



TOGETHER AGAINST  
WILDLIFE CRIME



# ANNUAL REPORT 2020



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ANNUAL REPORT 2020

# CONTENTS



3  
GLOSSARY



17  
A DECADE COMBATING  
WILDLIFE CRIME



5  
FOREWORD



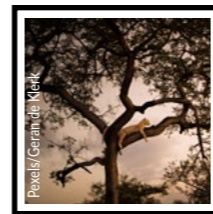
18  
THE YEAR IN REVIEW



7  
WHAT IS  
WILDLIFE CRIME?



30  
2020 AT A GLANCE



8  
WHO WE ARE



33  
THE WAY FORWARD



10  
WHAT WE DO



35  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



13  
THE GLOBAL GOALS



Photo: Justin Mott/Kindred Guardians

# GLOSSARY

<b>CITES</b>	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna & Flora
<b>COVID-19</b>	Coronavirus Disease 2019
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organization
<b>FIU</b>	Financial Intelligence Unit
<b>GEF</b>	Global Environment Facility
<b>ICCWC</b>	International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime
<b>IGO</b>	Intergovernmental Organization
<b>INTERPOL</b>	International Criminal Police Organization
<b>KWS</b>	Kenya Wildlife Service
<b>MEMBER STATES</b>	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.
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>NRA</b>	National Risk Assessment
<b>RRG</b>	Rapid Reference Guide
<b>RRM</b>	Rapid Reference Manual
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goal
<b>UNGA</b>	United Nations General Assembly
<b>UNODC</b>	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
<b>UWA</b>	Uganda Wildlife Authority
<b>WBG</b>	World Bank Group
<b>WC</b>	Wildlife Crime
<b>WCS</b>	Wildlife Conservation Society
<b>WCO</b>	World Customs Organization
<b>WEN</b>	Wildlife Enforcement Network
<b>WWC</b>	World Wildlife Crime Report
<b>WWF</b>	World Wildlife Fund



Photo: Justin Mott/Kindred Guardians

*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.*

# FOREWORD

Wildlife crime has far-reaching and devastating consequences for people, planet and prosperity. It poses a risk to maintaining healthy ecosystems and the livelihoods of local communities. It exacerbates poverty, undermines conservation efforts, threatens the rule of law, governance and national security, and ultimately hinders progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

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.

**3** OUT OF **4**  
**INFECTIOUS DISEASES**  
ARE TRANSMITTED FROM  
**ANIMALS TO HUMANS**

**GOVERNMENTS**  
LOSE **\$7-\$12**  
**BILLION**  
PER YEAR IN POTENTIAL  
FISCAL REVENUES FROM  
**ILLEGAL LOGGING**  
**FISHING AND**  
**WILDLIFE CRIME**

BETWEEN 2016 & 2018  
THE ANNUAL GROSS  
ILLICIT INCOME  
GENERATED BY  
**IVORY**  
ALONE  
WAS ESTIMATED TO BE  
**US\$400**  
MILLION  
AND BY  
**RHINO HORNS**  
**US\$230**  
MILLION

**34**  
COUNTRIES  
WORKED  
WITH  
**ICCWC**  
TO IMPROVE  
THEIR RESPONSE  
TO WILDLIFE CRIME





## WHAT IS **WILDLIFE CRIME** ?

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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.

## WHY MUST WE **COMBAT IT** ?

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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.



Photo: Pexels/Geran de Klerk

# WHO WE ARE

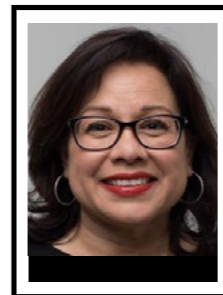
Established in 2010, ICCWC is a unique and powerful partnership of five inter-governmental organizations working together against wildlife crime. It is made up of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Secretariat, INTERPOL, the United Nations Office 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.



**Ivonne Higuero**  
CITES Secretary General



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>

*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.*



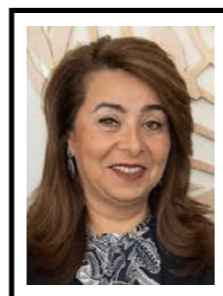
**Jürgen Stock**  
INTERPOL-Secretary General



**INTERPOL**

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>

*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.*



**Ghada Waly**  
UNODC-Executive Director



**UNODC**

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

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>

*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.*



**Juergen Voegele**  
WB-Vice President for Sustainable Development



**WORLD BANK GROUP**

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>

*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.*



**Kunio Mikuriya**  
WCO-Secretary General



**World Customs Organization**  
Organisation mondiale des douanes

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>

*ICCWC raises awareness within the global law enforcement community on the gravity of global wildlife crime and strengthens coordination across agencies to detect and deter wildlife criminal networks.*



Photo: Justin Mott/Kindred Guardians

# WHAT WE DO

## ALONG THE ENTIRE CRIMINAL JUSTICE CHAIN

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.



### The Wildlife and Forest Crime Analytic Toolkit

ICCWC's Analytic Toolkit helps Member States assess their wildlife crime response, identify gaps and design an effective prevention strategy. It looks at legislation, law enforcement and prosecution, data availability and the factors that drive and prevent wildlife crime.



### The Indicator Framework for Wildlife Forest Crime

Developed to complement the Toolkit or be implemented independently, this ICCWC tool helps monitor and assess national law enforcement capacity via a set of 50 indicators of effective wildlife crime enforcement.



### Guidelines for Wildlife Enforcement Networks (WENs)

These ICCWC Guidelines assist in the development and strengthening of WENs for increased regional collaboration and coordination to combat wildlife crime around the world.



### 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.



### Best Practice Guide for Forensic Timber Identification

This ICCWC guide helps enforcement officers gather and process credible and admissible forensic evidence on timber crime to support successful prosecutions.



### Anti-Money Laundering Training Program

This four-day workshop helps Financial Intelligence Units, investigators, prosecutors and judges to better detect illegal transactions and suspicious activities, and to investigate, prosecute and adjudicate money laundering cases related to wildlife trafficking.



### 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 help 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.





Photo: Justin Mott/Kindred Guardians

# WILDLIFE CRIME & THE GLOBAL GOALS

## ZERO TOLERANCE FOR WILDLIFE CRIME

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.



“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.”



Take urgent & significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species.



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.



# ...GLOBAL GOALS

## ACHIEVING THE SDGS

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	CONSEQUENCES	ICCWC
<p>POACHING</p>	<p>EXTINCTION OF SPECIES LOSS OF BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE</p>	<p>RAISING AWARENESS</p>
<p>SMUGGLING &amp; TRAFFICKING</p>	<p>WEAKENED COMMUNITIES AND ECONOMIES</p>	<p>STRENGTHENING LEGISLATION</p>
<p>MONEY LAUNDERING</p>	<p>INCREASED RISK OF DISEASE EMERGENCE AND CONFLICT</p>	<p>COOPERATING ACROSS BORDERS TO BRING CRIMINALS TO JUSTICE</p>
<p>BRIBES &amp; CORRUPTION</p>		<p>GATHERING EVIDENCE INVESTIGATIVE TECHNIQUES ANTI-CORRUPTION MEASURES</p>

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.



Poverty and lack of employment can enable wildlife crime to flourish. The promise of easy money lures in impoverished communities, which in turn thwarts efforts to gain sustainable livelihoods (SDG 8)



Wildlife crime is a serious threat to biodiversity, affecting the natural resources that provide for our daily needs, including food.



Illuminated by the COVID-19 pandemic, wildlife crime may intensify the risk of disease emergence, threatening global public health.



Wildlife crime depletes natural resources and harms ecosystem services that provide us with clean water and air.



Biodiversity and climate change crises are inseparable. Ensuring the health and protection of biodiversity can stabilize the climate.



Wildlife crime impacts the health of our oceans and marine biodiversity, which play a key role in supporting life on earth.



Wildlife crime causes environmental, economic and social distress that flows into business and politics, threatening peace, security and stability.



Cross-border cooperation and strong partnerships with government, law enforcement and communities are essential to address the global transnational nature of wildlife crime.



# 2010-2020

## 10 YEARS COMBATING WILDLIFE CRIME

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.



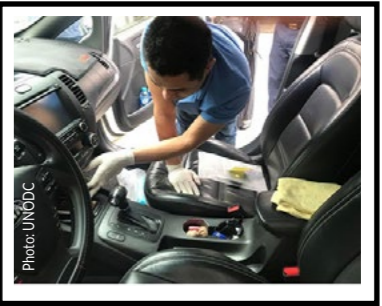
A social media campaign raises awareness of 10 years of impact.



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



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.

*"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

# 2020

## THE YEAR IN REVIEW

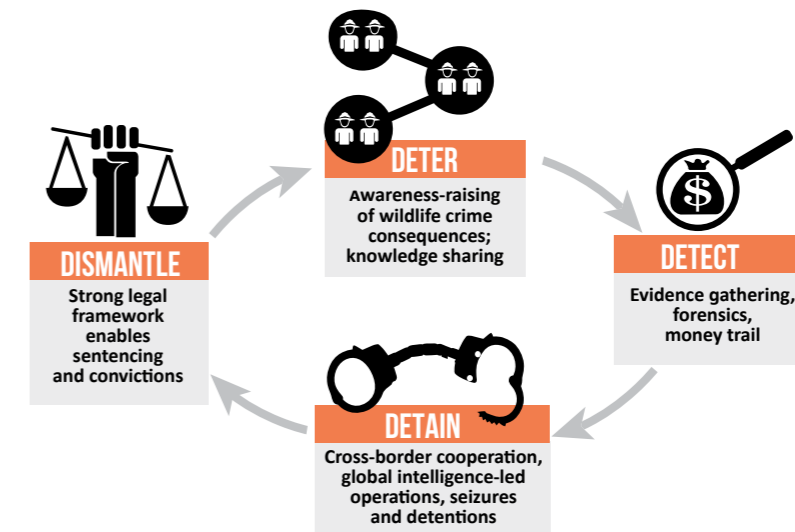
ICCWC measures its success by the bold actions taken by Member States who, informed by ICCWC programmes, work to strengthen wildlife crime legislation, support and train frontline law enforcement in new investigative techniques, and encourage cross-border cooperation in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

## DETER, DETECT, DETAIN, DISMANTLE

### ALONG THE ENTIRE **CRIMINAL JUSTICE CHAIN**

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



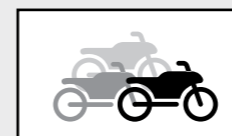
With in-person meetings limited and new protection protocols in place, ICCWC shifted some of its activities online to provide continued support to Member States. Operation Thunder 2020 was coordinated virtually, via secured communication and reporting channels. Despite the global sanitary situation and 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.



ICCWC 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.

# DETER

## AWARENESS RAISING OF WILDLIFE CRIME CONSEQUENCES



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.

# DETECT

## FRONTLINE INVESTIGATIVE TECHNIQUES FOR CREDIBLE & ADMISSIBLE EVIDENCE



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.

### 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.

# DETAIN

## GLOBAL INTELLIGENCE-LED OPERATIONS

### SEIZURES AND DETENTIONS



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.

### WATCH OPERATION THUNDER 2020



## 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.



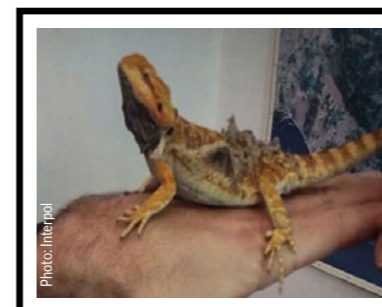
### Illegal Trade of Lion Bones

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.

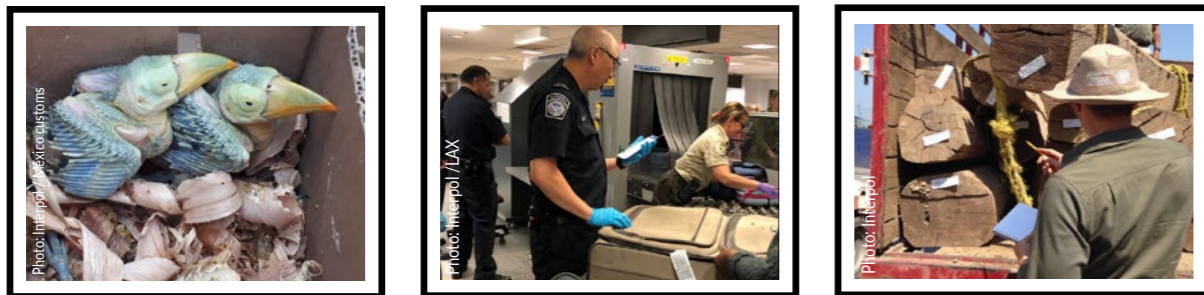


### Reptile Trafficking

ICCWC facilitated information-sharing and analysis in a transnational case of reptile trafficking between **Mexico, Uganda** and several European countries.

# DISMANTLE

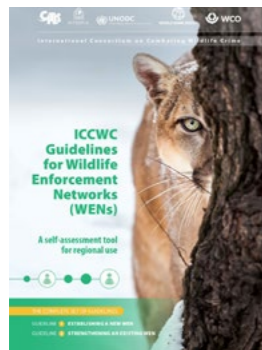
## STRONG PENALTIES FOR ORGANIZED CRIME GROUPS



### WILDLIFE ENFORCEMENT NETWORKS

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).



and mutual legal assistance in wildlife and forest crime cases.

### MYANMAR-THAILAND BORDER VULNERABILITIES

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

### 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.



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:

## IN ASIA

### 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 LATIN AMERICA

### 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).

### BRAZIL

**Assessing the national criminal justice response.** At the request of the Government of **Brazil**, ICCWC is providing support to undertake a broad assessment of the preventive and criminal justice responses to wildlife and forest crime using the ICCWC Toolkit and Indicator Framework. The process commenced in December 2019 and is ongoing.

### 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.

**Strengthening prosecutorial and judicial capacities.** Preparatory work commenced to develop a Rapid Reference Guide for Investigators of Wildlife Crime, in close collaboration with national counterparts and civil society organizations. The need to strengthen prosecutorial and judicial capacities was identified through the Toolkit Assessment and is further embedded in the Peruvian National Strategy to Reduce Illicit Trafficking of Wildlife in Peru 2017-2020.

## IN AFRICA

### 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.

### MADAGASCAR

**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.

### NIGERIA

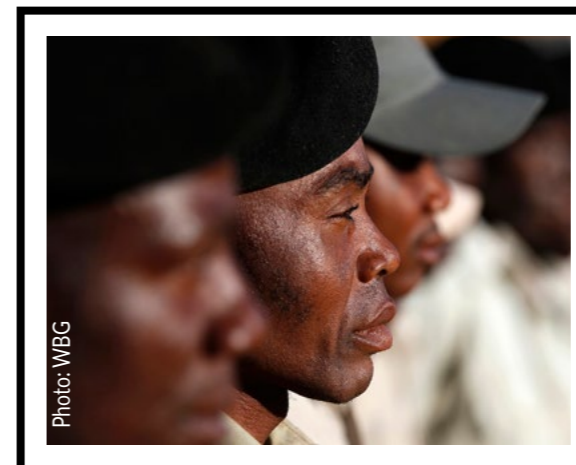
**Strengthening the national response to wildlife crime.** Following a request from the government, ICCWC has commenced preparatory work with **Nigeria** to assess its wildlife crime response and any threats posed by criminal activities, using the ICCWC Toolkit and Indicator Framework.

### ZIMBABWE

**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

**7000**  
SPECIES  
AFFECTED IN  
**120**  
COUNTRIES



THE  
**PANGOLIN**  
IS THE MOST  
TRAFFICKED  
MAMMAL IN  
THE WORLD



EACH YEAR  
**150+**  
**RANGERS**  
ARE KILLED IN  
THE LINE OF DUTY  
PROTECTING WILDLIFE.

THIN GREEN LINE FOUNDATION

**22%**  
OF ANIMALS ON THE  
BRINK OF  
EXTINCTION

**\$260** MILLION A YEAR SPENT TO COMBAT  
WILDLIFE CRIME IN 67  
AFRICAN & ASIAN COUNTRIES

COMPARED TO

**\$30** BILLION SPENT ON  
DRUG CRIME  
JUST BY THE U.S.



RALLIED LAW  
ENFORCEMENT  
OFFICERS IN **103**  
COUNTRIES

**2000+**  
WILDLIFE SPECIES  
SEIZED

**699**  
OFFENDERS APPREHENDED



CONTRIBUTES TO THE  
ACHIEVEMENT OF



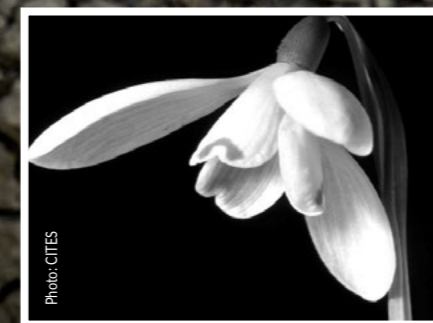
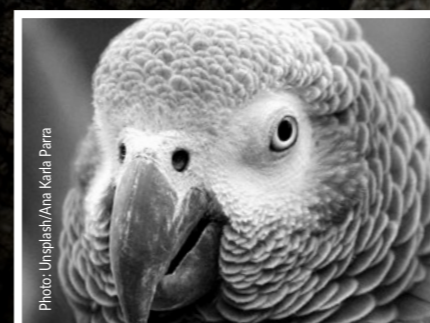
DECREASE THE  
PROPORTION OF  
POACHED & ILLICITLY  
**TRAFFICKED**  
**SPECIES**



WORKED WITH **34** COUNTRIES  
TO IMPROVE  
**CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEMS**  
INCLUDING **STRONGER**  
LEGISLATION & SENTENCING



TRAININGS IN **25**  
COUNTRIES  
ON **CRIME SCENES**  
**DNA SAMPLING**  
ONLINE WILDLIFE CRIME  
& **MONEY LAUNDERING**





# THE WAY FORWARD

## CONTINUED MOMENTUM AGAINST **WILDLIFE CRIME**

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.



Photo: UNEP

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## TOGETHER AGAINST 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:

The African Network for Animal Welfare, College of African Wildlife Management, Conservation Justice in Gabon, Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, EL PAcCTO, Environmental Investigation Agency, GEF-financed Global Wildlife Program, International Union for Conservation of Nature, Kenya Judicial Training Institute, Kenya Wildlife Service, Netherlands Forensic Institute, Space for Giants, Tanzania Government Chemist Laboratory Authority, TRAFFIC, TRACE Wildlife Forensics Network, Uganda Wildlife Authority, University of Edinburgh, Wildlife Conservation Society, Wildlife Justice Commission, World Wide Fund for Nature.

