



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

COMBATING WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING



PHOTO BY NORTHERN RANGELANDS TRUST.

Conservation is a priority for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) not only because biodiversity is inherently valuable, but also because it is fundamental to human well-being. USAID has 30 years of experience securing protected areas while working with communities and companies to manage broader seascapes and landscapes in a manner that balances protection with sustainable use and economic growth. Through these investments, millions of people have gained rights and skills to manage and benefit from natural resources, and hundreds of millions of hectares are better protected from habitat loss, fragmentation, and overexploitation.

Working at scale in high-biodiversity areas builds corridors for species and opportunities for rural people, but many threats originate in cities or across the globe. **Wildlife trafficking** is one such threat. It is a uniquely challenging type of overexploitation in which the high value of wildlife and wildlife products—and a historically low risk of punishment

for poaching or illicit trade—have attracted the involvement of transnational criminal organizations. Illicit wildlife is one of the largest black markets in the world, worth tens of billions of dollars. Whether it is rural farmers with few opportunities who are easily recruited or pressured into poaching or consumers desperate to enhance their health or social standing without understanding the efficacy of what they buy or the human cost incurred, organized crime preys on people as surely as it preys on wildlife.

USAID implements a comprehensive, multi-sector approach to address wildlife trafficking that supports law enforcement training and community-based conservation activities, reduces demand for wildlife and wildlife products, and interrupts the flow of illegal products around the world. This work helps to secure our global natural heritage and fight the criminal networks that exploit people and nature, threaten security and the rule of law, and undermine development efforts.

PROTECTION

Protecting animals from illegal hunting remains the most urgent strategy in fighting wildlife crime. Poaching threatens community livelihoods and traditional lands, as well as wildlife populations. While working to reduce the pressures that drive people to poach wildlife, USAID has increased support for and effectiveness of law enforcement and monitoring of poaching activity by community and government rangers, the first lines of defense. The Agency currently supports wildlife protection through more than 40 activities, strengthening ranger and community anti-poaching in at least 60 protected areas in 30 countries.

USAID's longstanding and considerable portfolio of work in community-based conservation has evolved to include support for community scouts and informants, to help them safely assist rangers and police against well-armed poachers. Communities are key players in the protection and conservation of wildlife. For example, a long-term partnership with the Northern Rangelands Trust in Kenya now involves the Kenya Wildlife Service in training hundreds of community rangers responsible for 35 conservancies spanning 4.5 million hectares.

PHOTO BY JEREMY HOLDEN | FAUNA & FLORA INTERNATIONAL TRUST.



BEHAVIOR CHANGE

Like any market, the supply of illegal wildlife products is driven by consumer demand. Reducing that demand—not just raising awareness, but effectively changing the buying behavior of particular market segments—requires careful analysis and new kinds of partnerships. About half of all USAID activities to combat wildlife trafficking include some work to reduce local demand, but funding for behavior change campaigns and associated research is focused on buyers in three countries: China, Thailand and Vietnam. Since April 2011, USAID behavior change campaigns leveraged \$4 million from government and private partnerships to reach more than 740 million people across Asia via the internet, television, and installations at airports.

Because wildlife and wildlife products are sought for a variety of reasons—including food, medicine, art, apparel, and status—understanding consumer motivation is key to developing successful behavior change campaigns. USAID supported our partner TRAFFIC, the wildlife monitoring network, in developing the “Wildlife Consumer Behavior Change Toolkit,” which is helping conservation professionals quickly access and apply information on the most effective practices and monitoring methods.

PHOTO BY FAN WANG, USAID WILDLIFE ASIA.





PHOTO BY NATALIE BAILEY, USAID.

JUSTICE

Once an animal is illegally taken or a suspected criminal is apprehended, an effective criminal justice system is needed to investigate and prosecute wildlife crime. USAID supports not only training but also interagency collaboration, transboundary cooperation, and reforms to policies and practices so that wildlife crime is punished appropriately. All told, 45 activities in nearly 40 countries are helping ensure justice is served

USAID partners have strengthened wildlife law enforcement in partner countries, training hundreds of police, customs officials, prosecutors, and judges to bring wildlife criminals to justice. In Indonesia, USAID supported revision of the country's main conservation law to increase sanctions for wildlife crimes, expand the investigatory and arrest authorities of civil investigators in protected areas, and criminalize trade in all endangered and threatened species. In the vicinity of Republic of Congo's Nouabale-Ndoki National Park, nearly 100 poachers and traffickers were arrested for wildlife crime in 2017, with half transferred to courts for prosecution and 30 sentenced to jail.



PHOTO BY NATALIE BAILEY, USAID.

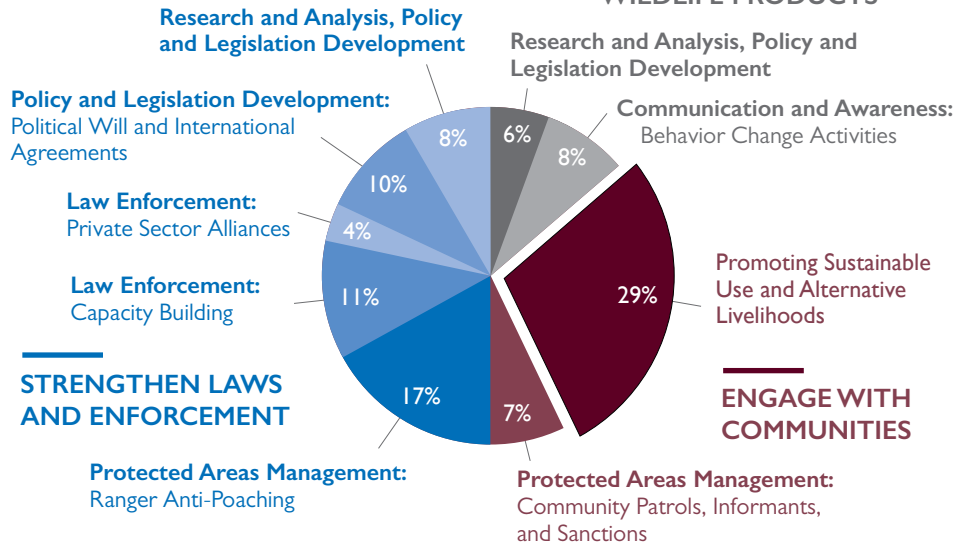
DISRUPTION

Illegal wildlife often travels great distances from source to market, making it a logistics and transport-intensive activity. Wildlife traffickers exploit the increasing connectivity of global transportation, online markets, and gaps in law enforcement to move goods and avoid detection. Through training and partnerships with private sector and international institutions, USAID handicaps transnational organized criminal organizations' ability to hijack the tools of legitimate commerce—ships, planes, ports and banks. For example, USAID partnered with companies like Delta Airlines, Kenya Airways, and Etihad Airways, to train airline employees to detect and respond to illegal wildlife and wildlife products in luggage, in cargo, and on passengers.

USAID also supports international partnerships to strategically track and stop traffickers. USAID and partner TRAFFIC provide technical leadership to financial institutions to ensure banks are not used to finance or launder earnings from wildlife crime. In South Asia, a network analysis of eight tiger smuggling groups conducted by partner INTERPOL resulted in the identification and arrest of key criminals, disrupting their operations.

USAID'S INVESTMENTS IN COMBATING WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING

In 2017, USAID invested about \$70 million to address wildlife trafficking, approximately 25 percent of the Agency's budget for biodiversity conservation. Through more than 65 projects in 25 countries, USAID and its partners are making it more difficult—and costly—for people to poach wildlife, avoid legal consequences, move wildlife and wildlife products across borders, and buy wildlife products in physical and online markets.



USAID COMBATING WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING FUNDING AT A GLANCE: 2017

Since 2013, USAID has monitored combating wildlife trafficking investments in three broad areas: Strengthen Laws and Enforcement (blue), Reduce Demand for Wildlife Products (gray), and Engage with Communities (red pie slices). In support of donor gap analysis, USAID also began tracking programming according to the intervention categories defined by the World Bank (labels in bold font). Promoting sustainable use and alternative livelihoods is separate from the other categories because USAID does not include this among its combating wildlife trafficking intervention areas. The Agency's biodiversity conservation portfolio includes substantial work in this area, which is tracked for inclusion in World Bank analyses.

2013-2017
USAID
supported

\$286 Million
TO COMBAT WILDLIFE
TRAFFICKING

RESOURCES AND LINKS

USAID Combating Wildlife Trafficking www.usaid.gov/biodiversity/wildlife-trafficking
 Measuring Efforts to Combat Wildlife Crime: A Toolkit for Improving Action and Accountability
www.usaid.gov/biodiversity/wildlife-trafficking
 Conservation is Wildlife pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00KK25.pdf

COVER PHOTO: Critically endangered black rhinos are targeted by poachers and wildlife traffickers for their horns.

CENTER PHOTOS (Top left): Tigers are trafficked for their bones and skins and for use in traditional medicine.

(Top Right): Guards searching for evidence in the field during wildlife crime prevention training in India.

(Bottom Right): Wildlife products are transported daily through airports, sea ports and over land. USAID works with partners to disrupt the trafficking.

(Bottom left): Visitors to the Chengdu Panda Base in China learn about the negative impacts of buying illegal wildlife products.

Community scouts play an essential role in combating wildlife trafficking.

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