to the notification and shared these with the consultant. In addition, the consultant reached out to many Parties directly, requesting their cooperation in filling out the questionnaire. The consultant also offered to undertake Skype interviews with Parties if needed. In addition, the consultant made a target list of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) known to engage in relevant awareness raising activities, and reached out directly to those organisations. A number of them filled in the questionnaire, and the consultant interviewed a handful of them by Skype.

In total, responses were received through questionnaire or interview from 27 Parties and 18 NGOs. The full list of respondents is included in Annex 2. The consultant reviewed relevant literature and included those findings in this report. Resource and time constraints did not allow for engagement directly with any rural communities.

Findings

A number of Parties, as well as conservation organizations, both international and local, have been engaged in raising awareness among both rural and urban communities of poaching and wildlife trafficking and its legal, economic, social and environmental impacts. The following section of the report outlines the defined audiences, key messages, approaches used, and challenges experienced. It will close with a summary of key findings.

Audiences

While the majority of programmes described by respondents were focused on rural communities surrounding protected areas, or those communities who live alongside wildlife, there were also a number of programmes whose target audience was the urban population in countries that are range States for species involved in the illegal wildlife trade. While some of these campaigns were focused on awareness raising about anti-trafficking, many included messages about the wider cultural and economic consequences of wildlife crime. With the inclusion of major bus terminuses and transit points, urban campaigns are likely reaching portions of the rural population as well.

A major focus of some campaigns was on students or youth, with programmes targeting school children, either through support to teachers delivering the nationally-mandated curriculum or through support for after-school programmes or clubs.

Messages

There was a very diverse set of messages included in the programmes to raise awareness about wildlife trafficking amongst rural and urban populations in source countries. While Decision 17.86 refers to raising awareness of the economic, social and environmental impacts of wildlife trafficking, the responses to the questionnaire indicated that there is a wide range of messages being used, for varying audiences and purposes.

A great deal of work is going into raising awareness about the **legal consequences** of wildlife trafficking. This includes advertising the size of penalties, both fines and jail terms, as well as advertising successful seizures, arrests and prosecutions. Many countries have updated their laws, and so there is a particular need to educate citizens about changes to the law, and new or updated penalties. A number of respondents noted that it is critical, however, that the legal and judiciary systems are well-capacitated to successfully prosecute wildlife crimes before such awareness campaigns are launched. They emphasized that successful prosecutions were more effective than any awareness campaign about laws or penalties. This lesson is reflected in the relevant literature, which notes the importance of the visibility of deterrence efforts in ensuring compliance with laws (Kahler and Gore, 2012; Keane et al., 2011).

Activities on building awareness of the **economic consequences** of wildlife crime usually focus on the contribution of wildlife-based tourism to GDP, and the relationship between wildlife and tourism. One project, working in East Africa, noted that they had observed an increase amongst their target audience in understanding of the contribution of tourism to GDP as a result of their campaign. However, they noted that the understanding of the link between a healthy wildlife population and the tourism industry was still low. There are also programmes that attempt to raise awareness of the value of biodiversity to a country, including ecosystem services that support other economic drivers. In some cases, programmes focus on the issue of bushmeat rather than species that are in high-value international trade. If the illegal bushmeat trade is seriously impacting wildlife populations, this has major economic consequences for local communities, and some programmes have found it more effective to focus on this trade, rather than the poaching of species such as elephant that are in international trade, but may be of little value locally.

There are many programmes that focus on the **social or cultural consequences** of the illegal wildlife trade. A major message is around national heritage, pride and ownership. Wildlife is 'beneficial' to humans. These resources belong to us, often stated as "Poaching steals from us all". These campaigns go beyond the economic value of these species and speak to the feeling of national pride in a unique wildlife heritage.

The **environmental consequences** of wildlife crime are also a major message that are used in campaigns, with key species being symbols for a healthy environment – if they are gone, then the environment is no longer in balance.

A small number of programmes were mentioned by respondents that seek to increase tolerance for living with wildlife, through providing information and building awareness about methods to mitigate conflict. The questionnaire, and indeed Decision 17.86, was focused on awareness programmes related to wildlife crime, so it is likely that there are more programmes on human-wildlife conflict than was reflected through this exercise.

Approaches

Respondents referred to many different strategies that are used to raise awareness about environmental issues, including wildlife crime.

Many different **communications mechanisms** are used to get messages out: newspapers, billboards, ecological murals, music videos, television PSAs, social networks, websites, radio, magazines, posters, postage stamps, and even virtual reality technology. Many of these technologies are, unfortunately, only available to urban populations with at least some disposable income, which may limit their reach to the key target audience of rural populations living alongside wildlife.

One of the most common strategies mentioned by respondents is to work through **primary and secondary schools** to reach the youth. Some programmes work through the existing curriculum, providing support to teachers, while others work through after-school activities or wildlife clubs. There are some innovative approaches, such as the development of apps and games to educate children about the value of their wildlife heritage. Another interesting example shared was a scholarship scheme for talented children, ensuring that they are able to complete secondary school and attend university. This scheme is marketed to the community as 'compensation' for the costs of living with wildlife.

Another common strategy used is to develop **community ranger**, **or ecoguard**, programmes. Community rangers, in addition to undertaking monitoring and law enforcement activities, are the main avenue by which messages about wildlife are communicated to rural communities. Respondents referred to a large variety of different 'entry' points for these discussions, including human security, human-wildlife conflict, and monitoring of natural resources, but all respondents that use community ranger programmes indicated that a key objective was to educate rural communities about the consequences of illegal wildlife trade.

Visits to wildlife areas for rural communities was another common strategy mentioned. This strategy was used for two main purposes: 1) to expose rural communities to wildlife in a positive way; and 2) to educate rural communities about the economic contribution of tourism. One respondent stated that "children seeing tourists is more impactful than seeing wildlife – they have no other insight into the wildlife economy." Many tourism companies include such activities as part of their corporate social responsibility.

The involvement of **celebrity ambassadors** is increasingly being used in source countries (it was already heavily in use in 'demand' countries). Musicians, actors, sports stars and business leaders are making Public Service Announcements (PSAs) and commercials about the importance of wildlife as a national heritage. An

interesting innovation is the engagement of faith leaders in such campaigns. In Tanzania, an inter-faith booklet has been written on the religious imperative for wildlife conservation, and a gospel song about creation of wildlife has been popularized. Some campaigns are encouraging domestic tourism.

While **radio and television** have commonly been used as a home for PSAs, there is an increasing use of fictional film, television and radio to get out the message about wildlife crime. For example, a police drama on television in Botswana has dealt with the issue of poaching and trafficking. Likewise, a popular action film, and a long-running radio drama in Uganda have both addressed the issue. A popular television show about agriculture in Kenya has included episodes on ways to mitigate against human-wildlife conflict. Also in Kenya, an NGO has worked with major film networks to ensure that wildlife documentaries that are filmed in Kenya can actually be seen by Kenyans on local television stations.

Special events are often used to raise awareness about wildlife issues, although these are usually targeted at urban populations more than those who live in rural areas alongside wildlife. Special events, such as World Elephant Day, World Wildlife Day, Bird-Loving Week (China), the Camel Derby (Kenya) are all opportunities used to raise awareness about the importance of wildlife. Trade fairs are also often used as opportunities to showcase wildlife issues, but again these are targeted largely at urban populations.

At the most local, rural level, many report that long-term success is more likely when engaging through **local governance structures**, such as local committees (Mali), kgotla meetings (Botswana), and traditional leaders. A number of respondents reported that long-term community engagement has proven more effective than short-term awareness campaigns. It is critical to identify people and structures that are both representative and legitimate in order to have the most success with such awareness efforts. Many wildlife departments undertake outreach meetings and workshops at the local level, in response to particular issues.

Decision 17.86 refers to activities that "*encourage the general public to report wildlife trafficking to appropriate authorities for further investigation.*" The questionnaire requested information on any such '**hotline**' programmes. Most respondents indicated that there were hotline systems in place, but that intelligence networks, particularly rewards-based intelligence networks, were more effective than hotlines.

Finally, a number of respondents referred to activities and policies that **engaged rural communities in managing and benefitting from wildlife and protected areas**. These respondents were very clear that if communities do not materially benefit from the wildlife economy, then any awareness raising activities would be meaningless in the long term. While only a small number of respondents referred to these types of activities, there is a great deal of research that emphasizes the importance of rural communities managing and benefitting from wildlife (Cooney et al., 2018; IUCN SULi et al., 2015; Roe, 2015).

Challenges

Respondents listed a variety of challenges they had experienced in attempting to undertake awareness campaigns, including:

- lack of financial resources;
- challenges expanding beyond major cities to reach rural populations;
- insufficient coordination of actions;
- language barriers; and
- lack of radio and television accessibility in rural areas.

Respondents raised other issues of concern. Scaling up education programmes can be challenging because of how difficult it is to change national-level syllabi. Additionally, while there may be recognition of the tourism industry's value to a local or national economy, the link between the tourism industry and a healthy wildlife population is not yet well understood. Other respondents were skeptical of the value of raising awareness amongst rural communities, who may have little influence over professional poaching syndicates. Another major challenge raised was corruption and lack of trust between communities, authorities, and NGOs in some contexts.

Finally, evaluation of success is very hard to measure and there is no clear 'blueprint' for building awareness amongst communities – such activities are by necessity unstructured and must be highly context-specific.

Summary of findings

At the community level, it is critical to understand the specific context and the relationship of the community to wildlife. Programmes must be context-specific for maximum chance of success. Likewise, awareness

programmes need to have clear target audiences, with messages and delivery mechanisms appropriate to each audience. It is critical to unpack and understand the motivations at the local level around engaging in wildlife crime in order to understand which types of interventions are likely to be most effective (Cooney et al., 2017; Roe et al., 2018). These motivations can be very diverse, and are not limited to acquiring money or food, or retaliating against human-wildlife conflict. In addition, it is absolutely critical to unpack individual vs. community costs and benefits to understand which types of awareness building might be necessary, and with which audiences (Kahler and Gore, 2012).

Communities that live adjacent to or with wildlife, particularly in places where poaching poses a serious threat to wildlife, are more often than not aware of poaching, wildlife trafficking, the penalties associated with them as well as the various impacts of poaching and wildlife trafficking although not necessarily in a comprehensive way. However, if the legal framework for dealing with wildlife crime is not in place, including capacity of the legal and judicial sector, then community-level awareness programmes about the legal consequences of engaging in poaching and illegal trade is unlikely to have major success (Keane et al., 2011). Successful prosecutions, with application of the maximum penalty, are a more effective awareness raising approach than educating communities about penalties.

Rural communities are on the front line and bear the costs of living with wildlife. Human wildlife conflict and lack of economic incentive from wildlife protection and management often lead to retaliation killing of wildlife and engagement in poaching and trafficking. The needs and rights of local communities are fundamental to the success of wildlife conservation. Effective engagement and benefit-sharing mechanisms, tangible incentives from wildlife and better understanding of local customs and traditions together with awareness raising will create a better chance of success.

Without meaningfully engaging with communities on their concerns, which range from lack of benefits to high levels of human-wildlife conflict, awareness programmes alone are unlikely to have major success in community-level engagement against poaching and illegal trade. A holistic approach is likely to be more successful than one focused only on raising awareness. In the same vein, approaches which are based on long-term trust building approaches are likely to have more success.

In the longer term, poaching and illegal trade are a lesser threat to wildlife than rapid land transformation and increasing habitat loss (Cooney et al., 2018; Roe et al., 2018). The understanding of the link between a healthy wildlife population and the tourism industry is still low. The opportunity cost is too high – the incentives to transform land from wildlife habitat to agriculture or other uses are great, and real incentives are needed for local communities to support wildlife as an economically viable and competitive land use option.

Recommendations

The consultant notes a number of recommendations regarding awareness raising programmes for rural communities living alongside wildlife:

- 1. Awareness programmes should not stand alone, but should be a component of wider programmes that seek to engage and empower rural communities in wildlife management, with due consideration of the costs of living with wildlife and the benefits of wildlife stewardship at the individual and community level;
- 2. Likewise, awareness programmes about the legal consequences of illegal wildlife trade should only be implemented when the legal framework for combatting illegal wildlife trade is in place including the capacity of the legal and judicial sector;
- Awareness programmes cannot easily be transferred across from one project to another, and must be context-specific, taking into account the relationship of the community to wildlife, illegal wildlife trade, and law enforcement, amongst others;
- 4. Awareness programmes should have clear target audiences, with appropriate messages and delivery mechanisms for each audience;
- 5. Robust monitoring should be included in any awareness programmes, to understand the most and least effective strategies;
- 6. Any further analysis of such programmes should specifically seek to engage directly with local communities that are the 'target' of awareness campaigns, as well as engaging with governments and organisations that are implementing them;

References

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- Cooney, R., Roe, D., Dublin, H., Phelps, J., Wilkie, D., Keane, A., Travers, H., Skinner, D., Challender, D.W.S., Allan, J.R., Biggs, D., 2017. From Poachers to Protectors: Engaging Local Communities in Solutions to Illegal Wildlife Trade: Engage communities against illegal wildlife trade. Conserv. Lett. 10, 367–374. https://doi.org/10.1111/conl.12294
- IUCN SULi, IIED, CEED, Austrian Ministry of Environment, TRAFFIC, 2015. Beyond enforcement: communities, governance, incentives and sustainable use in combating wildlife crime (Event report). Glenburn Lodge, Muldersdrift, South Africa.
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- Keane, A., Ramarolahy, A.A., Jones, J.P.G., Milner- Gulland, E.J., 2011. Evidence for the effects of environmental engagement and education on knowledge of wildlife laws in Madagascar. Conserv. Lett. 4, 55–63. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1755-263X.2010.00144.x
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Annex 1 – Notification No. 2018/053 of 28 May 2018

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA

NOTIFICATION TO THE PARTIES

Geneva, 28 May 2018

No. 2018/053

CONCERNING:

Community awareness on wildlife trafficking

1. At its 17th meeting (CoP17, Johannesburg, 2016), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decision 17.86 on

Community awareness on wildlife trafficking.

- 2. Decision 17.86, paragraph a), directs the Secretariat to, subject to external funding, contract a consultant to:
 - 1. *i)* engage with Parties that reported against Decision 16.85 paragraph c)^{*} and any other Parties as may be appropriate to identify best practices and challenges experienced by these Parties in their implementation of strategies or programmes to enhance community awareness about the economic, social and environmental impacts of trafficking in wildlife, and to encourage the general public to report wildlife trafficking to appropriate authorities for further investigation;
 - 2. *ii)* conduct a review of existing strategies or programmes to enhance community awareness; and
 - 3. *iii)* prepare a report on the basis of the findings made through the activities outlined in paragraphs i) and ii) in this decision, together with recommendations, on how to further enhance the effectiveness of such strategies or programmes to enhance community awareness.
- 3. In order to assist the preparation of this report, the contracted consultant has developed a questionnaire to gather information on strategies or programmes to enhance community awareness about the economic, social and environmental impacts of trafficking in wildlife and to encourage the general public to report wildlife trafficking to appropriate authorities for further investigation. The questionnaire is contained in the Annex to the present Notification.
- 4. Parties are invited to complete the attached questionnaire and submit their responses by 28 June 2018, to the Secretariat at: info@cites.org, with a copy to: yuan.liu@cites.org. The Secretariat will make the responses to the questionnaire available to the consultant, to be used in preparing a report for the 70th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC70, Rosa Khutor, Sochi, October 2018).

Questionnaire on community awareness on wildlife trafficking

Country	
Function of agency completing this questionnaire	
Contact details of agency/agencies completing this questionnaire	
Contact person (name, email, job title, function)	

Instructions:

Many countries have instituted programmes to:

- Build community awareness about the economic, social and environmental impacts of trafficking in wildlife; and
- Encourage the general public to report wildlife trafficking
- 1. If your country has any such programmes, please fill out the following table.
 - a) Please use one line per strategy.
 - b) Add as many lines to the table as is necessary for each strategy or programme.
- 2. If your country does not have any such programmes, please advise what the hurdles are to instituting such a programme.

provide	Please specify the		date	
strategy or programme	 geographical scope of this particular strategy or programme Local – please specify; National; or Transboundary – please specify partner countries. 	 Please detail the approach taken, including: Key messages Target audience If there are any materials that can be shared, please include them as annexes in your response, or provide the relevant URL links 	Please outline the experience with this strategy to date. Outline any particular successes as well as any challenges.	Please list all partners involved in this strategy, including any NGOs
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Add rows if necessary

Annex 2 – Respondents to the questionnaire

PARTIES

Name	Contact	Title	Agency
Benin		Directorate-General	Department of Waters, Forests and Hunting
Botswana		Director	Department of Wildlife and National Parks
Cameroon	Mrs Maha Ngalié	Chief of hunting service	Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife
Central African Republic	Nestor Waliwa	Director of Wildlife and Protected Areas	Director of Wildlife and Protected Areas
China	Shi Ronghong	Senior Consultant	International Coordinate of CITES Affairs
Colombia	Jessika Carvajal	Specialized Professional, Biodiversity Group	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development
Comoros	Dr. Soule Hamidou	Research Professor at the University of Comoros	Directorate General of Environment and Forests
Côte d'Ivoire	Mrs Kone Salimata	Director	Ministry of Water and Forests/ Director of Wildlife and Cycling Resources
El Salvador	Andrea María Chinchilla Magaña	Head of the CITES Service Unit	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock
France	Agathe Pelissier	CITES Project Manager	
Jamaica	Ava Tomlinson	Senior Public Education and Community Outreach Officer	National Environment and Planning Agency
Malawi	Alex Chunga	Head of CITES Focal Point & Law Enforcement	Department of National Parks and Wildlife
Mexico		General Directorate of Wildlife	Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT)
Myanmar	Mr. Win Naing Thaw	Director	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation
Niger	Samaila Sahailou	Director of Wildlife, Hunting, Parks and Reserves	
Peru	Jessica Gálvez - Durand Besnard		National Forest and Wildlife Service - SERFOR
Philippines	Crisanta Marlene P. Rodriguez	Director	Biodiversity Management Bureau
Thailand	Mrs. Nilubol Khanha	Forestry Technical Officer/ Chief of Subdivision	Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation

Name	Contact	Title	Agency
		Chief of Fish Inspector and Quarantine	
Thailand	Mr. Kriengkrai Jirapitigul	Group	Fish Inspector and Quarantine Group
		Head Division Protected Areas and	
Тодо	Kotchikpa Okoumassou	Wildlife	Forest Resources Branch
		Forest Chief Engineer/Head of	
Tunisia	Jamel Tahri	Department	General Directorate of Forests
United Arab Emirates	Muna Omran Majed Al Shamsi	Head of CITES	Ministry of Climate Change and Environment
			National Wildlife Crime Unit/ Border Force,
United Kingdom	Grant Miller	Senior Officer	Heathrow Airport
		Technical Advisor of the Department of	Ministry of Housing, Territorial Planning and
Uruguay	Marcel Calvar	Fauna	the Environment
Viet Nam	Mr. Vuong Tien Manh	Deputy Director	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
Yemen	Dr. Abdulqader M. Alkharraz	Chairman	Environment Protection Authority
			Zimbabwe Parks & Wildlife Management
Zimbabwe	Patience Gandiwa	International Conventions	Authority

NGOs

Name	Contact	Title
African Parks Network	Andrew Parker	Director of Conservation Development
Big Life Foundation	Jeremy Goss	Conservation Project Manager
EAGLE Network (Eco Activists for Governance and Law Enforcement)	Ofir Drori	Founding Director
Elephants for Africa	Dr Kate Evans	Founder & Director
International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW)	Matt Collis	Director, International Policy
Lowveld Rhino Trust, Zimbabwe	Mr Simbarashe Chiseva	Community Liaison Officer
Mali Elephant Project	Dr Susan Canney	Project Director, UK
PAMS Foundation	Krissie Clark	Co-Founder
PEGAS (Project to End Great Ape Slavery)	Daniel Stiles	Project Manager
Save The Elephants	Frank Pope	Chief Executive Officer

Name	Contact	Title
Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary	Natalia Casado Bolanos	Conservation Manager
Tikki Hywood Foundation	Lisa Hywood	Founder
WAG (Wildlife Action Group)	Lynn Clifford	Director
WCS (Wildlife Conservation Society)	Susan Lieberman	Vice President, International Policy
WildAid	Susie Watts	Africa Programme Director
Wildlife Crime Prevention (WCP)	Luwi Nguluka	Awareness Manager
WWF		
ZSL	Mike Hoffmann	Head of Global Conservation

Annex 3 - Examples of awareness materials

The following examples are just a small set of examples of the types of awareness programmes and materials that are used to raise awareness of illegal wildlife trade.

1. WILDAID Ben Pol Documentary (Ngorongoro, Tanzania)

WILDAID ambassadors, such as Ben Pol, a popular singer/songwriter in Tanzania, film PSAs and documentaries that are screened on local television, sharing information about conservation and encouraging national pride in wildlife. A predominant message is "Poaching Steals From Us All". Another PSA has messages from religious leaders in Tanzania.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OEezwliRLRM



2. CITES Poster, Zimbabwe

This poster is used in many government offices to raise awareness on the legal consequences of illegal wildlife trade.



3. Ndovu Zetu

This concert was held to raise national pride around elephants in Kenya. It was targeted at the urban audience in Nairobi, Kenya.



4. Lowveld Rhino Trust education programme

This is just one of many examples of education programmes designed to educate rural children about wildlife and illegal wildlife trade. This programme provides teaching materials and posters to primary schools located in a 10 kilometre buffer around rhino conservancies.

