



GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY
INVESTING IN OUR PLANET



Combating Illegal Wildlife Trade

Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) is reaching unprecedented levels, threatening the long-term survival of populations of numerous keystone species, including the African elephant, rhinos, tigers, and pangolins. Between 2010 and 2012, poachers killed a total of 100,000 African elephants. The number of black rhinos, a critically endangered species, has dwindled from 100,000 in 1960 to just 5,000 in 2016. Rhino poaching is at a crisis point, pushing this iconic species closer towards extinction. Found over large parts of Africa and Asia, all eight species of pangolin could face extinction; pangolins are the world's most trafficked mammals, with over a million pangolins poached since 2000.

Poaching is driven by a rise in demand for wildlife products, especially from rapidly growing Asian economies. The estimated annual value of IWT is US \$7-23 billion,¹ making wildlife crime one of the most lucrative illegal businesses based on renewable natural resources, along with illegal logging and trade, and illegal, unreported, and unregulated fisheries. Sophisticated, international, and well-organized criminal networks are increasingly engaging in IWT, given its high rewards and low risks. Profits obtained from illegal wildlife trade have found their way into the hands of criminal gangs and violent insurgent groups. While demand plays a key role in fueling the slaughter of animals at industrial scales, at the local level poaching is also the result of poverty, corruption, inadequate enforcement, and political instability.

The accelerating decline in wildlife populations will have long-term negative impacts on local communities as it deprives them of future livelihood options and precludes opportunities to gain from nature-based tourism revenues. In many developing countries, wildlife is a driver for tourism revenues, job creation, and sustainable development. Wildlife also brings significant ecological and cultural benefits to regions around the world. IWT robs communities of their natural capital and livelihoods—\$70 billion per year is lost due to crimes affecting natural resources—deepens poverty and inequality, and threatens national security by causing instability and fueling conflicts. IWT also negatively impacts government revenues due to lost tax revenues.

At the international political level, poaching and IWT received enormous attention in recent years. Over 18 declarations and pledges have been made in high level political summits that included the African Elephant Summit in Botswana in 2013, the London IWT Conference in 2014, the Kasane Conference on Illegal Wildlife Trade 2015, and the Hanoi Conference on IWT in 2016. The international political pressure continued as global leaders gathered in London in October 2018 for the 2018 IWT conference.

At the national and regional levels, commitments, declarations, and pledges guided the development of strategies and action plans, including the US National Strategy for Combating Wildlife Trafficking (2014), the European Commission's Strategic Approach to Conservation in Africa (2015), and the African Strategy on Combating Illegal Exploitation and Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora in Africa (2015).

Still, much more needs to be done.

Fortunately, countries are now taking major steps to stem the crisis, launching targeted and integrated solutions. Indeed, the Global Wildlife Program recently released the first-ever review of international donor funding for combatting illegal wildlife trade in Africa and Asia, which shows that over \$1.3 billion (ca. \$190 million per year) was committed by 24 international donors between 2010 and June 2016, funding 1,105 projects in 60 different countries and various regional and global projects.²



THE APPROACH

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) takes a holistic approach to tackling the poaching crisis by seeking to reduce both supply and demand which is driving the illegal wildlife trade, as well as targeted efforts to curb the actual trafficking. We support stronger monitoring and enforcement efforts, strengthening of legal and regulatory frameworks, and awareness raising.

1 *The Rise of Environmental Crime – A Growing Threat to Natural Resources Peace, Development and Security.* <http://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/7662>

2 <https://www.thegef.org/publications/analysis-international-funding-tackle-illegal-wildlife-trade>



Launched in 2015, the Global Wildlife Program (GWP) —A Global Partnership on Wildlife Conservation and Crime Prevention for Sustainable Development—is a US\$131 million grant program funded by the GEF and led by the World Bank Group (WBG). The GWP seeks to address the IWT across 19 countries in Asia and Africa by serving as a platform for knowledge exchange and coordination, and by supporting on-the-ground actions. The GWP accelerates sharing of best practices and lessons learned, and coordinates activities with key source, transit, and demand countries, donors, and other partners. The GWP helped mobilize an additional \$704 million in co-financing from a wide range of partners, including the governments of participating countries, GEF Agencies, bilateral and multilateral donors, foundations, the private sector, and civil society.

The program combats poaching, trafficking and demand for wildlife and wildlife products illegally traded between Africa and Asia. It is a comprehensive effort to protect threatened species and their habitats, with a suite of investments to address the problems and to look for short and long-term solutions in the source, transit, and demand countries.

