

FORUM: Environmental Commission (EC)

QUESTION OF: Addressing Wildlife Trafficking and the Smuggling of Endangered and Protected Species

STUDENT OFFICER: Eva Lolou

POSITION: Deputy President

INTRODUCTION

Wildlife trafficking and the smuggling of endangered and protected species is an international crime which threatens many aspects of human and wildlife existence. For example, wildlife trafficking and smuggling is one of the main factors which cause environmental degradation, and more specifically disruptions on the ecosystem and the food chain. At the same time, endangered species smuggling impacts human activities on a deteriorating level. The communities near illicit wildlife trade activities are negatively impacted as the species smuggled are essential to the local economy and tourism.

Wildlife species are of the utmost importance to maintain environmental harmony, however as long as endangered species smuggling continues we are getting closer and closer to the extinction of thousands of species. It is clear that the impact of wildlife trafficking deteriorates the environment towards an inevitable path, the acceleration of the biodiversity crisis and everything that comes with it.

Wildlife smuggling has escalated quite rapidly and has exceeded all moral limits in the past decade, as mentioned in a UN research concerning the topic reported “illegal trade in 162 countries and territories during 2015–2021, which impacted around 4,000 plant and animal species—3,250 [...] In many cases, illegal trade appeared to have contributed to local or global extinctions of species, disrupted ecosystems, and undermined the many socioeconomic benefits that people derive from nature”¹. It is a significant global issue that requires coordinated international efforts to combat. The smuggling of endangered species leads the path to their inevitable extinction, but is humanity currently prepared to confront that? As technology progresses we may seem ignorant towards the environmental

¹ “Launch of the World Wildlife Crime Report 2024: New Data, Trends, Threats and Possible Solutions to Combat Illegal Wildlife Trade | ICCWC. 1 May 2024, www.iccwc-wildlifecrime.org/news/launch-world-wildlife-crime-report-2024-new-data-trends-threats-and-possible-solutions-combat . Accessed 3 Aug. 2024.

degradation which has been taking place for the past millennium. But from a realistic point of view, the bare existence of humanity depends on nature and a flourishing natural environment. This year's conference bears the name Ethos Vs. Progress, a debate entirely linked with wildlife trafficking. The cultural background of the topic goes deep and even though customs and perceptions are entirely linked with maintaining our heritage, is ethos an excuse for the degradation and the explicit consequences the human race is to face, should wildlife smuggling continue? By combating this illegal trade, we safeguard our natural heritage, ensure sustainable development, and promote global security and environmental integrity for future generations.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Bushmeat

“Meat obtained by hunting wild animals especially in Africa and Asia” ²

Endangered species

“Any species that is at risk of extinction because of a sudden rapid decrease in its population or a loss of its critical habitat.”³

Exotic Pet

“Also called a wild pet, is an animal of a non-native or not regularly domesticated species in the country that is kept or traded for entertainment or company” ⁴

Illegal wildlife trade

“The illegal wildlife trade refers to the illegal buying, selling, and trading of animals and their parts, such as skins, horns, or bones. [...] Animals that are part of the illegal wildlife

²Definition of BUSHMEAT.” *Www.merriam-Webster.com*, www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bushmeat.

³Dublin, Holly. “Endangered Species | Definition & Facts.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 12 Nov. 2018, www.britannica.com/science/endangered-species. Accessed 3 Aug. 2024.

⁴Mozer, Annika, and Stefan Prost. “An Introduction to Illegal Wildlife Trade and Its Effects on Biodiversity and Society.” *Science Direct*, Dec. 2023, www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2666937423000021#bib21S. Accessed 5 Aug. 2024.

trade have often been violently removed from their habitats and families or killed despite their conservation status.”⁵

Poaching

“Poaching is defined as the illegal hunting or capture of animals that are not one’s own. Poaching does not refer to just the illegal killing of animals, but also to their unauthorized trapping and capture to introduce them into the illegal live animal trade.”⁶

Ranger

“Any professional involved in the protection and management of national parks, natural areas, wildlife and cultural sites.”⁷

Rewild

“To increase biodiversity and restore the natural processes of an ecosystem typically by reducing or ceasing human activity and reintroducing plant and animal species”⁸

Smuggling

“To import or export secretly contrary to the law and especially without paying duties imposed by law”⁹

Wet Market

“Especially in Asia, a market where fresh meat, fish, fruit, vegetables, and sometimes live animals are sold to the public”¹⁰

⁵“Wildlife Crime: Terms and Definitions.” *IFAW*, 2024, www.ifaw.org/international/journal/wildlife-crime-terms-definitions#:~:text=Wildlife%20trafficking%20refers%20to%20all. Accessed 3 Aug. 2024.

⁶“Wildlife Crime: Terms and Definitions.” *IFAW*, 2024, www.ifaw.org/international/journal/wildlife-crime-terms-definitions#:~:text=Wildlife%20trafficking%20refers%20to%20all. Accessed 3 Aug. 2024.

⁷“What Do Rangers Do and How Does WWF Support Them? | Pages | WWF.” *World Wildlife Fund*, www.worldwildlife.org/pages/what-do-rangers-do-and-how-does-wwf-support-them Accessed 3 Aug. 2024.

⁸“Merriam-Webster Dictionary.” *Merriam-Webster.com*, 4 Aug. 2024, www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/rewild#:~:text=1. Accessed 12 Aug. 2024.

⁹“Definition of SMUGGLING.” *Www.merriam-Webster.com*, 26 Aug. 2023, www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/smuggling. Accessed 25 Aug. 2024.

¹⁰Cambridge Dictionary. “Wet Market.” *@CambridgeWords*, 28 Aug. 2024, dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/wet-market#google_vignette. Accessed 3 Sept. 2024

Wildlife Confiscation

“Refers to stopping wildlife trafficking by intercepting traffickers and liberating any animals or animal parts in their possession. This is often done at specific checkpoints, like airports or ports, trafficking hubs (if they can be identified), or on-site where animals are being killed or captured.”¹¹ This term can only be used for the liberation of live animals.

Wildlife Commodities

“Food products, leather goods, timber, dead specimens, parts (such as ivory) or derivatives (such as medicines made from animals or plants)”¹² In general, wildlife commodities are products derived from non-domesticated species either animals, or plants.

Wildlife Sanctuary

“An area of land in which hunting, collecting and any other disturbance of the fauna and flora is forbidden”¹³

Wildlife trade

“Any sale or exchange of wild animal and plant resources by people.”¹⁴

Wildlife Trafficking

“The illegal trade, smuggling, poaching, capture, or collection of endangered species, protected wildlife (including animals or plants that are subject to harvest quotas and regulated by permits), derivatives, or products thereof”¹⁵

¹¹Wildlife Crime: Terms and Definitions.” IFAW, 2024, www.ifaw.org/international/journal/wildlife-crime-terms-definitions#:~:text=Wildlife%20trafficking%20refers%20to%20all. Accessed 3 Aug. 2024.

¹²“Wildlife Trade.” *Environment*, 20 Aug. 2024, environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/nature-and-biodiversity/wildlife-trade_en#:~:text=This%20includes%20food%20products%2C%20leather. Accessed 31 Aug. 2024.

¹³“Wildlife Sanctuary - Quick Search Results | Oxford English Dictionary.” *Oed.com*, 2024, www.oed.com/search/dictionary/?scope=Entries&q=wildlife+sanctuary . Accessed 3 Aug. 2024.

¹⁴ TRAFFIC. “TRAFFIC | Legal Wildlife Trade.” *Traffic.org*, 2017, www.traffic.org/about-us/legal-wildlife-trade/ . Accessed 3 Sept. 2024.

¹⁵“Wildlife, Forest & Fisheries Crime Module 3 Key Issues: Criminalization of Wildlife Trafficking.” ;, sherloc.unodc.org/cld/en/education/tertiary/wildlife-crime/module-3/key-issues/criminalization-of-wildlife-trafficking.html . Accessed 3 Aug. 2024.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Understanding wildlife trafficking

What is it that really makes wildlife trade illegal? Wildlife trade can be domestic or international, however it is deemed illegal when this trade leads to the overexploitation of natural habitats and more specifically, when it threatens an ecosystem's well being and flourishing. Illicit wildlife trade or Wildlife trafficking, is estimated to be a multibillion-dollar business (up to USD 20 billion per year)¹⁶ and following habitat destruction, poses the most formidable threat to biodiversity conservation and the survival of countless species.

Wildlife trafficking, smuggling and poaching are all illegal acts and considered a punishable offense. They all take place on a large spectrum and while some forms are well known such as the poaching of elephants for ivory, other species face similar if not worse exploitation such as pangolins, and even marine species. It is believed that poaching isn't but a single piece to a larger puzzle where other punishable offenses are committed by the same criminal groups, such as human trafficking, narcotics trade, and prostitution.

Usually, when additional cargo space is available either in most means of transport, live specimens as well as plain wildlife commodities are smuggled. Wildlife trafficking can happen in both passenger flights as well as on cargo ships and jets. Moreover, depending on the difficulty of obtaining every specimen, smugglers set prices. For example, jaguars, or critically endangered species, reach an extremely high price in comparison with amazon parrots, a more common species.

It's well known that wildlife trafficking and endangered species smuggling is a punishable offense, yet the legislation varies from country to country. Even though the plethora of Member States have acknowledged Illegal wildlife trade as a key issue, the legislation still leaves legal loopholes in some cases. Furthermore, another challenge is the behavior of consumers. If there wasn't any demand for wildlife commodities and even live specimens, the smugglers would be forced out of business, and this goes for all forms of trafficking. Ultimately, the combat of illegal wildlife trade is an operation full of challenges we are in absolute need of overcoming to safeguard our natural inheritance for us and for the generations that are yet to follow.

¹⁶Interpol. "Illegal Wildlife Trade Has Become One of the 'World's Largest Criminal Activities.'" *Www.interpol.int*, 6 Nov. 2023, www.interpol.int/en/News-and-Events/News/2023/Illegal-wildlife-trade-has-become-one-of-the-world-s-largest-criminal-activities#:~:text=With%20the%20black%20market%20for. Accessed 31 Aug. 2024

Historical Background

Wildlife trafficking and the smuggling of endangered or protected species is an issue which troubles the modern world on a great level because of the negative impact it provokes not solely on the environment but also on human activities and communities. It is definitely not something new, as it has been going on explicitly for a long period of time.

Wildlife trade has been going on since the mere existence of humanity, and especially in the beginning it was a necessity to our species survival and later on a major part of the economy. However, during the late 19th century, wildlife trade took a big turn from being a necessity to humanity, to being a threat towards wildlife. However, the importance of this issue was firstly understood in the 1900's when the Lacey Act, a United States Law that prohibits the trafficking of wildlife, was enacted.

Poaching poses a similar case, firstly poachers were considered heroes, taking from the rich to give back to the poor but as the years passed they resulted in criminal offenders, destroying ecosystems and posing a serious threat to biodiversity. Poaching was first considered illegal and a punishable offense during the Late Middle Ages (1300-1500), and it remains to be up till today. However, the big rise in poachers was detected in the 1700's when the poverty rates were extremely high, and people turned to poaching. Poachers were supported by a great number of people both of the lower and the middle class, because poaching was one of their very few food sources. Later on, poachers started engaging in black markets and afterwards, wet markets. Nonetheless, in this day and age poaching is of no need for nutrition and it is one of the biggest threats to this planet's biodiversity.

Cultural Background

In order to tackle wildlife trafficking on a global scale we need to comprehend the culture of wildlife consumption. The wildlife commodities in trade are strongly linked with cultural practices globally. In many societies both animals and plants are valued for their use in traditional medicine, cuisine, fashion and in communities more associated with nature, rituals.

For example in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), commodities derived from wildlife have great demand and thus, play a crucial role in wildlife trafficking. More specifically, as Dale Hoiberg, sinologist and chief editor of the Encyclopedia Britannica explicitly occupied with culturomics, mentions "TCM uses approximately 1,000 plant and 36

animal species, including the tiger, rhinoceros, black bear, musk deer, and seahorse¹⁷. During its centuries of development, TCM spread throughout China and then into Japan, Korea, and Southeast Asia. It has been a major part of traditional Chinese culture and continues to play an important role in medical treatment in China today. This serves as proof of the explicit overexploitation of natural resources which takes place in the countries above, while at the same time it highlights the connection between wildlife trafficking and cultural beliefs or practices.

Apart from that, the roots of culture on wildlife trafficking go on a much deeper level. Fashion and luxury goods are deeply linked with the exploitation of wildlife commodities because of the association between high fashion and animal products such as leather, fur and ivory. It's also of great importance that in numerous cultures owning items which originate from endangered species, such as leopard skins or alligator leather is a way of expressing status and displaying wealth.

Another way in which culture is strongly linked with wildlife trafficking is religion and rituals. More specifically, in both Asian and African mythology and rituals, pangolins are of great importance. In the Central African rainforest tribes have developed cults in which being a member meant the sacrifice of a pangolin for the initiation ceremony. However, in other tribes, pangolins were considered culture heroes and are thought to navigate through the worlds of both the dead and the living and thus are considered sacred. In eastern and southern Africa, other rituals take place during which, the pangolin is thought to determine whether a drought or good rains are to follow depending on the pangolin's behavior. Later on, the ritual continues with the sacrifice of a sheep and afterwards the pangolin is buried alive on top of the dead sheep's fleece.

It is clear that these kinds of rituals as the ones mentioned above are brutal and threaten all forms of wildlife, as pangolins aren't the only ones affected. However, by comprehending and respecting all these cultural dimensions and thinking critically we can combat wildlife trafficking efficiently by collaborating with the communities affected the most by these practices. Ultimately the question remains, can we come to a point where there is balance between preserving cultural practices while respecting and promoting environmental flourishing?

¹⁷ Hoiberg, Dale. "Traditional Chinese Medicine and Endangered Animals." *Saving Earth | Encyclopedia Britannica*, 22 Sept. 2008, www.britannica.com/explore/savingearth/traditional-chinese-medicine-and-endangered-animals-2#:~:text=TCM%20uses%20approximately%201%2C000%20plant. Accessed 3 Aug. 2024.

Species most affected

Some examples of wildlife smuggling are well known such as the poaching of elephants and tigers. However, the issue takes place on a much larger spectrum as countless other species are victims of wildlife trade and exploitation. Wildlife trade is considered illegal when hunters overexploit natural ecosystems and thus disrupt natural habitats or threaten the existence of the local fauna and flora. The species which face illicit trade are usually endangered and the ones breaching closer to extinction.

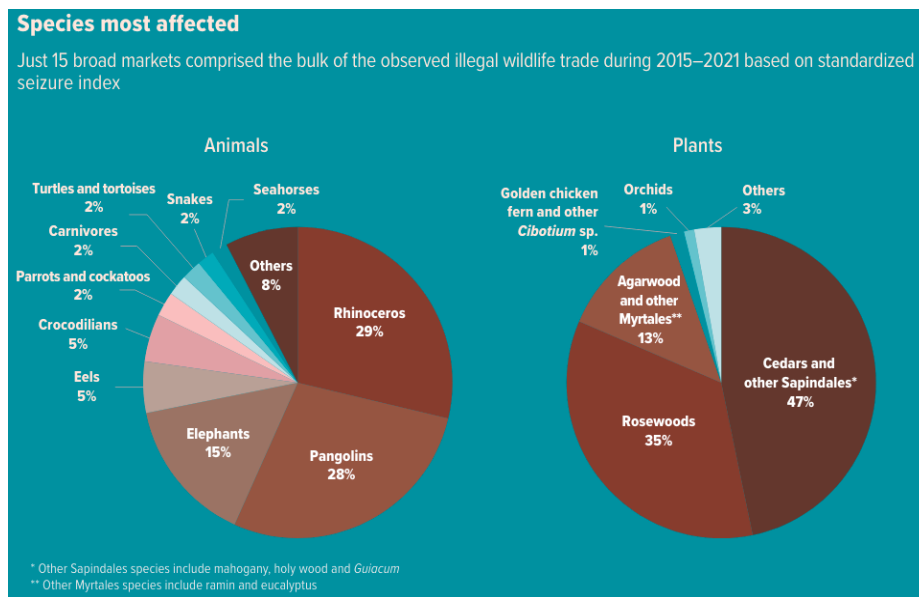


Figure 1: On the graph above is depicted data collected between 2015-2021 regarding the species most impacted by illegal wildlife trade. The first graph concerns animals while the second one concerns plants. As it is depicted pangolins, rhinoceros cedars and rosewoods have the higher percentages and thus, are considered endangered species. ¹⁸

As can be seen on the graph above the species most affected concerning both animals and plants are, rhinoceros, pangolins, cedars and other Sapindales. All of which, originate from Asia and Africa, the two continents which export the plethora of illegal wildlife commodities. Most of the species affected are due to extinction and thus, the gravity of the situation is unquestionable. Pangolins are one of the most commonly trafficked species

¹⁸ Meineke, Michelle. "4 Charts That Show How Organized Crime Is Endangering Wildlife and Damaging Ecosystems." *World Economic Forum*, 11 June 2024, www.weforum.org/agenda/2024/06/how-organized-crime-is-endangering-wildlife-and-damaging-ecosystems/. Accessed 3 Aug. 2024.

globally, and according to the WWF (World Wildlife Fund) out of all 8 pangolin species “two are listed as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.”¹⁹

However, what should definitely concern us is the cause of its trafficking. There is extremely high demand for pangolin scales and claws for medicine and more specifically, to improve circulation, reduce inflammation, stimulate lactation, and relieve skin diseases. However, what should be troubling is the fact that there has not been any scientific proof of their efficiency in treating these conditions. Even so, the main reason they are trafficked is bushmeat. Pangolin meat is consumed as a delicacy in both Asian and African countries. Moreover, it is crucial that even though the use of pangolin scales, claws and meat is associated with medicine and food, it is merely a luxury and not a necessity as the benefits of commodities extracted from pangolins have not yet been scientifically proven.

Commodities in trade



Figure 3: Commodities in trade, 2015-2021 ²⁰

¹⁹ WWF. “Pangolin | Species | WWF.” *World Wildlife Fund*, WWF, 2000, www.worldwildlife.org/species/pangolin . Accessed 5 Aug. 2024.

²⁰ Meineke, Michelle. “4 Charts That Show How Organized Crime Is Endangering Wildlife and Damaging Ecosystems.” *World Economic Forum*, 11 June 2024, www.weforum.org/agenda/2024/06/how-organized-crime-is-endangering-wildlife-and-damaging-eco-systems/ . Accessed 3 Aug. 2024.

The most frequently smuggled commodities in trade, as it is shown in the chart, are coral species, live specimens, medicine and there is also a high percentage of meat and leather. From this data we are able to comprehend the uses of these commodities. The wildlife products illegally traded can be divided into markets. According to a UNODC classification the main markets are 5: Fashion, Exotic Pets, Traditional Medicine, Wild Food, and Decorations, Accessories and Jewellery. Concerning fashion, it's true that commodities in trade follow trends which is why wildlife commodities are used in fur coats, leather bags, shoes, and belts. However, the meat market is entirely linked with bushmeat consumption as a luxury since the products smuggled are usually a symbol of wealth and status. The commodities include caviar, pangolin, king cobra and many other endangered or protected species.

Even so, the market which threatens endangered and protected species on a greater level is the one of exotic pets. Live specimens have a percentage as high as 15%, which proves the critical need for action on this area. Exotic pet trafficking not only disrupts the ecosystem on a direct point, but during the animals' transportation very few make it out alive because of the life threatening circumstances these species face, from extremely low temperatures to not sufficient water or food provision. More specifically, as Eurogroup for Animals states "A study in 2013 under the United Nations Environment Programme in West and Central Africa estimated that for every chimpanzee kept as a pet or in a zoo, another ten die in capture or trade conditions."²¹ Another way in which exotic pet trafficking promotes the death of thousands of animals every year is their owners inability to take proper care of them. All exotic pets need special care and nutrition to survive and usually their owner is not able to provide them with.

Deterioration through the years and causes of Wildlife trafficking

It is clear that the issue of illicit wildlife trade has escalated on a progressively worse level throughout the years but has remained similar for the past decade to about 90.000 of wildlife trafficking victims, taking into consideration only recorded transactions yearly. It is only vital for us to take immediate action on the area before the consequences are beyond any boundaries and most of this planet's flourishing biodiversity is extinct. The Guardian

²¹ "The Exotic Pet Trade | Eurogroup for Animals." www.eurogroupforanimals.org/what-we-do/areas-of-concern/exotic-pet-trade#:~:text=At%20every%20stage%20of%20the . Accessed 5 Aug. 2024.

states: “Wildlife populations decline by an average of 62% in areas where species are traded, pushing some closer to extinction”²².

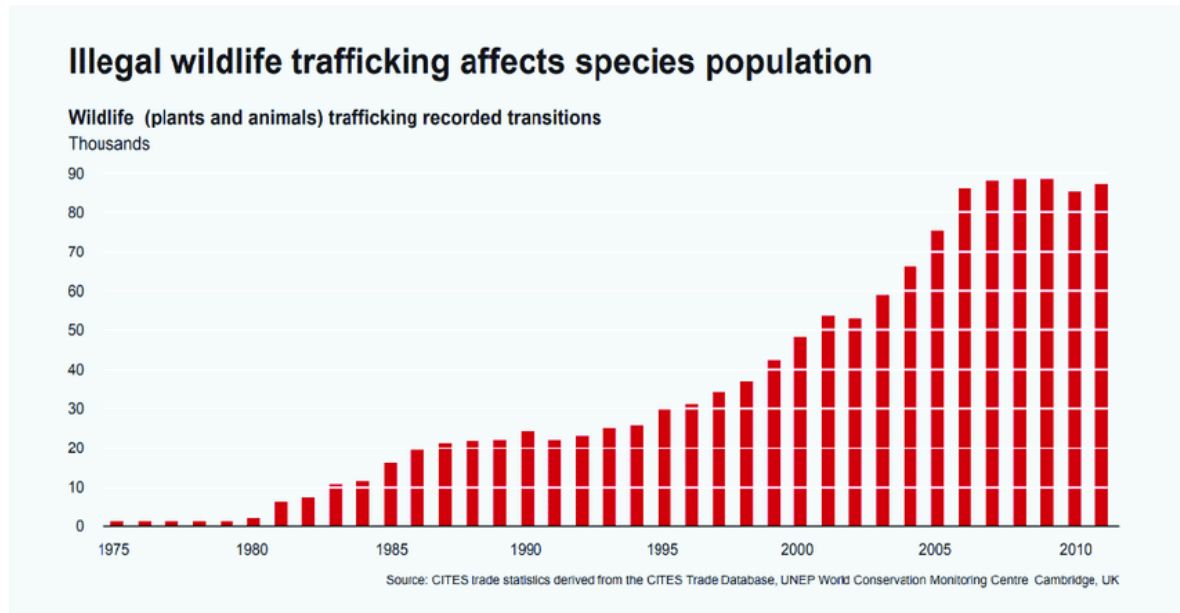


Figure 2: Wildlife trafficking recorded transactions 1975-2011²³

But the real question is, why has there been such an escalation on illicit wildlife trade? The case is more complex than it may appear at first. To begin with, the human population growth and the constantly increasing wealth presented both the need and the opportunity to find different ways of nutrition, fashion and medicine. In the beginning these were addressed to lower income families or communities. However, later on these solutions turned out to be not a mere necessity, but a luxury for people of an entirely different social class and income. Wildlife commodities became a way of displaying wealth and status. Since the desire for those commodities came from people with resources and high incomes the access to wildlife increased to an entirely different level. The global transport links were critically improved and so the exporting of wildlife products and their selling in black markets

²² Weston, Phoebe. “Wildlife Trafficking Driving ‘Severe Declines’ in Traded Species, Finds Study.” *The Guardian*, The Guardian, 15 Feb. 2021, www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/feb/15/wildlife-trade-drives-species-decline-study-aoe#:~:text=Wildlife%20trafficking%20driving%20. Accessed 5 Aug. 2024.

²³ Jasparro, Cr. “Wildlife Trafficking and Species Population (credit: Riccardo... | Download Scientific Diagram.” *ResearchGate*, https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Wildlife-Trafficking-and-Species-Population-credit-Riccardo-Pravettoni-GRID-Arendal_fig3_329754789. Accessed 12 August 2024.

became an easy way for poachers to profit and for consumers to have high fashion clothing, accessible chinese and asian medicine practices, exotic pets and luxurious nutrition choices.

Finally, the escalation of wildlife trafficking is a grave concern, driven by increasing demand for exotic species and body parts. The outcome is an unsustainable overexploitation of natural resources and immense biodiversity loss which keeps escalating and is anticipated to condemn most of the planet's fauna and flora if not for immediate action on our part.

Concequences

After all the information mentioned above, it's distinct that the repercussions of wildlife trafficking are linked with the wellbeing of the ecosystem as well as the bare existence of protected and endangered species. There are many fields other than the previous which are immensely impacted by illicit wildlife trade and each and every one of them is critically important.

To begin with, wildlife trafficking and endangered species smuggling has an enormous effect on the environment. Each species, no matter its size, plays a critical role in the function of an ecosystem. However, when animals are derived from their natural habitat, the ecosystem is unable to thrive to its best ability and when a disruption is caused it can ultimately lead to the ecosystem's destruction. It's also critical that should wildlife trafficking continue the endangered and protected species extinction is inevitable. Although the confiscation of wildlife is the main issue, poachers also damage the environment by destroying surrounding habitats and untargeted wildlife. More specifically, with the use of cyanide bombs poachers hurt other non-targeted species especially when these practices are used in marine life ecosystems. Therefore, the impacts of wildlife trafficking on the environment include, biodiversity loss, habitat disruption and destruction and the poor function of an ecosystem.

Even though the environmental aspect of the issue is critical we must also comprehend that the damage also exists on a level closer to human activity. More specifically, wildlife trafficking impacts local economies on a great level. Many communities have an economy which is based on wildlife and tourism, if wildlife is lost, tourists will perish as the main attraction will be lost. Thus, the income of the locals will dramatically decrease to a point where the civilians will not be able to financially support themselves and their families. Moreover, another way in which human life will be drastically affected is health. Wildlife trafficking markets are direct sources for zoonotic diseases such as the one which possibly provoked the Covid-19 outbreak. The consumption of infected bushmeat can also be

a source of disease thus, the prevention of the next global pandemic is up to point linked with taking drastic measures against illicit wildlife trade.

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

United States of America (USA)

The United States has undoubtedly played a crucial role in the mitigation of wildlife trafficking, as lots of governmental organizations seem dedicated to the elimination of this issue. More specifically, Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), a federal law enforcement agency under the U.S. Department of Homeland Security has started its mission towards eliminating Wildlife Trafficking by collaborating with other governmental organizations such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Office of Law Enforcement, or the U.S. Customs and Border Protection. The coordinated efforts of HSI began with the establishment of the Wildlife and Environmental Crimes Unit (by HSI) in 2023 which supports all actions targeting wildlife trafficking. “HSI continues to work and build on the strategy’s three objectives: strengthening enforcement; reducing demand for illegally traded wildlife; and building international cooperation, commitment, and public-private partnerships.”²⁴ Even though great efforts have been made by the US Government to mitigate the issue, wildlife trafficking and endangered species smuggling continues numerous cases, especially between the years 2017-2018 where the prosecution of those engaged in illicit activities concerning wildlife were successful.²⁵

China

China is one of the world’s most known illicit markets in which wildlife products are both imported and exported. It has a great demand not solely in bushmeat but in wildlife products associated with Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) which drives illicit wildlife trade along with commodities associated with wealth and status. However, there have been some successful attempts, where the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) has made

²⁴ ICE. “Wildlife Trafficking: Why Battling This Illicit Trade Is Crucial.” *Wwww.ice.gov*, 22 Aug. 2023, www.ice.gov/features/wildlife. Accessed 6 Aug. 2024.

²⁵ *Summary of Recent Wildlife Trafficking Enforcement Cases Environment and Natural Resources Division*. 2018, www.justice.gov/enrd/page/file/1103756/dl . Accessed 29 Aug. 2024.

coordinated efforts in one of which, they banned the auction of tiger bone, rhino horn and elephant ivory in December 2011.²⁶

India

Whilst China holds the record for most recorded wildlife trafficking transactions²⁷. India has the record for the most common market where air transport is used for illicit wildlife trade. Between the years 2011 and 2020 a total of 18 airports reported the trade of 146 species.²⁸ Even though India has a strong legal and policy framework to regulate and restrict wildlife trade, the challenge is presented in the proper implementation and enforcement of these regulations. It's also of critical importance that whereas there have been attempts to mitigate the issue they are often undermined by lack of political will and governance failures. Thus, without political and governmental support these efforts fail.

Kenya

Kenya has a very rich biodiversity and flourishing natural ecosystems which are currently threatened by poachers and all activities which concern illicit wildlife trade. Wildlife trafficking is a true threat for Kenya's biodiversity. More specifically, the ecosystem, consisting of the key water sources in the East African Region has endured a great loss in the past years leading to the extinction of major wildlife species all on account of poaching. Taking action is critical because in a case where poaching persists at this level, elephant, rhinoceros and other endangered species populations could go extinct in the next decade.

European Union (EU)

The European Union has undoubtedly shown dedication to the elimination of wildlife trafficking and has been actively engaged in this cause. More specifically, the EU has set in motion two action plans concerning the issue. One taking place in 2016 and the second one which is still in action. According to the EU, "The Action Plan [2016] was found to be comprehensive and flexible, leading to increased enforcement measures, coordination and

²⁶We. "We Combat Global Wildlife Crime by Tackling Every Link." *IFAW*, 2022, www.ifaw.org/projects/wildlife-crime-prevention-china/updates-from-the-field. Accessed 28 Aug. 2024.

²⁷McConkie, Anna. "Illegal Wildlife Trade in China." *Ballard Brief*, 2021, ballardbrief.byu.edu/issue-briefs/illegal-wildlife-trade-in-china#:~:text=China%20is%20widely%20recognized%20as. Accessed 6 Aug. 2024.

²⁸Pavan Kumar H. "In India, Prized Species Have Targets on Their Backs." *Deccan Herald*, 13 Jan. 2024, www.deccanherald.com/environment/wildlife/in-india-prized-species-have-targets-on-their-backs-2848106#:~:text=A%20report%20by%20the%20Reducing. Accessed 29 Aug. 2024.

cooperation, and altogether supported the EU's fight against wildlife trafficking.”²⁹ It is of great importance that the evaluation of the previous action plan showed that the EU and Member States need to intensify their efforts to address emerging challenges and that the elimination of the issue cannot be done solely by the EU. The current Action Plan is intended to eliminate the weaknesses of the previous one and calls for transparency, and the cooperation of its Member States and other organizations to improve the action plan's efficiency. Finally, the new action's plan efficiency is still yet to be evaluated.

World Wildlife Fund (WWF)

WWF is an independent conservation organization active in nearly 100 countries. Founded in 1961 with the aim to sustain the natural world for the benefit of people and wildlife. It remains active in nearly all affairs concerning restoring and protecting natural habitats and ecosystems. WWF is also actively engaged in combating wildlife trafficking with a global campaign. The past year they have made a big step towards eliminating illegal wildlife trade in many ways such as banning ivory trade in Thailand. WWF has founded a great number of endangered species shelters where they offer the best care. A great example is the Hanoi Wildlife Rescue Center which since its opening in 1996 has received and rescued more than 32,000 individuals comprising over 100 different species³⁰.

African Wildlife Foundation (AWF)

The African Wildlife Foundation is a Non-Governmental organization founded in 1961 by Russell E. Train, a judge, hunter, and member of the Washington Safari Club with the aim to conserve wildlife and natural ecosystems. The organization's strategy and action plan is groundbreaking as it encourages collaboration between humans and canines (dogs) to conserve wildlife. The dogs are able to acquire skill in recognising the different scents associated with wildlife species therefore, they can pick up a scent in a very few seconds. Their training takes place in the AWF's Canines for Conservation Training Centre in Usa River, Tanzania. This organization has made a great effort in tackling illicit wildlife trade “between June 2021 and June 2022, 78 wildlife crime offenders were arrested. During this period,

²⁹European Commission. “Wildlife Trade.” *Environment.ec.europa.eu*, environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/nature-and-biodiversity/wildlife-trade_en. Accessed 6 Aug. 2024.

³⁰ Ong, Sandy. “In Viet Nam, rescued tigers find a safe haven | Stories.” *WWF*, 30 May 2024, <https://www.worldwildlife.org/stories/in-viet-nam-rescued-tigers-find-a-safe-haven> . Accessed 6 August 2024.

the teams recovered 632 kg of ivory and 15 kg of rhino horn.”³¹ In general their actions have played a great role in the mitigation of wildlife trafficking and their efforts range in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Mozambique, and Botswana. Ultimately, AWF is engaged in this cause and its future plan is expanding to Cameroon in Central Africa to sustain as much of this planet’s biodiversity as possible.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Date	Description of Event
25th May 1900	The US Lacey Act (a US law which prohibited the importation of any foreign wild mammal or bird to protect agriculture and horticulture, with exceptions only by permit. ³²)
3rd March 1973	First CITES meeting
1st July 1975	CITES entered in force
May 2015	Operation Cobra III
2016	EU first Action Plan against Wildlife trafficking
30th July, 2015	UN Resolution on Tackling the Illicit Trafficking in Wildlife
11th July, 2017	G20 summit against corruption related to illegal wildlife trade
18 September 2018 -16 September 2019	UN Resolutions on tackling the Illicit Trafficking in Wildlife
23rd July 2021	The 2021 UN General Assembly resolution 75/311 on Tackling illicit trafficking in wildlife
2022	Operation Thunder 2022
10th November 2022	EU launches a new Action Plan to combat Wildlife Trafficking
2023	Operation Thunder 2023

³¹Sahmi, Harleen. “International Dog Day: Celebrating Conservation Detection and Tracker Dogs.” *African Wildlife Foundation*, 26 Aug. 2022, www.awf.org/news/international-dog-day-celebrating-conservation-detection-and-tracker-dogs. Accessed 30 Aug. 2024.

³² Richards , Holly. “A Century of Injurious Wildlife Listing under the Lacey Act: A History | U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.” *FWS.gov*, 18 Oct. 2021, www.fws.gov/story/century-injurious-wildlife-listing-under-lacey-act-history#:~:text=In%201900%2C%20under%20the%20oversight . Accessed 4 Sept. 2024.

UN INVOLVEMENT: RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

UN Resolution on Tackling the Illicit Trafficking in Wildlife (A/RES/69/314)³³

At the 69th session of the United Nations General Assembly (GA), which took place on the 30th of July 2015 in New York, USA one of the topics discussed was the illicit trafficking in wildlife. The resolution proposed, urged all Member States to treat wildlife trafficking involvement as a serious crime while at the same time encouraged them to review and amend national legislation in order to prevent and combat wildlife trafficking incidents. Finally, it has not proven to be as effective as it was supposed to, which is why there have been other sessions of the GA on the same topic to combat the issue efficiently.

G20 summit against corruption related to illegal wildlife trade

The Group of 20 Summit which took place on the 11th of July in 2017, in Hamburg, Germany was critical. This can be shown from the declaration made which states that tackling wildlife trafficking and all forms of corruption associated with it is essential. As the world faces unexpected biodiversity loss, G20 leaders are addressing the impacts of illicit wildlife trade on all areas focusing specifically on the ecosystem and biodiversity loss. The summit highlights the need for the collaboration between all Member States to protect endangered species, and combat illegal wildlife trade. The G20 is engaged to promote all efforts associated with sustainable development and especially the wellbeing of wildlife ecosystems. Ultimately, even though this summit had positive outcomes such as the awareness raised on the topic, as well as the global attention and commitment from parties to combat the issue there were challenges introduced. To conclude, the G20 summit was definitely a positive step towards the elimination of wildlife trafficking, concrete actions and commitments are essential, key aspects that weren't included in the efforts mentioned above.

UN Resolutions on tackling the Illicit Trafficking in Wildlife (A/73/L.120 and A/73/L.120/Add.1)³⁴

³³ UN. "Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 30 July 2015." *General Assembly*, 30 July 2015, <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n15/238/62/pdf/n1523862.pdf?token=e8cXvh7qEOFubvJ3FK&fe=true>. Accessed 6 8 2024.

³⁴ General, UN. "Tackling Illicit Trafficking in Wildlife :: Resolution /: Adopted by the General Assembly." *United Nations Digital Library System*, UN, 20 Sept. 2019, digitallibrary.un.org/record/3828828?ln=en&v=pdf. Accessed 6 Aug. 2024.

In the 73rd session of the GA one of the topics discussed was once more the illicit trafficking in wildlife. It took place on the 16th of September 2019 in New York city. It proposed similar resolutions to the resolution made on the same topic at the 69th session whereas the intention was to mitigate the issue on a bigger spectrum and finding a way to combat wildlife trafficking efficiently. The new resolution focused on preventing, combating, and eradicating illicit wildlife trade. In this session of the GA the Member States highlighted the importance of the endangered species and their extinction. Finally, while the UN resolutions on tackling illicit trafficking in wildlife (A/73/L.120 and A/73/L.120/Add.1) represent a positive step in addressing this issue, their effectiveness ultimately depends on the extent to which they are implemented and enforced by member states.

UN Resolutions on tackling the Illicit Trafficking in Wildlife (75/311)³⁵

The 2021 UN General Assembly which took place on the 23rd of July proposed resolution 75/311 on Tackling illicit trafficking in wildlife and it was the one set to evaluate the resolutions A/73/L.120 and A/73/L.120/Add.1 from the 73rd session of the GA. The resolution reconfirmed the increasing scale of poaching and illegal trade globally and its direct contribution to the extinction of many species. This resolution “invited parties to the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) to more effectively use the Convention to address illicit trafficking in wildlife, and to continue discussions on other possible international tools to combat wildlife trafficking.”³⁶ Even though this resolution proposed different and more innovative solutions than the other two, its effectiveness is still yet to be evaluated as the ideas proposed are up to the discretion of the countries to implement and their results would be presented in an extremely long period of time. Therefore, the solutions proposed cannot all tackle the issue directly.

PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

Interpol and World Customs Organization (WCO) on Operation Thunder

³⁵UN. “Tackling illicit trafficking in wildlife.” *A/RES/75/311*, 26 July 2021, <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n21/205/05/pdf/n2120505.pdf?token=tlN8zps80rhGqikNGC&fe=true>. Accessed 06 08 2024.

³⁶ Inc, Massive Media, and marcella. “Wildlife Trafficking: Is a Fourth Protocol to UNTOC the Answer?” *ICCLR*, 19 July 2022, icclr.org/2022/07/19/wildlife-trafficking-is-a-fourth-protocol-to-untoc-the-answer/. Accessed 8 Aug. 2024.

The first operation Thunder, a joint law enforcement operation arranged by INTERPOL and the World Customs Organization (WCO) with the support of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC), took place in 2020 and since then 3 more operations bearing the same name have proven to be escalating towards the best efficiency. The operations which took place between 2022-2023 have been entirely focused on the combat of illicit trade of wildlife products and tackling all forms of wildlife crime mostly in the form of wildlife confiscations. The second operation, more effective than the first one; they have both mitigated the problem on a great level. More specifically, “From 2 – 27 October 2023, customs and police officers coordinated some 500 arrests worldwide and more than 2,000 confiscations of animals and plants”³⁷ as it is stated by Interpol. Ultimately, the efficiency of Operation Thunder is unquestionable because of the thousands of seizures it has provoked. The operation of 2023 included the acquisition of 300 kg of ivory, thousands of turtle eggs, 30 tonnes of plants,³⁸ dozens of big cat body parts and rhino horns, as well as primates, birds and marine species.

Operation Cobra III

Operation Cobra III is the result of the association between the Southeast Asian Nations Wildlife Enforcement Network (ASEAN-WEN) and the Lusaka Agreement Task Force (LATF) with the support of Interpol and Europol to tackle endangered species smuggling. More specifically, Europol states that Operation Cobra III is “the biggest ever coordinated international law enforcement operation targeting the illegal trade in endangered species”³⁹. It took place in May of 2015 and its sole goal was to eliminate wildlife trafficking. The arrests and seizures took place in 37 countries while over 65.000⁴⁰ illegal wildlife items were

³⁷“2,114 Seizures of Endangered Animals and Timber in Major International Law Enforcement Operation.” *Www.interpol.int*, 12 Dec. 2023, www.interpol.int/en/News-and-Events/News/2023/2-114-seizures-of-endangered-animals-and-timber-in-major-international-law-enforcement-operation. Accessed 6 Aug. 2024.

³⁸ “Operation Thunder 2023: 2,114 seizures of endangered animals and timber in major international law enforcement operation.” *CITES*, 14 December 2023, <https://cites.org/eng/news/operation-thunder-2023>. Accessed 29 August 2024.

³⁹“Europol Supports Largest Ever Coordinated Operation against Wildlife Crime | Europol.” *Europol*, Europol, 2022, www.europol.europa.eu/media-press/newsroom/news/europol-supports-largest-ever-coordinated-operation-against-wildlife-crime. Accessed 12 Aug. 2024.

⁴⁰“85 Arrests and over 6 400 Objects Recovered during Annual Operation against International Art Trafficking | Europol.” *Europol*, Europol, 2022, www.europol.europa.eu/media-press/newsroom/news/85-arrests-and-over-6-400-objects-recovered-during-annual-operation-against-international-art-trafficking. Accessed 30 Aug. 2024.

acquired. Its results were outstanding after “139 arrests and over 247 seizures in which elephant ivory, medicinal plants, rhinoceros horns, pangolins, rosewood and tortoises were obtained”⁴¹. In conclusion, this operation was a complete success because of the great difference it has made in the mitigation of wildlife trafficking and the criminals captured and tried.

The European Union’s Action Plan

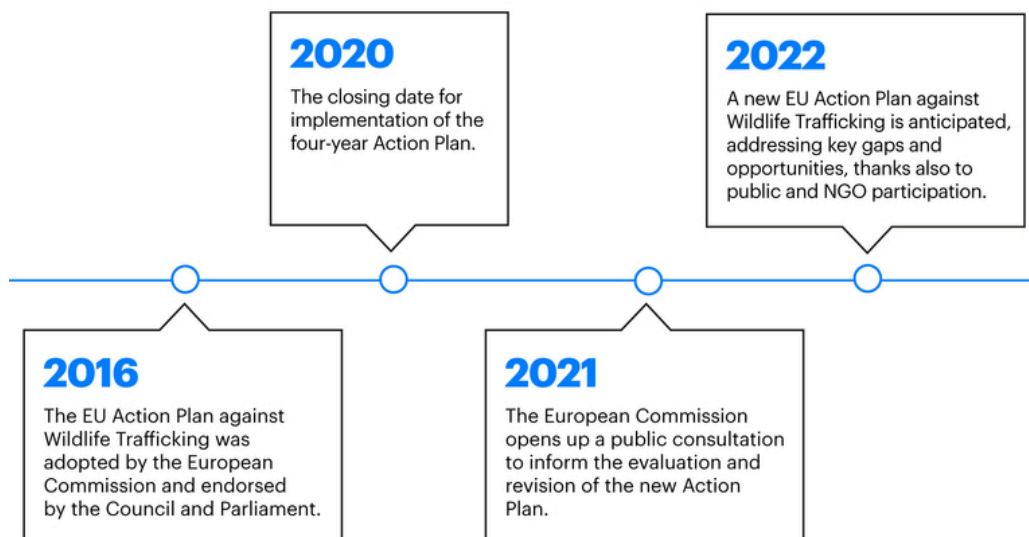


Figure1: The EU’s Action plan towards Wildlife Trafficking ⁴²

As can be shown from the graph above, the European Union’s (EU) action plan concerning wildlife trafficking started in 2016 which was to fight wildlife crime inside the European Union (EU) and to strengthen the EU's role in the global fight against these illegal practices. The implementation of this action plan was terminated after four years, in 2020. This action plan helped with the implementation of new legislation and legal frameworks to

⁴¹“Successful operation highlights growing international cooperation to combat wildlife crime.” *CITES*, 18 June 2015, <https://cites.org/eng/node/18046>. Accessed 30 August 2024.

⁴²EU. “EU Action Plan against Wildlife Trafficking | IFAW.” *IFAW*, 2021, www.ifaw.org/international/news/eu-action-plan-against-wildlife-trafficking. Accessed 12 Aug. 2024.

combat illicit wildlife trade. Whereas, its development was unquestionable, a new action plan was needed to ensure the elimination of the issue. As Ilaria Di Silvestre, Head of EU Policy and Campaigns at IFAW, stated at the time, “Stricter regulation of the legal trade in wildlife within the EU is urgently needed to close loopholes in the existing legislation by applying a precautionary approach”⁴³ This led to the second action plan by the EU which is still ongoing and is expected to last from 2022-2027. Just as the previous action plan it is based on the collaboration between all key parties involved. These include Member States, Europol, Eurojust, civil society organizations, etc. According to the EU this action plan is most focused on capacity-building along the entire enforcement chain. It is associated with data sharing, exploitation of the full capacities of enforcement actors such as the police. Finally, the EU’s action plan against wildlife trafficking has demonstrated a commitment to the issue, having a comprehensive strategy to protect endangered species, strengthening international legislation, and promoting cooperation between all engaged parties.

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is an international agreement between governments to eliminate the illicit trade of wildlife. The first CITES agreement was signed in 1973 by 21 countries, now the member parties are 184. This agreement between countries provides a framework to be respected by each Party, which has to adopt its own domestic legislation to ensure that CITES is implemented at the national level. CITES is a cornerstone concerning environmental conservation and this can be proved by the numerous meetings made by representatives of the parties engaged along with the main bodies of the convention which all tackle illicit wildlife trade. This convention is critically important as it protects endangered and protected species from being exploited and even going extinct. Finally, CITES provides protection for more than 38,000 animal and plant species which include pangolins, elephants, rhinoceros and much more.⁴⁴

⁴³Wiacek, Benjamin. “Redirecting.” *Google.com*, 10 Nov. 2022, www.google.com/url?q=www.ifaw.org/international/press-releases/the-eu-launches-new-action-plan-to-fight-wildlife-trafficking&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1722936473952941&usg=AOvVaw04O7oYHMHXrjVcO-B_yFrE. Accessed 6 Aug. 2024.

⁴⁴ “Wildlife Crime: Terms and Definitions.” *IFAW*, 2024, www.ifaw.org/international/journal/wildlife-crime-terms-definitions#:~:text=Wildlife%20trafficking%20refers%20to%20all. Accessed 3 Aug. 2024.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Establishing a Data-sharing platform by enhancing the collaboration of Member States

All efforts concerning the elimination of wildlife trafficking should be coordinated thus, the collaboration of all Member States is essential. Most international operations concerning the issue are proven to be ineffective because of the limited data sharing and the poor cooperation between forces. Therefore, strong partnerships between Member States as well as organizations and all other engaged parties is crucial to the mitigation of the issue. The partnerships should be secure and effective with the establishment of a data sharing platform in which all parties are to share any information and data, concerning incidents, seizures and prosecutions. In this way addressing the issue with joint investigations, and coordinated enforcement actions would be most effective. The coordinated operations and enforcement actions are to have an immense impact on the seizures and arrests and ultimately the full elimination of illicit wildlife trade. Finally, of indispensable need is the international support of regional networks and task forces focused on combating wildlife trafficking in order to ensure the efficiency of the efforts mentioned above.

In such a rapidly developing world as ours the 'exploitation' of technological resources and innovations is critical. Through the collaboration between all Member States in the joint data sharing platform mentioned above, DNA forensics and satellite tracking are critical in order to monitor the exchanges of wildlife commodities and thus capture and uncover many poachers, black markets and could ultimately lead to great cases of wildlife confiscation. However, the coordination of these efforts along with the joint data sharing platform should be monitored and evaluated by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in collaboration with the UN to ensure its efficiency on a deeper level. Ultimately, this partnership between all engaged to the issue parties would be proven critically effective as it would lead to numerous seizures and wildlife confiscations.

Habitat protection and preservation

The protection and preservation of habitats and ecosystems is one of the key environmental factors of the issue. More specifically, illicit wildlife trade is linked with the poor safeguarding of protected areas. Therefore the expansion of these areas as well as their efficient safeguard is critical. The prevention of illegal activities within these regions is entirely linked with the performance of rangers. Thus, the proper and thorough training of

rangers is essential for the preservation of the natural fauna and flora of every habitat. This training should be overseen by professionals in collaboration with the UN. Moreover, engaging residents of the local communities is of great importance, in order to recruit more rangers as well as aid in the proper training of the already existing ones on any knowledge they have about the tactics and ways of operation of the rangers. It's also important for the training of the rangers to be thorough and cover all its aspects intelligence gathering, investigative techniques, and community engagement. In addition, concerning the preservation of endangered species, and more specifically animals, tracking devices monitored by the UN and the joint data platform mentioned above, can be proven extremely helpful to the immediate action of rangers in cases in which animals are threatened.

Rewilding and species reintroduction programs

Another important aspect essential to tackling the issue thoroughly is the restoration of habitats to their natural state. It is a critical action to be taken because of the impact it would make. More specifically, habitat rewilding will increase biodiversity to a point where endangered species will have normal rates of population while at the same time it would decrease the overexploitation of natural resources by humans. Moreover, by providing suitable habitats we can support endangered species recover and reintegrate into their natural environment. It's also critical that by the rewilding of the most affected territories, we are able to mitigate the exploitation of natural resources as the access of poachers will be more limited. More specifically, both during and after the rewilding process habitats will be closely monitored, thus the poaching activities will be more easily detected. Furthermore, the process mentioned above will aid in the reconnection of fragmented ecosystems and habitats which will limit the poachers' access to more isolated areas.

As for the actions to be taken, it is of crucial importance for keystone species to be reintroduced in order to ensure the rewilding's full efficiency. With the launch of rewilding efforts, which include reforestation, which will support biodiversity and help sustain habitats and ecosystems in danger. In addition, the reintroduction of animals, victims of poachers is essential for the promotion of ecosystems and the complete rewilding process. This will be done with the help of specially trained experts in collaboration with the UN, which will help maintain balance especially on the food chain. However, these efforts should be focused in restoring the territories most affected, and in collaboration with the locals to promote the

flourishing coexistence between humans and animals. Ultimately, the complete elimination of wildlife trafficking is linked to the rewilding of affected territories, to ensure the environment's biodiversity. .

BIBLIOGRAPHY

"85 Arrests and over 6 400 Objects Recovered during Annual Operation against International Art Trafficking | Europol." *Europol*, Europol, 2022, www.europol.europa.eu/media-press/newsroom/news/85-arrests-and-over-6-400-objects-recovered-during-annual-operation-against-international-art-trafficking. Accessed 30 Aug. 2024.

"2,114 Seizures of Endangered Animals and Timber in Major International Law Enforcement Operation." *Www.interpol.int*, 12 Dec. 2023, www.interpol.int/en/News-and-Events/News/2023/2-114-seizures-of-endangered-animals-and-timber-in-major-international-law-enforcement-operation. Accessed 6 Aug. 2024.

Annual Report 2021 | UNODC Global Programme for Combating Wildlife and Forest Crime | 1 | Global Programme for Combating Wildlife and Forest Crime. www.unodc.org/documents/Wildlife/Annual_Report_GPWLFC2021.pdf. Accessed 6 Aug. 2024.

Cambridge Dictionary. "Pangolin." *@CambridgeWords*, 4 Sept. 2024, dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/pangolin#google_vignette. Accessed 4 Sept. 2024.

"CITES." *World Wildlife Fund*, www.worldwildlife.org/pages/cites#:~:text=What%20is%20CITES%3F. Accessed 9 Aug. 2024.

"CITES Secretariat Welcomes UN General Assembly Resolution on Tackling Illicit Trafficking in Wildlife | CITES." *Cites.org*, cites.org/eng/unga_resolution_wildlife_trafficking_150730. Accessed 6 Aug. 2024.

"CITES Welcomes New UN General Assembly Resolution on Tackling Illicit Trafficking in Wildlife | CITES." *Cites.org*,

- [cites.org/eng/news/CITES_welcomes_new_UN_General_Assembly_resolution_o
n_tackling_illicit_trafficking_in_wildlife_20092019](https://www.cites.org/eng/news/CITES_welcomes_new_UN_General_Assembly_resolution_on_tackling_illicit_trafficking_in_wildlife_20092019). Accessed 8 Aug. 2024.
- “Combat Wildlife Crime - China.” *IFAW*,
www.ifaw.org/international/projects/wildlife-crime-prevention-china.
- “Counter Wildlife Trafficking | African Wildlife Foundation.” *Www.awf.org*,
www.awf.org/caring-for-wildlife/counter-wildlife-trafficking. Accessed 6 Aug.
2024.
- “Definition of BUSHMEAT.” *Www.merriam-Webster.com*,
www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bushmeat.
- “Definition of SMUGGLING.” *Www.merriam-Webster.com*, 26 Aug. 2023,
www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/smuggling. Accessed 25 Aug. 2024.
- Dublin, Holly. “Endangered Species | Definition & Facts.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 12
Nov. 2018, www.britannica.com/science/endangered-species . Accessed 3 Aug.
2024.
- EU. “EU Action Plan against Wildlife Trafficking | IFAW.” *IFAW*, 2021,
www.ifaw.org/international/news/eu-action-plan-against-wildlife-trafficking.
Accessed 12 Aug. 2024.
- European Commission. “Wildlife Trade.” *Environment.ec.europa.eu*,
environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/nature-and-biodiversity/wildlife-trade_en.
Accessed 6 Aug. 2024.
- “Europol Supports Largest Ever Coordinated Operation against Wildlife Crime |
Europol.” *Europol*, Europol, 2022,
[www.europol.europa.eu/media-press/newsroom/news/europol-supports-larges
t-ever-coordinated-operation-against-wildlife-crime](https://www.europol.europa.eu/media-press/newsroom/news/europol-supports-largest-t-ever-coordinated-operation-against-wildlife-crime). Accessed 12 Aug. 2024.
- “G20 Leaders Commit to Intensify Fight against Corruption Related to Illegal Wildlife
Trade - Wildlife Trade News from TRAFFIC.” *Traffic.org*, 11 July 2017,
[www.traffic.org/news/g20-leaders-commit-to-intensify-fight-against-corruption-r
elated-to-illegal-wildlife-trade/](https://www.traffic.org/news/g20-leaders-commit-to-intensify-fight-against-corruption-related-to-illegal-wildlife-trade/) .Accessed 6 Aug. 2024.
- General, UN. “Tackling Illicit Trafficking in Wildlife :: Resolution /: Adopted by the
General Assembly.” *United Nations Digital Library System*, UN, 20 Sept. 2019,
digitallibrary.un.org/record/3828828?ln=en&v=pdf. Accessed 6 Aug. 2024.
- Hoiberg , Dale. “Traditional Chinese Medicine and Endangered Animals.” *Saving Earth |
Encyclopedia Britannica*, 22 Sept. 2008,
www.britannica.com/explore/savingearth/traditional-chinese-medicine-and-end

[angered-animals-2#:~:text=TCM%20uses%20approximately%201%2C000%20pla nt.](#) Accessed 3 Aug. 2024.

“How Does Wildlife Trafficking Impact People and the Environment?” *Rare*, Rare, 11 July 2024, [rare.org/stories-articles/how-does-wildlife-trafficking-impact-people-environme nt/#:~:text=Wildlife%20trafficking%20contributes%20to%20the.](#) Accessed 5 Aug. 2024.

ICE. “Wildlife Trafficking: Why Battling This Illicit Trade Is Crucial.” *Www.ice.gov*, 22 Aug. 2023, [www.ice.gov/features/wildlife.](#) Accessed 6 Aug. 2024.

ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE -A TRINIDAD and TOBAGO PERSPECTIVE SA/003/2023 0 a Trinidad and Tobago Perspective ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE. [fiu.gov.tt/wp-content/uploads/Illegal-Wildlife-Trade-Strat-Report_FINAL.pdf.](#) Accessed 3 Sept. 2024.

“Illegal Wildlife Trade in India.” *Wwfindia.org*, 2021, [www.wwfindia.org/about_wwf/enablers/traffic/illegal_wildlife_trade_in_india/.](#) Accessed 6 Aug. 2024.

Inc, Massive Media, and marcella. “Wildlife Trafficking: Is a Fourth Protocol to UNTOC the Answer?” *ICCLR*, 19 July 2022, [icclr.org/2022/07/19/wildlife-trafficking-is-a-fourth-protocol-to-untoc-the-answer/.](#) Accessed 8 Aug. 2024.

Interpol. “Illegal Wildlife Trade Has Become One of the ‘World’s Largest Criminal Activities.’” *Www.interpol.int*, 6 Nov. 2023, [www.interpol.int/en/News-and-Events/News/2023/Illegal-wildlife-trade-has-bec ome-one-of-the-world-s-largest-criminal-activities#:~:text=With%20the%20black %20market%20for.](#)

Jasparro, Cr. “Wildlife Trafficking and Species Population (credit: Riccardo... | Download Scientific Diagram.” *ResearchGate*, [https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Wildlife-Trafficking-and-Species-Population -credit-Riccardo-Pravettoni-GRID-Arendal_fig3_329754789.](#) Accessed 12 August 2024.

Koigi, Bob. “From Poachers to Conservationists.” *FairPlanet*, FairPlanet, 8 Feb. 2024, [www.fairplanet.org/story/poaching-wildlife-rescue-kenya-hunting/#:~:text=Com bined%2C%20the%20illicit%20wildlife%20and.](#) Accessed 12 Aug. 2024.

- Launch of the World Wildlife Crime Report 2024: New Data, Trends, Threats and Possible Solutions to Combat Illegal Wildlife Trade* | ICCWC. 1 May 2024, www.iccwc-wildlifecrime.org/news/launch-world-wildlife-crime-report-2024-new-data-trends-threats-and-possible-solutions-combat . Accessed 3 Aug. 2024.
- leila. "Operation COBRA III Highlights Success of International Cooperation in Combatting Wildlife Crime." *SDG Knowledge Hub*, SDG Knowledge Hub, 25 June 2015, sdg.iisd.org/news/operation-cobra-iii-highlights-success-of-international-cooperation-in-combatting-wildlife-crime/ . Accessed 8 Aug. 2024.
- McConkie, Anna. "Illegal Wildlife Trade in China." *Ballard Brief*, 2021, ballardbrief.byu.edu/issue-briefs/illegal-wildlife-trade-in-china#:~:text=China%20is%20widely%20recognized%20as . Accessed 6 Aug. 2024.
- Meineke, Michelle. "4 Charts That Show How Organized Crime Is Endangering Wildlife and Damaging Ecosystems." *World Economic Forum*, 11 June 2024, www.weforum.org/agenda/2024/06/how-organized-crime-is-endangering-wildlife-and-damaging-ecosystems/ . Accessed 3 Aug. 2024.
- "Merriam-Webster Dictionary." *Merriam-Webster.com*, 4 Aug. 2024, www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/rewild#:~:text=1 . Accessed 12 Aug. 2024.
- Mozer , Annika, and Stefan Prost . "An Introduction to Illegal Wildlife Trade and Its Effects on Biodiversity and Society." *Science Direct* , Dec. 2023, www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2666937423000021#bib21S . Accessed 5 Aug. 2024
- Ong, Sandy. "In Viet Nam, rescued tigers find a safe haven | Stories." *WWF*, 30 May 2024, <https://www.worldwildlife.org/stories/in-viet-nam-rescued-tigers-find-a-safe-haven> . Accessed 6 August 2024.
- "Operation Thunder 2023: 2,114 seizures of endangered animals and timber in major international law enforcement operation." *CITES*, 14 December 2023, <https://cites.org/eng/news/operation-thunder-2023> . Accessed 29 August 2024.
- "Operation Thunder 2022: Global Crackdown on Illegal Wildlife and Timber Trade | ICCWC." *Operation Thunder 2022: Global Crackdown on Illegal Wildlife and Timber Trade* | ICCWC, 5 Aug. 2022, iccwc-wildlifecrime.org/news/operation-thunder-2022-global-crackdown-illegal-

[wildlife-and-timber-trade#:~:text=About%20Operation%20Thunder%202022.](#)

Accessed 8 Aug. 2024.

“Pangolins Are the World’s Most Trafficked Mammal | IFAW.” *IFAW*, 13 June 2024,

[www.ifaw.org/international/journal/faq-pangolins#:~:text=What%20are%20pan](#)

[golin%20scales%20used](#) . Accessed 29 Aug. 2024.

“Pangolin FAQ: Learn about the World’s Most Trafficked Mammal.” *IFAW*, 13 June 2024,

[www.ifaw.org/international/journal/faq-pangolins](#). Accessed 5 Aug. 2024.

Pavan Kumar H. “In India, Prized Species Have Targets on Their Backs.” *Deccan Herald*,

13

Jan.

2024,

[www.deccanherald.com/environment/wildlife/in-india-prized-species-have-targets-on-their-backs-2848106#:~:text=A%20report%20by%20the%20Reducing](#)

Accessed 6 Aug. 2024.

“Press Corner.” *European Commission - European Commission*, 10 Nov. 2022,

[ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/QANDA_22_6581](#). Accessed 6

Aug. 2024.

Richards , Holly. “A Century of Injurious Wildlife Listing under the Lacey Act: A History |

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.” *FWS.gov*, 18 Oct. 2021,

[www.fws.gov/story/century-injurious-wildlife-listing-under-lacey-act-history#:~:t](#)

[ext=In%201900%2C%20under%20the%20oversight](#). Accessed 4 Sept. 2024.

Sahmi, Harleen. “International Dog Day: Celebrating Conservation Detection and

Tracker Dogs.” *African Wildlife Foundation*, 26 Aug. 2022,

[www.awf.org/news/international-dog-day-celebrating-conservation-detection-a](#)

[nd-tracker-dogs](#). Accessed 30 Aug. 2024.

Shadow, Simon. “How Poaching Works.” *MapQuest Travel*, 9 Dec. 2008,

[www.mapquest.com/travel/outdoor-activities/hunting/traditional-methods/poa](#)

[ching.htm#:~:text=Poaching%20is%20the%20illegal%20taking](#). Accessed 3 Sept.

2024.

“Stop Wildlife Crime.” *World Wildlife Fund*, 2019,

[www.worldwildlife.org/pages/stop-wildlife-crime](#) . Accessed 6 Aug. 2024.

Summary of Recent Wildlife Trafficking Enforcement Cases Environment and Natural

Resources Division. 2018, [www.justice.gov/enrd/page/file/1103756/dl](#). Accessed

29 Aug. 2024.

- “Successful operation highlights growing international cooperation to combat wildlife crime.” *CITES*, 18 June 2015, <https://cites.org/eng/node/18046>. Accessed 30 August 2024.
- “The Exotic Pet Trade | Eurogroup for Animals.” *Www.eurogroupforanimals.org*, www.eurogroupforanimals.org/what-we-do/areas-of-concern/exotic-pet-trade#:~:text=At%20every%20stage%20of%20the. Accessed 5 Aug. 2024.
- TRAFFIC. “TRAFFIC | Legal Wildlife Trade.” *Traffic.org*, 2017, www.traffic.org/about-us/legal-wildlife-trade/. Accessed 3 Sept. 2024.
- “UN Adopts Resolution on Tackling Wildlife Trafficking - Wildlife Trade News from TRAFFIC.” *Www.traffic.org*, 30 July 2015, www.traffic.org/news/un-adopts-resolution-on-tackling-wildlife-trafficking/. Accessed 6 Aug. 2024.
- UNODC. “Wildlife, Forest & Fisheries Crime Module 1 Key Issues: Implications of Wildlife Trafficking.” *Www.unodc.org*, Sept. 2019, www.unodc.org/e4j/en/wildlife-crime/module-1/key-issues/implications-of-wildlife-trafficking.html. Accessed 6 Aug. 2024.
- UN. “Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 30 July 2015.” *General Assembly*, 30 July 2015, <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n15/238/62/pdf/n1523862.pdf?token=e8cXvh7qEOFubvJ3FK&fe=true>. Accessed 6 8 2024.
- “Unsustainable and Illegal Wildlife Trade.” *Panda.org*, 2018, wwf.panda.org/discover/our_focus/wildlife_practice/problems/illegal_trade/. Accessed 6 Aug. 2024.
- UN. “Tackling illicit trafficking in wildlife.” *A/RES/75/311*, 26 July 2021, <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n21/205/05/pdf/n2120505.pdf?token=tln8zps80rhGqikNGC&fe=true>. Accessed 06 08 2024.
- Walsh, Martin. “(PDF) Symbolism, myth and ritual in Africa and Asia.” *ResearchGate*, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/337932645_Symbolism_myth_and_ritual_in_Africa_and_Asia. Accessed 30 August 2024.
- Warinwa, Fiesta, et al. “Fighting Wildlife Trade in Kenya.” *United Nations*, Sept. 2014, www.un.org/en/chronicle/article/fighting-wildlife-trade-kenya. Accessed 6 Aug. 2024.

[ext=This%20includes%20food%20products%2C%20leather](#). Accessed 31 Aug. 2024.

“Wildlife Trafficking | Homeland Security.” *Www.dhs.gov*, 22 Apr. 2024, www.dhs.gov/hsi/investigate/wildlife-trafficking . Accessed 6 Aug. 2024.

World Wildlife Fund. “Illegal Wildlife Trade.” *World Wildlife Fund*, 2022, www.worldwildlife.org/threats/illegal-wildlife-trade. Accessed 1 Sept. 2024.

WWF. “Pangolin | Species | WWF.” *World Wildlife Fund*, WWF, 2000, www.worldwildlife.org/species/pangolin. Accessed 5 Aug. 2024.

Zain, Sabri. “Corrupting Trade: An Overview of Corruption Issues in Illicit Wildlife Trade.” *World Wildlife Fund*, July 2020, www.worldwildlife.org/pages/tnrc-introductory-overview-corrupting-trade-an-overview-of-corruption-issues-in-illicit-wildlife-trade. Accessed 6 Aug. 2024.