

wildlife crime update
june 2023



ifaw

wildlife crime update



Benjamin Miacsek © IFAW

Elephants are keystone species that play critical roles in their environments. Poaching for ivory is the largest threat against this species.

Wildlife crime is a global activity, crossing international and continental boundaries with ease and relative impunity. Traffickers are able to respond more rapidly and efficiently to changes in transport routes or take advantage of new methods of shipment than the state agencies tasked with combatting their activities.

Illicit wildlife trade is now believed to be as dangerous as global arms, human trafficking, and drug trafficking not only in terms of value (totaling billions in estimated revenue) but also because it often involves many of the same offenders and smuggling routes.

IFAW is combating wildlife crime at its source—in transit and at the point of sale. This is done through law enforcement support and training, improved regulatory environments and by reducing the consumption of wildlife.

The immense complexity of trade in wildlife requires a holistic response in partnership with governments, communities, NGO's and the private sector. IFAW's multifaceted approach addresses key wildlife trafficking hotspots in Africa, the Middle East and Asia. Our experience in international advocacy, outreach and lobbying allows us to effectively engage governments to improve domestic legislation and enforcement, support international initiatives to curb illegal wildlife trade, and secure funding to protect wildlife in their natural habitat.

As you read about IFAW's recent activities to combat wildlife crime, please know of our gratitude for your generosity and kindness to help so many animals and people alike.

IFAW has four program goals to eradicate wildlife crime:

- ▶ Build capacity for law enforcement and prosecution via the provision of training, financial and/or technical assistance to improve the capacity of governments and agencies. To enforce wildlife laws and prosecute wildlife criminals nationally, regionally and globally.
- ▶ Support international and national policy and legislative reforms by assisting in the development, modification, and implementation of international and national laws and policies related to wildlife crime, in order to directly reduce threats to wildlife.
- ▶ Disrupt the online trade in wildlife by working with the private sector, general public, and law enforcement agencies to disrupt the ability of criminals to use the internet (and its support systems, e.G. Logistics companies) for the trafficking of wildlife.
- ▶ Reduce demand for illegal wildlife & wildlife products and promote alternative wildlife-friendly choices -> use of social marketing, communication and other methodologies to raise awareness and change the behaviours of target audiences, especially consumer choices and reporting of illegal products and markets.

the exotic pet trade



© Theo McInnes

The slow loris is an animal that is highly sought after as an exotic pet.

The exotic pet trade is surging across the world. Each year, more exotic animals are making their way into people's homes and are being featured in widely shared online videos. It might look sweet to cuddle up with a baby chimp or tickle a slow loris but most videos don't capture what it is really like to live with one of these animals—or how their popularity helps drive a dangerous and illegal pet trade.

Wildlife trafficking is a multi-billion-dollar business. Each year, tens of millions of wild animals are captured and sold to buyers around the world for a variety of reasons. They do not all become exotic pets—some are eaten, put on display, or used to make clothing—but the vast exotic pet market helps keep demand high.

The exotic pet trade can be notoriously harmful to the animals that are captured and sold. Many die in transit, where they are forced into makeshift hiding places, are poorly fed, or otherwise improperly handled. If they survive, they often end up in cramped spaces, far from their natural habitats and other members of their species.

The capture of wild animals also harms their natural ecosystems. Even animals that aren't poached are indirectly affected, as the decline of other species throws their ecosystem off balance. Exotic pets can also cause a great deal of harm if they escape or are released into the wild. If an animal ends up in a place where it has no predators, it can reproduce and wreak havoc on the natural ecosystem.

Furthermore, many wild animals carry viruses and bacteria that can spread to humans if we interact with them too closely.

IFAW focuses on exotic pet species that:

- ▶ are illegally traded.
- ▶ can spread diseases to other animals or humans.
- ▶ are likely to experience poor welfare in captivity.
- ▶ are concerning from a conservation perspective.
- ▶ pose a risk to people's safety.

These days, scientists estimate that three out of every four new infectious diseases arise from contact between humans and wild animals.

IFAW is consistently working to disrupt the illegal wildlife trafficking trade.

We know you share our belief that wild animals belong in the wild. We will continue to work on behalf of these creatures who are unable to protect themselves.

Scan the QR code to see FAQs about exotic pets and the exotic pet trade!



United States & South Africa partner to stem illegal wildlife trade



The white rhino is particularly vulnerable to poaching because it is relatively unaggressive and lives in herds.

A new partnership between the United States and South Africa is expected to urgently boost global efforts to stem wildlife crime.

Announcing the agreement, U.S. Treasury Secretary, Janet Yellen, said the treasury departments of both countries have agreed to form a task force to combat illicit finance linked to illegal wildlife trade. IFAW has long been a proponent of considering wildlife crime at the same level as other serious international organised crimes, such as human trafficking and the drug trade, and IFAW encourages international collaboration between states as a critical part of any solution.

“South Africa’s rich wildlife biodiversity makes it a key source country for criminals involved in wildlife trafficking and its role as a transport and financial hub for the continent makes it even more important. If this collaboration leads to investigations and convictions, then it will be another useful tool in the

global response to wildlife crime,” **Matthew Morley, Deputy Vice President of Conservation at IFAW.**

South Africa is a biodiversity hotspot with an abundance of wild animals and has long been a destination for wildlife criminals.

“This is a welcome move by the two governments but in order to really get tough on wildlife crime, national and international policies must be strengthened, law enforcement needs more resources and judicial systems need to hand down effective but appropriate sentences. This new effort, in tandem with other efforts such as targeted consumer awareness initiatives to reduce demand for wildlife products and effective community-based in situ conservation, can help keep wild animals where they belong—in the wild,” **concluded Morley**

in the UK wildlife crimes need to matter



© Libby Owen

Poisoning, trapping and being set upon by dogs are just some of the thousands of largely hidden and horrific acts of crime and cruelty inflicted on UK wild animals, including badgers, hares, bats and birds of prey.

Illegal wildlife crime in the UK is taking place under the radar, according to new research. Wild animals are being poisoned, trapped, shot, and hunted by dogs. National laws are inconsistent, police resources are limited, and public awareness around wildlife crime remains low. This combination has deadly consequences for wildlife.

That is why IFAW commissioned a study from criminologists at Nottingham Trent University and the University of Gloucestershire to provide a comprehensive review of UK wildlife law and enforcement opportunities.

The report, **'Make wildlife matter—Spotlight on wildlife crime: working with police and enforcers for change'** focuses on the need for greater protection of wild animals in the UK.

"The fact that wildlife crime cannot be reported as a crime in a meaningful way means the government cannot measure or manage the current situation. Countless sinister crimes could be being committed—we simply do not know... This must change—our wildlife deserves better," - **Frances Goodrum, Head of Campaigns IFAW UK.**

To tackle the problem, IFAW is launching a campaign called 'make wildlife matter'. We are calling on the government to protect the UK's precious wildlife by introducing the following measures:

- ▶ make wildlife crimes notifiable.
- ▶ harmonise all UK wildlife laws.
- ▶ ensure there is at least one dedicated full-time wildlife crime officer per force.
- ▶ incorporate wildlife crime into the Policing Education Qualification Framework.
- ▶ develop enforcement, prosecution, and sentencing guidelines to combat inconsistencies around wildlife crime scenarios and how those should be dealt with.

Scan the QR code to read the report



Additional reading about the campaign can be found here:

www.ifaw.org/uk/campaigns/make-wildlife-matter

elephant poaching down with thanks to our heroic rangers in Zimbabwe and your support



Photo: David Brazier / © IFAW

Group photo at the opening of Makona substation, Hwange National Park's first modern-era ranger station.

What began with a handshake at the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (ZimParks) headquarters roughly three years ago between two unlikely partners, has now transformed into a long-term partnership that has played a key role in the protection and conservation of Zimbabwe's iconic natural resources.

Marking a significant milestone in the partnership between IFAW and ZimParks, the Makona ranger base in Zimbabwe's largest protected area—Hwange National Park—is now fully operational. Opening on 15 April, Makona is now a fully-fledged permanent ranger base accommodating 24 rangers and their families. Presence here is vital to prevent wildlife crime in the remote area, which was once a hot spot for poachers. In 2013, at least 300 elephants were left for dead after poachers laced watering holes and salt licks with cyanide. *"The terrible event didn't kill our passion and desire to protect the gentle giants in the wild...In fact; the catastrophe reignited a strong desire to do more in the protection of our wildlife heritage."* – **Katenda Tshum Wildlife Ranger.**

Hwange National Park is home to 150 species of mammals, including an estimated population of 45,000 elephants. It is also designated as an important bird area, with 400 distinct species residing here. The establishment of the ranger base brings the partnership one step closer to achieving its core mission: to protect the rich biodiversity of the area, conserve and enhance ecological processes, and secure critical habitats while

providing solutions that enhance ranger welfare holistically across an area spanning 14,651 acres.

The concept of enhancing ranger welfare is fundamental to ensuring the long-term success of the initiative. Leaving their families for months at a time, the work of rangers demands a level of personal sacrifice that is often overlooked. Because of this the Makona ranger base serves needs that go beyond functional and provide a foundational home and conducive working environment for a team of individuals who have chosen to undertake life dedicated to the preservation of wildlife and the natural environment. The base now includes ranger houses, an office complex, recreational center, and an enhanced radio communications system.

The impact of all these investments has been significant, resulting in **zero incidents of elephant poaching in IFAW-supported areas**, including Makona, over the last three years. Thank you for standing with us and helping us achieve this huge milestone.

Scan the QR code to learn more about Makona base!



building capacity to counter wildlife trafficking in Kenya



Rhino horns from a previous seizure are now used to train security officers to detect illegal species.

Kenya is a key transit country for wildlife contraband due to its well-developed transport network, including Mombasa Port and Jomo Kenyatta International Airport. Many of the illegal wildlife products that are trafficked, including ivory, pangolin scales, lion bone and rhino horn, are destined for Asia and transit through these major hubs.

Extensive poaching and trafficking continue to threaten the security of East Africa's wildlife and for years IFAW and African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) have collaborated to find holistic solutions to counter wildlife trafficking in Kenya.

Building on decades of expertise and deep local relationships, the Countering Wildlife Trafficking Project was initiated to build capacity of investigative enforcement officers and community rangers in the key cross-border region around Amboseli and Tsavo National Parks. This aim is to interdict, investigate and prosecute wildlife crimes to help save Kenya's iconic wildlife such as elephants, rhinoceroses, giraffes and lions.

52 airport officers in charge of security, verification, investigations and intelligence participated in IFAW's Detecting Illegal Species through Prevention Training (DISRUPT). Capacity building activities also included targeted training and mentorship of Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) officers and community rangers from the Ilkimpa Community Conservation

52

officers in total participated in IFAW's Detecting Illegal Services through Prevention Training (DISRUPT)

54

wild animals have been rescued in two years since the implementation of the training

Association (ICCA) and the Olgulului Community Wildlife Rangers (OCWR), who work to protect wildlife on conservancy and community lands.

In the two years of implementation, 10 investigative leads were generated resulting in a series of arrests and prosecution. In the process, 54 wild animals were rescued including a zebra, 30 lions, 20 elephants, a wildebeest, two vultures and an eagle.

"We are very happy with the results of this innovative project; it addressed the full cycle of activities aimed at eliminating wildlife crime—from prevention and apprehension, right through to prosecution," says James Isiche, IFAW's Director for Africa.

spanning continents to stop wildlife trafficking and trade



Some of the 440 plus star tortoises seized by India customs officers at the Thiruvananthapuram International Airport in Kerala.

IFAW is committed to working with law enforcement and governments to stop the illegal smuggling and trade of wildlife. More than 20 countries and regions across Asia and Oceania have joined forces to combat wildlife smuggling amid an increased risk of cross-border endangered species trafficking.

Earlier this month in Shanghai, IFAW, together with TRAFFIC (Trade Records Analysis of Flora and Fauna in Commerce) and WCS (Wildlife Conservation Society), supported the opening of the fifth Operation of Mekong Dragon (OMD) meeting. The objective of this meeting is to enhance information and intelligence exchange and cooperative enforcement efforts amongst customs across the Greater Mekong Sub-region to prevent and intercept illegal cross-border movements of drugs and illegal wildlife. Customs representatives from more than 20 countries and regions including China, Vietnam, Australia, Laos, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, and Singapore attended the meeting.

These trainings are part of an ongoing project, Confiscated Animals – Rescue & Enforcement Trainings (CARE), led by IFAW and funded by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs. During each of the 13 training sessions, attendees will learn to use confiscation kits designed by IFAW and partners to reduce biosafety risks, safeguard animal welfare, and preserve evidence integrity. The confiscation kits are designed to protect both animals and people. Each kit includes personal protective gear, animal first aid supplies, and forensic evidence equipment.

“Enforcement officers often come face-to-face with illegally traded wildlife. They must be prepared to handle live wild animals in a safe and humane way, while also collecting the evidence needed for any future proceedings,” said Lois Lelanchon, Program Manager for Wildlife Rescue at IFAW. “For most trafficked animals, enforcement officers are their last hope to be rescued and possibly released back to the wild—which is our ultimate goal.”



© China Customs Anti-Smuggling Bureau

Elephant ivory seized by Singapore authorities.

There is concern that, as global exchanges and trades gradually recover from the impact of COVID-19, there is an increased risk of cross-border trafficking of endangered species. With a global network of offices in Africa, the Middle East, Asia, Europe, and the Americas, IFAW is supporting law enforcement cooperation among agencies along the entire wildlife trafficking chain.

On March 20, 2023, Vietnam seized about seven tons of ivory smuggled from Angola in a container declared as peanuts. This was the largest case of ivory smuggling in Vietnam's Hai Phong port so far.

Representatives exchanged views on recent law enforcement actions, typical cases in their countries and analysed the effectiveness of OMD in previous years. Ever since wildlife smuggling was included in OMD in 2020, a total of more than 210 wildlife seizures had been made as of OMD IV in 2022.

"At present, the global trafficking of endangered species is showing rebound, requiring stronger regional collaboration and vigilance." **Said Grace Ge Gabriel, Senior Advisor for Asia Affairs with IFAW.**

The OMD V will last for six months from April to September 2023.

"IFAW commits to supporting law enforcement cooperation among agencies along the entire wildlife trafficking chain, based on our global network of offices in Africa, Middle East, Asia, Europe and Americas."

Grace Ge Gabriel.

Scan the QR codes below to see how IFAW is working to stop wildlife crime.



how volunteers are fighting wildlife crime in Uganda & the DRC



Photo: Paolo Torchio / © IFAW

A member of the anti-poaching unit at Queen Elizabeth National Park displays a trap found while on patrol.

In March 2021, the driver of a wildlife tour company saw vultures circling over the bush in Uganda's Queen Elizabeth National Park. He wandered off track to investigate, thinking a lion must have killed something. Instead, he found six lions dead, dismembered, and decaying. They had been poisoned by poachers, who stole their body parts to sell on the black market.

Queen Elizabeth National Park is famously home to a large number of tree-climbing lions. Listed as vulnerable on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Red List, lions should find safety in the park's conservation area.

Through intelligence and investigation using community sources, it was established that the lions had been poisoned by members of the community for their body parts. Four suspects identified by community informants were arrested by law enforcement officers. When they were arrested, the suspects had lion heads, claws, and oil hidden in their houses. One also had two lion skins, 40 porcupine spikes, a hunting net, and a bullet from an AK47. Two suspects were acquitted by court, while the other two were convicted and sentenced to seven years in prison.

One of the multiple informants who provided information is part of a group of local community members supported by IFAW to help collect and report timely information on poaching incidents. These community monitors work closely—and quietly—with the park's intelligence unit to prevent wildlife poaching and trafficking.

Moses Olinga, IFAW's program manager said:

"The volunteers are key in disrupting poaching and trafficking because the people involved in wildlife crime stay in their communities, so volunteers can give accurate information. The volunteers...want to contribute towards conservation. Some are former poachers who...had no benefit they could be proud of. They felt that supporting the park has more benefits."

On the opposite shore of Lake Edward lies another extraordinary wildlife area—the Democratic Republic of the Congo's **Virunga National Park**. It is Africa's oldest national park, most biodiverse protected area, and home to around one-third of the world's mountain gorillas. IFAW's partner International Union for Conservation of Nature Netherlands (IUCN NL) has trained several volunteers called community sensors, who collect data on security, poaching, and other environment-related incidents to share with the park's security forces. **Thanks to this work, two militia camps have been destroyed, preventing attacks on park staff and the arrest of a notorious elephant-and-hippo poacher.**

IFAW is supporting the community monitors in Uganda with equipment and training; quarterly meetings between the two parks to plan, analyse, and share information; and coordinated patrols along the common border.

Scan the QR code to read more



our mission to end the plight of pangolins



© Jakarta Animal Aid Network

Rescued from a wildlife trader in the harbor of Sumatra in 2021, this pangolin is now back in the wild and living in a safe Sumatran forest.

Live animals rescued from trafficking do not get as much attention as wildlife products, and IFAW realises that live seizures and confiscations are challenging and need corrective action. Our goal is to rescue animals from the illegal wildlife trade and prosecute trafficking crimes in a way that prioritises humane outcomes for wildlife. That is the purpose of our Confiscated Animals – Rescue and Enforcement (CARE) project.

In support of this mission, IFAW created a Live Animals Seized in Trade (LAST) initiative. Where we interface with law enforcement to ensure its members understand what to do, and how to do it correctly and safely, when they discover animals such as vulnerable-to-critically-endangered pangolins destined for wildlife trafficking. They need to care properly for seized animals that can experience extreme stress. *“We assist them in learning how to handle the animals—when they should and shouldn’t—and what to do when they open the consignment, how to identify the species, including how to recognise venomous or very dangerous animals, and how to preserve evidence integrity so a case can be properly built around that evidence,”* says **Lois Lelanchon**.

It’s thanks to your support that IFAW is able to also provide equipment with guidance and training, so animals can be safely kept for up to 24 hours until an approved rescue or zoo can pick them up while the legal process continues. We maintain global projects in selected countries in Asia, Africa and South America by working together to ensure the the best outcomes for any seized animal.

The pangolin is the most trafficked mammal in the world. All eight species are killed for their scales which are composed of the protein keratin. Sadly, the scales are still used in traditional and folk medicine, while efficacy for treating anything

successfully has not been scientifically proven. Their meat is also considered a delicacy among some cultures that view it as a sign of wealth. It is estimated that approximately one million pangolins have been captured in the wild and they, or their body parts, illegally sold on the black market.

IFAW recently collaborated on an undercover investigation of cybercrime that involved three trafficked Sunda pangolins from Indonesia to potentially India. *“During this case, we were a convenor and also funder who played an important role in the care of the animals post-seizure,”* says **Lionel Hachemin (IFAW wildlife crime program manager)**. *“Our close partner Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) conducted the online investigation on encrypted messaging apps. Building on their work, we then shared intelligence reports with our partner, the Jakarta Animal Aid Network, which contacted local police with information about the seller’s location. The animals were seized within nine days.”*

Three suspects were arrested but all pangolins sadly died. *“The outcome was unfortunate, but not surprising, given the fragile nature of pangolins and the inhumane conditions in which animals are trafficked”* **Lelanchon** says.

More efforts that save pangolins cannot come too soon. IFAW does not know exactly how many pangolins exist in the world, but experts project that some pangolin species could decline by as much as 50 to 80 percent over the next three generations.

Scan the QR code to learn more



high wildlife trafficking in the Sulu-Celebes Seas call for tripartite collaboration



© Andrey Arnyagov

Hawksbill turtles are one of eight species of endangered turtles protected by CITES (The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora).

A wide range and concerning volume of wildlife are being trafficked through the region of the Sulu-Celebes. The two seas have been revealed as a conduit to smuggle wildlife between Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines, rather than as a transit pathway to other destinations.

The study reported over 25,000 live animals and over 120,000 tonnes of wildlife, parts and plants seized from illegal trade in this area between June 2003 and September 2021. The illicit trade targeted hundreds of species, from forest dwelling pangolins, freshwater turtles and elephants to marine life such as turtles, seahorses, sharks and rays.

Analysis showed that illegal trade was severely affecting marine resources in the area with marine turtles, giant clams, seahorses, and sharks and

rays, in particular, seized in large quantities and frequently.

“The illegal trade of live animals is increasing at a shocking rate around the world and is targeting a growing number of threatened and endangered species. This report demonstrates the Sulu-Celebes Seas region is not exempt of this pervasive issue that is wildlife trafficking. At IFAW, we are working with partner organisations and authorities to humanely confiscate live wild animals with the goal of repatriating and releasing rescued wildlife back into their native habitats. Through close collaboration with authorities in Southeast Asia, we streamline the confiscation, care and rehabilitation process so wild animals can safely and quickly be returned to the wild,” **said Loïs Lelanchon.**



© IFAW

50% of the rescued birds of prey at BRRC (Beijing Raptor Rescue Centre) have been returned to the wild.

Alongside increased vigilance at formal and informal landing sites to intercept wildlife contraband, the report calls for strengthening the capacity of agencies on investigations, prosecution and post-confiscation handling. To strengthen tripartite collaboration, authors also urged improved inter-agency and inter-country cooperation, through stronger communications streams and joint task forces guided by practical operating procedures across agencies and borders.

This project known as the “Targeting Regional Investigations for Policing Opportunities & Development (TRIPOD)” project and was carried out by TRAFFIC. The study was partially funded by IFAW, WWF and Freeland through a US Department of State- Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs project, combating wildlife trafficking in the region.

452 SEIZURES

of illegally traded wildlife were confiscated in the Sulu-Celebes region between June 2003 to September 2021.

12,041 SEAHORSES

Seahorses (Syngnathidae) were the largest quantity of confiscated individuals by family, followed by turtles (Geoemydidae, 5,556 and Cheloniidae, 2,546) and pangolins (Manidae, 5,797).

25,894 LIVE ANIMALS

were seized: 96% of all live animals rescued in seaports were birds.

**Scan the QR code
to read the press release.**



raise public awareness and reduce consumer demand



IFAW tiger-themed PSA in China Daily, January 2022. This PSA was published during the Chinese Spring Festival, the Year of the Tiger, and the Beijing Winter Olympics.



IFAW raptor-themed PSA in China Daily, February 2022. This PSA was published during the Chinese Spring Festival, the Year of the Tiger, and the Beijing Winter Olympics.

To reduce consumer demand for wildlife products and raise public awareness on wildlife conservation, IFAW continues to promote the oriental aesthetic PSAs (public service announcements) themed 'Guard our shared home' in Beijing subway, Tianjin subway and Guangzhou airport. The PSAs delivered a strong message that animals and people coexist and thrive together and also has helped to increase brand awareness and bolster IFAW credibility.

It has also raised public awareness on IFAW's efforts in helping raptors in China to which IFAW promotes the raptor-themed PSA in Beijing. In November and December 2022, the PSAs reached millions of passengers daily and leveraged more than AUD 3.93 million (USD 2.57 million) in-kind support in total.

Five pieces of IFAW Guard Our Shared Home PSAs, together with one feature story on Chinese culture, raptor conservation and IFAW BRRC's (Beijing Rapture Rescue Centre) efforts, was published in the first issue of Le sommet magazine.

Le sommet is a quarterly high-end lifestyle magazine, with an initial print run of 5,000 copies and covers 300 business jets per month and business jet terminals in more than 10 cities.



Sabrina Zhang © IFAW

A leopard-themed IFAW PSA at a bus stop in a historical and cultural center in Beijing.

The PSA were also presented in the national English-language newspaper, China Daily. This newspaper has developed into a multi-media platform combining newspapers, websites and apps. It is the default choice for people who wish to read about China in English reaching over 330 million readers all over the world.

China Daily acts as an information exchange between China and the rest of the world. The newspapers reach includes high-end readers, such as diplomats, representatives of international organisations and transnational corporations, as well as journalists and foreign tourists.

IFAW China has promoted these PSAs in Beijing train stations to raise public awareness of conservation and reduce consumer demand for wildlife.

Wangfujing station is considered the central heart of Beijing city and one of its largest commercial centers. It has hundreds of thousands of passengers flow through each day.

These promotions also help with fundraising and have generated lots of support from the general public.

the coalition blocks millions of wildlife crime listings



© IFAW

A group photo of the Coalition partners and members.

China internet companies removed 12.27 million listings and posts of endangered and threatened species from their online platforms since the launch of the Coalition to End Wildlife Trafficking Online.

The Coalition, which includes WWF (World Wildlife Fund), TRAFFIC, and IFAW, this April celebrated its fifth anniversary by recapping its achievements since its 2018 launch. The Chinese Coalition members also analysed the latest trends of illegal trade on the internet in China, and discussed priorities for the next years.

In China, the Coalition established streamlined coordination with relevant government and law enforcement agencies and adopted innovative and effective methods to inform online users about wildlife conservation policies and regulations. The Coalition works with and encourages the public to embrace eco-friendly behaviour. The social media campaigns implemented by Coalition members have received over 1.1 billion likes and interactions.

“Moving forward, we aim to further facilitate cross-sector communication and collaboration, and cooperate with internet companies to incorporate

combating illegal wildlife trade and supporting biodiversity into their corporate ESG (environmental, social and governance) construction,” said Grace Ge Gabriel. “Through these efforts, we aspire to amplify the Coalition’s impact on the global governance of cyber wildlife crime.”

Over the last five years, the number of Coalition members has more than doubled from 21 to 47, ranging across Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas, including 26 Chinese companies. A total of 2,344 staff from Chinese companies have received training provided by the Coalition, which enhanced their ability to detect and combat wildlife crime.

To read the full press release, visit here:

www.ifaw.org/au/press-releases/coalition-blocks-millions-wildlife-crime-listings

**Scan the QR code
To read more about how IFAW
is combatting illegal wildlife
trade in China.**



Philippine agencies unite to combat wildlife traffickers



© Aerawan - stock.adobe.com

Close up of accipiter or falcon inside a steel cage which was hunted and smuggled in rural areas of Thailand.

Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines, in the Southeast Asian archipelago, have been facing challenges related to the illegal wildlife trade of threatened species such as pangolins, marine turtles, and sharks, among others. Enforcement of laws on wildlife trafficking has been difficult given the wide marine borders in the Sulu and Celebes Seas and the lack of strong cooperation between the countries' security and intelligence agencies.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) estimated that the total cost of the illegal trade is around P50 billion (approximately 1.3 billion AUD) per year in the Philippines alone. This amount already includes the losses to damaged habitats from poaching and loss in potential ecotourism revenues.

This January over 40 officers from 11 Philippine enforcement agencies underwent joint specialised training in Palawan to identify and dismantle organised crime networks that are targeting the country's wildlife. Officers also received training in how to care for wild animals that they seize from traffickers.

IFAW is implementing a U.S. government-sponsored project called TRIPOD which improves

the cooperation between law enforcement agencies. Topics of the training focus on sharing of critical, actionable intelligence, building holistic interagency approaches between police, judicial, anti-corruption, and financial crime agencies, and teaching of analytical tools that help in identifying criminal supply chains. The next step in TRIPOD is to help convene Philippine agencies with their counterparts in Indonesia and Malaysia to share information and agree on ways to target cross-border illicit supply chains that are trafficking marine turtles, pangolins, sharks, and many other species.

"Seizures of live animals are particularly challenging for enforcement agencies combatting wildlife crime. Trafficked animals are discovered in poor condition and require urgent attention. Animal handling techniques are essential to ensure the safety of personnel and to safeguard animal welfare" said Loïs Lelanchon, Program Manager for Wildlife Rescue at IFAW.

Scan the QR code to read the press release.



good news stories

back to the wild for two friends

The Asiatic black bear is one of four species of bear found within the forests of India. As adult



Subhashish Arandhara © IFAW

One of the Asiatic black bear cubs in rehabilitation at CBRC.

bears are often hunted for meat, young cubs may be left orphaned or illegally poached to be sold as pets. In 2002, IFAW and our partner Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) joined the Arunachal Pradesh Forest Department to create the Centre for Bear Rehabilitation and Conservation (CBRC) — the first specialised rehabilitation centre for Asiatic black bears in India.

Cubs are raised by professional handlers to reintegrate them back into the wild. Here they go on daily walks in the wilderness and are taught valuable skills, such as identifying natural foods, to help the cubs survive and thrive on their own.

Den and Itan were only one week old when they were admitted to CBRC. For months, a team of professionals fed and monitored the orphaned cubs. When they reached 11 months old, they were taken to a soft release site in the forest, where they were fitted with tracking collars to ensure they will adapt to life in the wild once they are fully released. Eventually, they spent increasingly longer periods of time on their own, exploring their environment, until they stopped returning to the release site altogether and started their second chance as fully wild bears.

Scan the QR code to watch Itan enjoying his freedom in the tree.



UK Ivory Act will be extended beyond elephant ivory

We would love to end this update with some recent fantastic news!

In May 2023 it was announced that the UK Ivory Act will be extended beyond elephant ivory to cover five CITES listed species - hippo, narwhal, killer whale, sperm whale and walrus. Hippos, killer whales and sperm whales are targeted for their teeth, while narwhals and walrus are hunted for their tusks.

This follows a DEFRA (Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs) consultation two years ago seeking responses on whether the ban should be extended to other, non-elephant ivory-bearing species. Three options were on the table: retain the current ban on elephant ivory only, extend to five CITES listed species: hippo, narwhal, killer whale, sperm whale and walrus, or extend to hippo ivory only. We are seeing the strongest option taken forward.

It is great to see one of the toughest laws around ivory extended. Next steps will include pushing for the formal amendment and continuing to track trends across UK markets.



Donal Boyd © IFAW

Hippopotamus with their young walking along the Shire River in Liwonde National, Malawi.

"As we approach the one-year anniversary of the UK Ivory Act coming into force, IFAW are encouraged by early indications that the ban is having a significant impact on the trade in elephant ivory. Yet other species are still poached globally to meet an unnecessary demand for "luxury" ivory products. We welcome DEFRA's decision to extend this powerful legislation, which will go a long way in cracking down on a damaging trade. Today is a good day for conservation and a step change towards international commitments to safeguard our natural world" **Frances Goodrum.**

thank you for your support



A passenger interacts with the northeast tiger OOH at the Wangfujing Station on Beijing Subway.

Animals all over the world face being hunted, poached, trafficked and orphaned. Many don't get the chance to live a natural life in the wild. Many species of animals are now extinct from these inhumane practices and many are suffering for their survival in the aftermath.

But thanks to you, and your belief in IFAW, we have been able to transform such stories of tragedy into hope. You provide hope to the animals who are illegally poached and sold as pets, who are slaughtered for their body parts and hope to us, that we can continue to work to save all important lives.

Donating to IFAW's wildlife crime efforts enables us to reduce the demand for illegal wildlife and wildlife products, promote wildlife friendly choices and dispute the online trade of trafficking wildlife. It also allows us to assist in the development, modification and implementation of laws and policies related to

wildlife crime and helps us to build capacity for law enforcement and prosecution.

As you know, our work in wildlife crime is nowhere near over. Your generosity ensures that we are able to be on the ground all over the world to save animals' lives and to prevent wildlife crime occurring.

Thank you again for being there for animals in need, we are forever grateful for your compassion and kindness and we hope that you will continue to join us on our mission of helping animals in need around our world well into the future.

We would also like to acknowledge all our supporters who have chosen to leave their lasting legacy to the animals through a gift in their Will. Did you know that one in five animals are rescued and protected thanks to these wonderful gifts?



International Fund
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how you can help

Scan the QR code to sign the petition to make wildlife crimes notifiable in the UK