Activities in the source countries include: enhancing anti-poaching tracking and intelligence operations; increasing the size of conservation areas and improving their management; integrated land-use planning; strengthening enforcement; and providing opportunities for development through nature-based tourism and other agriculture, forestry, and natural resource projects that benefit local communities.

In transit states, the program supports law enforcement capacity, using DNA markers, tracking known shipments of illegal wildlife products to identify the source of wildlife, and strengthening efforts against corruption at all levels.

Activities in the demand countries include targeted awareness raising among consumers across the world, increasing legal deterrents for purchase, and changing behavior of the general public.

The Program carries out activities in 13 African countries (Botswana, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Gabon, Kenya, Mali, Malawi, Mozambique, Republic of Congo, Tanzania, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe) and in 6 Asian countries (Afghanistan,

India, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam) The World Bank is GEF's lead coordinating agency in this partnership. The implementing agencies include Asian Development Bank (ADB), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UN Environment, and the World Bank. The Program Steering Committee is composed of the above institutions and The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Secretariat, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), TRAFFIC, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), WildAid, and WWF). Partner organizations include Agence Française de Développement, European Union, Department for International Development, United for Wildlife, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, United States Agency for International Development, The Clinton Global Initiative, The Elephant Protection Initiative, The US National Strategy for Combating Wildlife Trafficking, the GEF Agencies, UN Agencies, and several national and international conservation organizations.

EXPECTED RESULTS

The program will help reduce poaching, trafficking, and demand for wildlife and wildlife products illegally traded between Africa and Asia, as well as protect wildlife habitats. In some cases, projects will not only help reduce poaching, but will support the recovery of wildlife populations. The program will create the necessary conditions for preserving habitats, secure funding for protected area management, and will provide opportunities for the local communities to benefit from wildlife. By doing so, the program will help preserve these critical species that are vital for the health of ecosystems and sustained delivery of ecosystem goods and services. The protection of habitats (including closed canopy forests and savannas) and supporting the livelihoods of the local communities (mainly pastoralism and small-scale agriculture), will render additional global environmental benefits including more than 25 million ton of CO₂ mitigated and more than 5 million hectares under sustainable land management.



During GEF-7 (2018-2022), countries will have the opportunity to invest GEF financial resources in “Preventing the Extinction of Known Threatened Species” worldwide, and/or developing and implementing projects on “Wildlife for Sustainable Development” (i.e. Wildlife Tourism) in Sub-Saharan Africa. During this period, there is going to be an increase in the funding for the Biodiversity Focal Area to help combat the sharp decline in global biodiversity. More emphasis will be given to the GEF’s work on wildlife, in view of the high demand in GEF-6 and the continuous pressure on wildlife populations worldwide. In GEF-7 US\$168 million has been allocated to countries that would like to join in the effort to combat illegal wildlife trafficking. This represents close to 29% increase from US\$131 million already committed in GEF-6 under the Global Wildlife Program.

Countries will also be able to incorporate investments to combat illegal wildlife trade in one of the flagship programs of GEF-7: The Sustainable Forest Management Impact Program. Through this program, the GEF will be better positioned to help countries pursue holistic and integrated approaches for greater transformational change in key economic systems, and in line with their national development priorities. The Impact Program addresses major drivers of environmental degradation and/or deliver multiple benefits across several Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and the many thematic dimensions the GEF is mandated to deliver. Wildlife components in these IPs will benefit and contribute to the Knowledge Management platform of the GWP.

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) was established on eve of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, to help tackle our planet’s most pressing environmental problems. Since then, the GEF has provided over \$17.9 billion in grants and mobilized an additional \$93.2 billion in co-financing for more than 4500 projects in 170 countries. The GEF has become an international partnership of 183 countries, international institutions, civil society organizations, and private sector to address global environmental issues.

The GEF’s 18 implementing partners are Asian Development Bank (ADB), African Development Bank (AFDB), Development Bank of Latin America (CAF), Conservation International (CI), Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), European Bank for

Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), Foreign Economic Cooperation Office – Ministry of Environmental Protection of China (FECO), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Fundo Brasileiro para a Biodiversidade (FUNBIO), Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), West African Development Bank (BOAD), World Bank Group (WBG), World Wildlife Fund U.S. (WWF).

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GEF implementing agencies participating in the Illegal Wildlife Trafficking program:

