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

Seventy-fourth meeting of the Standing Committee
Lyon (France), 7 - 11 March 2022

ICCWC ANNUAL REPORT 2020

This document is submitted by the Secretariat in relation to agenda item 33.3 on the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCWC) and presents the ICCWC Annual Report launched in 2020.¹

The ICCWC Annual Report 2020 is the Consortium’s first annual report which showcases ICCWC’s collective resolve to enhance capacity and bring coordinated support to national agencies, subregional and regional networks from around the globe to combat wildlife crime. It is available in English, French, and Spanish.

¹ The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat (or the United Nations Environment Programme) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.
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MEMBER STATES

Any country that has acceded to any of the relevant conventions/protocols/agreements where ICCWC partners have a mandate to operate and who have, or could potentially benefit from, ICCWC support.

NGO

Non-Governmental Organization

NRA

National Risk Assessment

RRG

Rapid Reference Guide

RRM

Rapid Reference Manual

SDG

Sustainable Development Goal

UNGA

United Nations General Assembly

UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

UWA

Uganda Wildlife Authority

WBG

World Bank Group

WC

Wildlife Crime

WCS

Wildlife Conservation Society

WCO

World Customs Organization

WEN

Wildlife Enforcement Network

WWC

World Wildlife Crime Report

WWF

World Wildlife Fund
The strength of ICCWC lies in its ability to tackle wildlife crime using a multi-pronged approach. Judicial support from one partner helps the law enforcement operations of another, while another partner helps enhance the political will for action and change.

Wildlife crime affects not only the iconic animal species, but over 7,000 species of CITES-listed wild animals and plants, driving many towards extinction. The COVID-19 pandemic illuminated the issue of wildlife crime and its role in intensifying the risk of disease emergence.

Wildlife crime has become one of the most serious forms of transnational organized crime and often converges with other serious crimes, with the criminals involved taking advantage of the low risk and high profits. Despite progress made to date, these criminals still do not face the full force of the law and much work remains to be done.

Combating a crime of this magnitude cannot be done by a single country, organization or sector. It requires a global and holistic approach through cooperation across borders and across jurisdictions. It requires commitment, collaboration and engagement along the entire criminal justice chain.

This need gave rise to the creation of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCWC) in 2010, a unique partnership of five intergovernmental organizations with the mandates and complementary expertise to support governments in addressing these transnational crimes.

Under the banner of ICCWC, we are stronger. Together we are able to deliver the range of strategies, tools, and services needed to support governments in understanding and strengthening their responses to wildlife crime, inter alia by adopting new or enhanced policies, enacting tougher legislation, building intelligence capability, strengthening investigative capacity and promoting and supporting the deployment of specialized investigative techniques against wildlife crime—ultimately assisting countries to dismantle organized crime networks and bring the criminals involved to justice.

In the following pages, you will read about how our partnerships with Member States and other stakeholders have enhanced the capacity of customs, police, wildlife authorities and entire criminal justice systems, enabling a strong, consistent, collaborative and increasingly effective response to wildlife crime. Examples in which ICCWC assessments have led to positive changes in penal codes, or where technical support has built capability to assist in the prosecution of criminals involved in wildlife crime, are detailed. Operation Thunder 2020, a global law enforcement operation initiated and supported by ICCWC which rallied 103 countries to crackdown on wildlife crime, is also showcased.

Despite the unprecedented global pandemic, the threat of wildlife crime continued in 2020. So too has our collective resolve to provide authorities responsible for wildlife law enforcement at the national, regional and global levels with the tools, services and technical support they need to combat it.

It is widely acknowledged that the global community must continue to act strongly on the issue of wildlife crime, and as the following pages reveal, progress can be made when we act together.
ICCWC considers ‘wildlife crime’ to be the taking, trading (supplying, selling or trafficking), importing, exporting, processing, possessing, obtaining and consuming illegally sourced wildlife, including animals, birds, fish, timber, and other forest products in contravention of national or international law.

Along with threatening a variety of wild fauna and flora, wildlife crime poses a risk to the health of our ecosystems and the livelihoods of local communities, undermines conservation efforts, exacerbates poverty, drives conflict, creates instability, and intensifies the risk of disease emergence. It is associated with other serious crime types including violence, money laundering, tax fraud and corruption, requiring as much attention as other transnational organized crimes.
Established in 2010, ICCWC is a unique and powerful partnership of five inter-governmental organizations working together against wildlife crime. It is made up of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Secretariat, INTERPOL, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the World Bank Group (WBG) and the World Customs Organization (WCO).

**OUR VISION**
A world free of wildlife crime.

**OUR MISSION**
To strengthen criminal justice systems and provide coordinated support at the national, regional and international level to combat wildlife and forest crime.

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CITES sets out the rules for international trade in wildlife, which have to be enforced by the countries that are signatories to the convention. [http://www.cites.org](http://www.cites.org)

Through ICCWC we are working to combat wildlife crime as it is a critical driver of global biodiversity loss. We assist CITES Parties to act against the criminals that are destroying nature, so that wildlife trade is legal, sustainable and traceable to ensure the survival of wild animals and plants for future generations.

INTERPOL is the world's largest international police organization with 194 member countries cooperating across borders to share and process criminal information globally. [http://www.interpol.int](http://www.interpol.int)

There is no shortage of challenges that lie ahead, but we must remain persistent and united in our efforts to combat wildlife crime across the globe, to protect today’s resources for tomorrow’s generations.

UNODC leads the global fight against illicit drugs and transnational organized crime with an extensive network of field offices in all regions of the world. [http://www.unodc.org](http://www.unodc.org)

As countries mobilize to recover with integrity from the COVID-19 crisis, let’s seize the opportunity to disrupt the corrupt networks that profit from, and perpetuate, wildlife, forest and fisheries crime.

The World Bank Group plays a key role in the global effort to end extreme poverty and boost shared prosperity. Working in more than 100 countries, it provides financing, advice and other solutions that enable countries to address the most urgent development challenges. [http://www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)

Illegal logging, fishing and wildlife trade deplete natural resources, exacerbate poverty and can increase the potential for transmission of zoonotic diseases. We need to work together to support countries to strengthen governance and build greener, more resilient and inclusive development pathways.

WCO is the voice of the global customs community, working to develop global standards, simplify and harmonize customs procedures, facilitate international trade and strengthen supply chain security. [http://www.wcoomd.org](http://www.wcoomd.org)

Illegal wildlife crime poses a threat to biodiversity, human health and livelihoods. It also has the potential to facilitate other illicit activities, including terrorism, corruption and the global arms trade. The ICCWC Secretariat plays a key role in driving coordinated action along with the UNODC, WCO, INTERPOL and CITES to combat wildlife crime.

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WHO WE ARE

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Guidelines on Methods & Procedures of Ivory Sampling & Analysis

ICCWC developed these guidelines to support the use of forensic technology to combat wildlife crime, particularly elephant poaching. An ICCWC training video on ivory sampling is also available.

World Wildlife Crime Reports

Developed by UNODC in collaboration with its ICCWC partners, these Reports include market assessments, key trends, in-depth wildlife crime case studies, and potential early warning mechanisms of wildlife crime across the globe. The data and science in these reports inform the approaches ICCWC takes to combat wildlife crime. See Year in Review.

Thunder Series - Global Enforcement Operations

Led by INTERPOL and WCO, these month-long operations (Thunderbird in 2017, Thunderstorm in 2018, Thunderball in 2019) rally police, wildlife authorities, customs and border officials across the globe to gather intelligence, identify smuggling routes, apprehend offenders, and dismantle organized crime groups. See Year in Review for more on Thunder 2020.

What We Do

ICCWC works globally providing wildlife law enforcement with the tools, services and technical support needed to build the capacity of their criminal justice systems to better deter, detect, detain, and dismantle criminal networks.
Take urgent action to end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna and address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products.

Enhance global support for efforts to combat poaching and trafficking of protected species, including by increasing the capacity of local communities to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities.

“A flourishing life on land is the foundation for our life on this planet. We are all part of the planet’s ecosystem and we have caused severe damage to it through deforestation, loss of natural habitats and land degradation. Promoting a sustainable use of our ecosystems and preserving biodiversity is not a cause. It is the key to our own survival.”

A shared blueprint for people, planet and prosperity, the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) include specific targets to combat poaching and trafficking of protected species.
ICCWC recognizes that wildlife crime is a cross-cutting issue that does not exist in isolation. The well-being of ecosystems, animals, humans and the environment are all interconnected and impacts the air we breathe, the food we eat and the communities we live in.

Exacerbated by poverty and facilitated by corruption, wildlife crime flourishes when detection rates and arrests are low, when penalties are weak and when prosecutions are rare.

ICCWC works with Member States to strengthen their criminal justice responses to help deter wildlife crime, protect the planet’s remaining natural resources and support socio-economic change.

Wildlife crime not only drives many wild animal and plant species towards extinction, it also represents a significant barrier to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals. It exacerbates hunger and poverty, creates conflict and instability, poses a risk to the health of our communities and undermines the rule of law and good governance.
In 2020, ICCWC celebrated its first decade of action, working with wildlife law enforcement along the entire criminal justice chain to deter, detect, detain, and dismantle criminal networks involved in wildlife crime.

Law enforcement officers cooperate across borders to apprehend wildlife criminals.

Member States learn investigative techniques to detect and prosecute wildlife crime.

A social media campaign raises awareness of 10 years of impact.

Law enforcement and customs officers gain the latest skillsets to detect wildlife crime.

Wildlife crime investigators trained in forensics, such as DNA sampling.

Controlled delivery training enables law enforcement to track evidence and dismantle crime groups.

Member States create specific wildlife crime units in their legal systems.

Member States identify and address gaps in their wildlife crime response using ICCWC’s Analytical Toolkit.

Member States use intelligence to map out wildlife crime networks and to target individuals for prosecution.

“The illegal trade is global. Every region is affected. To effectively combat wildlife crime, countries need to take action collectively.”

Mr. Pithaya Pookaman,
Thailand’s former vice minister of Natural Resources and Environment

“ICCWC’s training course on controlled delivery was an eye opener; we were impressed by the use of available technology for tracking the package.”

Police Participant,
Controlled Delivery Training, Vietnam, 2019

“Photo: Unsplash/Magdalena Kula Manchee

Photo: INTERPOL

Photo: UNODC

Photo: WBG

Photo: INTERPOL

Photo: INTERPOL

Photo: ICCWC

Photo: ICCWC

Photo: ICCWC

Photo: ICCWC”
2020
The Year in Review

ICCWC measures its success by the bold actions taken by Member States who, informed by ICCWC programmes, work to strengthen wildlife crime legislation, support and train frontline law enforcement in new investigative techniques, and encourage cross-border cooperation in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Combating wildlife crime requires concerted action along the entire criminal justice chain. Frontline law enforcement (such as customs officers, rangers, police and border officers) gather admissible and credible evidence to detect and detain suspects. Prosecutors determine charges. Judges use the law to ensure strong sentencing in line with the severity of the crime to deter and dismantle criminal groups.

Adapting to COVID-19 restrictions

With in-person meetings limited and new protection protocols in place, ICCWC shifted some of its activities online to provide continued support to Member States. Operation Thunder 2020 was coordinated virtually, via secured communication and reporting channels. Despite the global sanitary situation and existing restrictions, the law enforcement community demonstrated a sound commitment to Thunder 2020, with outcomes and participation comparable to previous years. ICCWC also helped Member States assess and address emerging trends and challenges in wildlife crime brought on by the pandemic. It undertook important wildlife crime research, developing guides and training modules in response to Member States needs in the fight against wildlife crime.

Costa Rica issued an INTERPOL purple notice when sea cucumbers and fish bladders were trafficked through the post, concealed in the high volume of face masks delivered worldwide during the pandemic.

When court appearances ground to a halt in Uganda during the COVID-19 lockdown, ICCWC helped facilitate digital court proceedings for wildlife trafficking trials.

ICCW supported the Kenya Wildlife Service in the face of a drop in revenue and a potential surge in poaching, donating equipment, such as motorbikes, to help maintain its rapid response anti-poaching patrol fleet.
ICCWC works to raise awareness of the seriousness of wildlife crime; sharing knowledge, research and best practices with law enforcement, policy makers, government and civil society to combat this organized and transnational threat. It also works to deter wildlife crime through corruption prevention support and anti-money laundering policies.

WORLD WILDLIFE CRIME REPORT

The 2020 World Wildlife Crime Report, developed by UNODC in collaboration with its ICCWC partners, outlines key global wildlife crime trends and analyzes markets for illicit rosewood, ivory, rhino horn, pangolin scales, live reptiles, big cats and European eel. It draws from UNODC’s World WISE database of almost 180,000 seizures in 149 countries, illustrating the wide-ranging threats of wildlife crime on nature, biodiversity, human health, security and socio-economic development. The report urges governments to take action to strengthen criminal justice systems, focusing on improving legal frameworks as well as prosecutorial and judicial processes. Read the Report.

SPECIES SPECIFIC TRADE REPORTS

Funding through the ICCWC Strategic Programme enabled several studies to be commissioned in 2020, including reports on Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles; African Lions and Big Cats, and a Report on Pangolins. The reports, expected to be finalized in 2021, will play a vital role in further understanding specific elements of trade, both legal and illegal, providing guidance on identification, trade trends, commodities in trade, as well as the management of stocks. The law enforcement community will be able to draw on these reports to support their role on the front line.

CUSTOMS TRAINING MODULES

An updated library of training modules is being produced to help customs officers identify wildlife species listed under CITES and to seize and process evidence through the criminal justice system. The modules will be made available on the WCO e-learning platform, CLiKC, in 2021 in English and French.

WILDLIFE FORUM

In January 2020, the Wildlife Forum convened donors, NGOs, and US-based partners to discuss the latest strategies to end wildlife crime. Over 150 participants shared best practices, priorities, and challenges to combat wildlife crime through a series of thematic discussions on key governance, economics, trade, and technological issues that impact wildlife crime. The Forum is a partnership between ICCWC and the Global Environment Facility (GEF)-funded Global Wildlife Program led by the World Bank. The Forum informed ICCWC’s strategic planning and implementation activities as well as future collaborative efforts.

CORRUPTION RELATED TO WILDLIFE CRIME

It is widely recognized that corruption is a key facilitator of wildlife crime and tackling corruption is a core part of ICCWC’s work. ICCWC takes a preventive approach to addressing corruption, working with wildlife and forest management authorities to limit the likelihood of occurrence of corrupt practices. This approach is based on a process of corruption risk management within the institution and the development of tailor made risk mitigation measures. ICCWC, through UNODC, provides support to authorities in Bolivia, Botswana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda.

MONEY LAUNDERING & TERRORISM FINANCING NATIONAL RISK ASSESSMENTS

ICCWC helped Cameroon, Cote d’ivoire, Madagascar and Zimbabwe identify, assess and understand the main drivers of money laundering and terrorist financing with respect to wildlife crimes in their countries. Using the National Risk Assessment Tool (NRA) and module on wildlife crime, ICCWC will help these countries review legislation and apply resources to where it is needed most to deter wildlife crime.

AWARENESS-RAISING OF WILDLIFE CRIME IN WEST & CENTRAL AFRICA

ICCWC worked to raise awareness of the critical need to respond to wildlife crime across West and Central Africa. Drawing upon the West and Central Africa Wildlife Crime Threat Assessment, ICCWC supported Member States with wildlife crime enforcement related activities. More than 30 agencies have been made aware of the Threat Assessment’s key findings and recommendations and were encouraged to incorporate these into their own working programs. Positive shifts in policy, responses and the seriousness in which Member States consider wildlife crime is already evident. ICCWC also works with regional bodies such as ECOWAS, the Economic Community of West African States, which in late 2020, took steps towards the adoption of its West African Strategy on Combatting Wildlife Crime.

Across 2021-2022, ICCWC will further support Member States in the two sub-regions through targeted capacity building interventions in support of CITES implementation and activities concentrating on border controls; national legislation enhancement; enforcement training and national coordination; international cooperation; anti-corruption activities; as well as site-based enforcement support activities.

36 TRAININGS FOR FRONTLINE CUSTOMS OFFICERS

ICCWC ran a series of 36 capacity building webinars for frontline Customs officers across 26 countries throughout Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and South America, in preparation for Operation Thunder 2020. The trainings included species identification, concealment methods, intelligence & data management, risk indicators, inter-agency cooperation, and more. 74 Customs officers (48 men and 26 women) participated in the webinar series.
Technological developments have led to the increased availability of tools to better detect and respond to wildlife crime. ICCWC trains law enforcement on crime scene management, the use of forensic science (such as DNA sampling of ivory and timber to determine species and geographic origin), as well as covert investigative techniques. ICCWC through its activities further demonstrates how to investigate the illicit flow of money and how to gather evidence stored on criminal’s electronic devices and encrypted messaging apps. Criminals also take advantage of technological developments, and as wildlife crime moves online, ICCWC responds to this crime type by building capacity in the law enforcement community to detect and address wildlife crime on social media and the internet.

**Detect**

**Frontline Investigative Techniques for Credible & Admissible Evidence**

First DNA evidence used in Cambodian wildlife prosecution

In March 2020, Cambodian authorities requested support to conduct DNA forensic analysis on a shipment of bones it had intercepted. Within 10 days, they were able to establish the DNA of African lions. The evidence is now part of the ongoing prosecution of a Vietnamese citizen for wildlife crimes.

Managing Wildlife Crime Scenes

**Kenya**

ICCWC supported mentorships in seven Kenya Wildlife Service conservation areas to review skills for effective investigations. Officers highlighted the need for further training in more complex crime scenes, fingerprint lifting and giving evidence in court.

**Tanzania**

In an endeavour to institutionalize basic wildlife crime scene responder training for all wildlife officers in Tanzania, the College of African Wildlife Management participated in a train-the-trainer programme. Funded through ICCWC and delivered by the NGO TRACE, this training is based on the Wildlife Crime Scene Guide for First Responders developed by the African Wildlife Forensics Network.

**Uganda**

ICCWC supported mentorship sessions across four Uganda Wildlife Authority conservation areas. The purpose of the mentorship sessions, supported through UNODC’s partnership with Space for Giants, was to enhance the skills of previously trained officers through a review of skills learned while conducting “on-the-job” training, a refresher on case file preparation, and the use of Crime Scene Kits.

Investigating Wildlife Crime Linked to the Internet

ICCWC provided specialized trainings to countries in Southeast Asia to strengthen their capacities to investigate wildlife crime linked to the internet. These trainings, built on previous capacity-building trainings, responded to specific identified needs, including those identified through Toolkit and Indicator Framework assessments.

**Lao PDR**

17 officials from the Department of Environmental Police, Department of Forest Inspection of the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment, Customs and the Office of the Public Prosecutor in Vientiane were trained on covert online investigations. Participants explored covert investigation techniques, including setting up undercover accounts, detecting deception, and conducting open source investigations through hands-on practice and live exercises.

**Malaysia**

27 law enforcement officers in Kuala Lumpur received training in advanced online investigations techniques to successfully detect and document transnational organized wildlife crime activity online. The training included hands-on surveillance and mock meetings with a suspect selling contraband wildlife products online.

**Philippines**

75 wildlife law enforcement officers in the Philippines were trained on covert investigative techniques for the internet, including social media and the dark net. The virtual training was led by the Biodiversity Management Bureau of the Department of Environmental and Natural Resources (DENR) and included hands-on practice and live exercises.

**Vietnam**

17 officials from the Environmental Police Department and from seven provincial police departments, as well as the Anti-Smuggling, Corruption and Economic Crime Police Department received training on investigation techniques for combating wildlife crime linked to the internet.

**Training in Online Investigative Techniques**

As part of the training in Lao PDR, a prosecutor created a fake Facebook profile to get in touch with a bear dealer. He successfully negotiated with the trader and passed the info to the police but unfortunately the buy-bust failed, and the trader was not arrested.
A strong, coordinated response at all levels is needed to detain and disrupt illegal trade across source, transit and destination countries. Despite the significant disruption caused by the pandemic, Member States continued to cooperate across borders to combat wildlife crime.

**OPERATION THUNDER**

Led by INTERPOL and WCO under the auspices of ICCWC, Operation Thunder 2020 is the fourth in a series of joint customs and police operations (Thunderbird in 2017, Thunderstorm in 2018, Thunderball in 2019). These global operations have led to the apprehension of more than 3500 suspects. Despite the COVID-19 restrictions imposed across the world, the global operation coordinated raids at airports, borders and other hotspots in 103 countries. Law enforcement and customs officers seized over 2,000 protected wildlife species and apprehended 699 offenders. Several of the 185 active INTERPOL Red Notices in regard to Wildlife Crime are a result of information gained during the operation. Further arrests and prosecutions continue as global investigations build cases against the networks that lead the illegal trade.

**CENTRAL AND WESTERN AFRICA ANNUAL WILDLIFE CRIME MEETING**

In February 2020, with participants from Benin, Cameroon, Central African Republic, DRC, Côte d’Ivoire, The Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Madagascar, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo, this annual wildlife crime meeting helped strengthen existing relationships in the region and build momentum for cross-border cooperation among law enforcement agencies in preparation for Operation Thunder. It explored national priorities, trafficking routes, emerging threats, concealment methods, criminal syndicates and companies used to facilitate wildlife trafficking.

**REGIONAL AND CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION**

Regional consultations on wildlife crime facilitated by ICCWC partners provided Member States with valuable insights into national and regional priorities, border hotspots, trade routes and emerging trends. These meetings helped to strengthen connections within and among countries and to build momentum for the global Thunder operations.

**Chimpanzee Seizures**

Following the seizure of 32 chimpanzees, ICCWC organized a regional meeting with the three countries of source, transit and destination to ensure law enforcement cooperation across borders, helping to identify and disrupt the criminal network.

**Shark Fin Trafficking**

Following Operation Thunder 2020, ICCWC supported cooperation and information sharing between Peru and Ecuador in a case of shark fin trafficking. Data extracted from seized telephones revealed the involvement of global export companies as well as links with other serious crimes, such as tax evasion and false declaration.

**Illegal Trade of Lion Bones**

ICCWC gathered law enforcement agencies in South Africa to discuss the illegal trade of lion bones as a substitute for high demand tiger products in Asia. Together, we mapped out the supply chain, identified criminal networks and discussed collaboration between South Africa and destination countries in Asia.

**Illegal Ivory Trade**

ICCWC continued to work with Vietnam and Democratic Republic of Congo in 2020 to disrupt the criminal networks responsible for the illegal trade in over 9.1 tonnes of elephant ivory, seized in the 2019 Thunderball operation.

**Reptile Trafficking**

ICCWC facilitated information-sharing and analysis in a transnational case of reptile trafficking between Mexico, Uganda and several European countries.
ICCWC produced guidelines for developing and strengthening Wildlife Enforcement Networks (WENS). The guidelines include a self-assessment tool for existing WENs to evaluate their operational performance and identify areas that could be strengthened. ICCWC also began support for regional cooperation in South America (Sud-WEN) and in the Horn of Africa (HAWEN).

**Wildlife Enforcement Networks**

In September 2020, ICCWC conducted a border vulnerability assessment, identifying significant risk of illegal cross-border movement of wildlife between Myanmar and Thailand. This included inspections of roads, checkpoints and border crossings in the west of Thailand Kanchanaburi province connecting Myanmar. The assessment included interviews and briefings with local police and customs at informal crossings as well as official check points and border crossings. Some of the NGO intelligence briefings presented to authorities in Lao PDR and Myanmar resulted in arrests of criminals.

**Strengthened Cooperation Among Prosecutors in Eastern Africa**

An ICCWC workshop in Eastern Africa provided an opportunity for prosecutors and investigators as well as CSOs from Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda to strengthen cross-border cooperation, information exchange and mutual legal assistance in wildlife and forest crime cases.

**Myanmar-Thailand Border Vulnerabilities**

**Dismantle**

**Strong Penalties for Organized Crime Groups**

Combating wildlife crime goes beyond the arrest of offenders. Strong legislation with strong penalties and a robust judicial system are critical to dismantle organized crime groups.

ICCWC works with Member States to address gaps in their criminal justice response to wildlife crime. Since its inception, 22 countries have completed assessments of their wildlife criminal justice responses using the ICCWC Toolkit or Indicator Framework. ICCWC supports each Member State throughout the process, including mobilizing resources, reviewing legal frameworks and penal codes, detailing the strengths and weaknesses of the country’s preventive and criminal justice responses to wildlife and forest crime. An Action Plan is designed to suggest concrete ways forward, priority areas and responsible entities to implement recommendations.

This past year, ICCWC worked with the following Member States to strengthen their criminal justice response to wildlife crime:

**Lao PDR**

Assessing the national criminal justice response. In November 2020, the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry of Lao PDR approved the adoption of the ICCWC Wildlife and Forest Crime Analytic Toolkit assessment report of its criminal justice responses to wildlife crime, including recommendations to improve legislation and enforce existing wildlife crime laws.

Developing a tiger database. Identified during Lao’s ICCWC Toolkit analysis, a tiger database for DNA registration will be produced using a new tiger SNP registration system (TigerBase) in Malaysia. With technical support from the NGO TRACE, the initiative includes CITES permits, cataloguing with photographic records, and enforcement action targeting the illegal tiger trade.

**In Asia**

**ICCWC Strengthens Cross-Border Cooperation**

A communication channel established between South Africa and Hong Kong during an ICCWC workshop led to the arrest of a South African courier who travelled from South Africa to Hong Kong, via Bangkok (Thailand) with a bag containing 16kg of rhino horn.

**International Cooperation**

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BOLIVIA

Strengthening prosecutorial capacities. Following a request for support from the School of State Prosecutors in Bolivia, an introductory teaching module on environmental crime focused on wildlife and forest crime was developed and tailored to the Bolivian context. The module aims to contribute to the strengthening of Bolivia’s capacity to effectively investigate and prosecute environmental crimes, through the training of selected candidates entering the prosecutorial service in 2021. The environmental crime module will be part of the initial Training Programme of the School of State Prosecutors (Escuela Fiscal del Estado).

ECUADOR

Assessing the national criminal justice response. At the request of the Government of Ecuador, ICCWC will support the country in implementing the ICCWC Toolkit and Indicator Framework. In December 2020, preparatory work commenced to introduce both tools to national key stakeholders and to develop a roadmap for implementation.

PERU

Assessing wildlife crime law enforcement. In preparation for the ICCWC Indicator Framework workshop in 2021, a series of virtual preparatory meetings were held to introduce the process to national authorities in Lima and regional actors from the Amazon regions of Loreto, Ucayali and Madre de Dios in Peru which are the regions most affected by illegal logging and wildlife trafficking.

KENYA

Providing prosecutorial support. ICCWC supported the provision of a secure exhibit storage facility for the coastal regional office of Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS). The need for such a facility was identified to minimize the risk of evidence tampering. The facility will be critical to maintain the integrity of the chain of custody and contribute to higher reliability of the exhibits for the court, ultimately supporting the successful prosecution of cases.

Supporting the judiciary. ICCWC supported the 10th National Judicial Dialogue and Continuing Judicial Education on Wildlife and Environment Crimes, which was convened by the Kenyan Judicial Training Institute (KJS) in partnership with the African Network for Animal Welfare (ANAW). The dialogue gathered over 40 magistrates, law enforcement agencies and CSOs to discuss challenges, emerging issues, and new legislation.

Training in anti-money laundering. ICCWC trained 31 law enforcement officials in Kenya to detect and prosecute wildlife crime-related money laundering. The training program helped prosecutors and judges recognize complex criminal patterns and suspicious financial transactions related to wildlife crime.

KENYA

Strengthening the national response to wildlife crime. Several workstreams on prosecution, investigations, legislative support and strengthening CITES legislation are being undertaken in the country.

MOZAMBIQUE

Strengthening prosecutorial capacities. 22 prosecutors from Northern and Central provinces in Mozambique were trained on the use of the Rapid Reference Manual (RRM) for Investigators and Prosecutors of Wildlife Crime to improve case preparations, evidence collection, and court room skills. The RRM was developed in 2018 in partnership with WWF and the USAID-sponsored SPEED+ Programme in response to the recommendations of the ICCWC Toolkit Assessment.

Supporting the judiciary. Noting the importance of enhancing the awareness and the sensitization of the judiciary in Mozambique, a bench book for judges is being developed and is expected to be approved in 2021.

MOZAMBIQUE

Strengthening the national response to wildlife crime. Following a request from the government, ICCWC has commenced preparatory work with Nigeria to assess its wildlife crime response and any threats posed by criminal activities, using the ICCWC Toolkit and Indicator Framework.

NIGERIA

Supporting prosecutors. A technical assistance program for law enforcement and the Prosecutors Office in Zimbabwe was developed and a first virtual workshop held on economic and financial crimes. Similar training is also planned in 2021 for Cote d’Ivoire and Cameroon.

MOZAMBIQUE IMPROVES TIMELINESS OF HANDLING CASES

The 24 month average duration to prosecute a case is down to six months since the use of the Rapid Reference Manual.
**2020 At A Glance**

**The Threat**

- **7000 species** affected in **120 countries**
- **Wildlife crime** threatens the world’s biodiversity
- **The pangolin** is the most trafficked mammal in the world
- Each year, **150+ rangers** are killed in the line of duty protecting wildlife
- **22% of animals** on the brink of extinction

**The Response**

- **Together against wildlife crime**
- **103 countries** worked with **34 countries** to improve criminal justice systems
- **Working with** the **criminal justice systems** including **legislation & sentencing**
- **WCC report** on **15 life on land**
- **DNA sampling** on **25 countries**
- **Trainings on** criminal & money laundering
- **Offenders apprehended**: 699
- **Wildlife species seized**: 2000+

- **Rallied law enforcement in 103 countries**
- **Together against wildlife crime**
- **Law enforcement officers in 103 countries**
- **699 offenders apprehended**
- **7000 species** affected in **120 countries**

**WCC contributions**

- **$260 million** spent to combat wildlife crime in African & Asian countries compared to **$30 billion** spent on drug crime just by the U.S.
- **$300 million** spent on wildlife crime in 67 African & Asian countries
- **150+ rangers** are killed in the line of duty protecting wildlife each year
- **22% of species** are on the brink of extinction

- **Online wildlife crime training** in 25 countries
- **DNA sampling** in 25 countries
- **Trainings on crime scenes** in 25 countries
- **$260 million** spent on wildlife crime in 67 African & Asian countries
- **Pangolin** is the most trafficked mammal in the world
Despite considerable effort by the global community, wildlife crime remains a significant threat. Highly organized and transnational in nature, wildlife crime often involves other serious crimes such as violence, corruption, fraud and money laundering, presenting law enforcement authorities with an increasingly difficult and complex task in addressing it. Illegally traded wildlife specimens also evade veterinary checks and sanitary safety inspections intensifying the risk of disease emergence.

In recent years, we’ve seen strong actions from within the global community in response to wildlife crime, including enhanced legislation, more timely prosecutions, the creation of specialized wildlife crime units, an increase in the deployment of specialized investigative techniques and anti-money laundering investigations, and stronger sanctions being imposed. Despite such positive developments, much more needs to be done and inconsistent legislation, weak governance, corruption and a lack of coordination along the entire criminal justice chain still too often hamper efforts to combat wildlife crime effectively.

Tackling a problem of such magnitude requires persistence, with well-considered national measures acting in concert with a coordinated, holistic regional and global response. For this reason, ICCWC is in the process of developing an ambitious vision towards a world free of wildlife crime. The ICCWC Vision 2030 is committed to continuing and further enhancing the fight, engaging and empowering those on the frontline, working with and supporting our Member States to better deter, detect, detain, and dismantle the criminal networks involved in wildlife crime.

Together, working with governments, ICCWC will continue to provide and deploy a range of impactful tools, services and technical support against wildlife crime, such as our intelligence-led operations, our country-led assessments, anti-corruption risk assessments, information sharing and financial investigations trainings.

The next decade will present many challenges as nations embark upon a journey of recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Ensuring that responding to wildlife crime remains a priority in the years to come is crucial. We will rely upon the political will of our Member States, the support of our donors, continued cooperation with a variety of stakeholders, and the wide-ranging expertise of our five partners, to continue the work of ICCWC in ensuring that customs, police and wildlife authorities are trained, resourced, equipped and supported, to deal with the multifaceted challenges posed by wildlife crime. As illustrated in the pages of this annual report, when countries, institutions, and people work together, we can turn the tide on wildlife crime.
ICCWC is a strong partnership of experts working to ensure a coordinated and global response to wildlife crime. It works closely with governments, international organizations and civil society to deter, detect, detain, and dismantle organized crime groups.

ICCWC has the privilege of working with courageous law enforcement personnel around the world—those who work on the frontline every day, often at great risk to their personal safety, to fight against transnational wildlife crime. ICCWC would like to thank each and every one of them, from the ports to the borders to the national parks, from Latin America to Africa to Asia. Our work is not possible without their tireless efforts.

ICCWC activities are all externally funded and dependent on strong donor support from the European Union, France, Germany, Monaco, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States Department of State. ICCWC donors ensure that Member States get the support they need to strengthen their criminal response to wildlife crime. We thank these donors for their continued support of our vital work.

ICCWC would also like to thank the following organizations for their invaluable support, cooperation and contributions in 2020: