

PROGRAM SUMMARY

USAID Wildlife Asia | At A Glance

July 2021

USAID WILDLIFE ASIA

- Timeframe: August 2016 – September 2021
- Budget: \$24.5 million
- Geographic Scope: Southeast Asia
- Target Countries: Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Thailand, Vietnam, China
- Target Species: Elephants, Pangolins, Rhinos, and Tigers

KEY PROGRAM RESULTS

- **11 Behavior change campaigns conducted** in Thailand, Vietnam, and China
- **94 Cooperative Law Enforcement actions** taken
- **10 Laws and policies** advanced
- **\$19.7 million** leveraged
- **1,948 People** trained
- **Over 100 influencers** publicly championing wildlife conservation

KEY IMPACTS

Demand Reduction

- Proportion of consumers who intend to buy wildlife products in Thailand, Vietnam, and China **decreased by half** since 2018.
- The social acceptability of buying and using wildlife products **reduced by a third** in Thailand, Vietnam, and China since 2018.
- Demand reduction is now recognized as a key component of counter wildlife trafficking and conservation in Thailand, Vietnam, and China.



From Counter Wildlife Trafficking Digest 2021, Photo © USAID Wildlife Asia/L. Gomez

WHAT CHALLENGE DOES USAID WILDLIFE ASIA ADDRESS?

Estimated at \$20 billion annually, the illegal wildlife trade threatens global economies and biodiversity, poses health risks, affects vulnerable communities, and undermines the rule of law. Southeast Asia and China are global hotspots for the supply, transit, and consumption of wildlife. Criminal networks continue to adapt their methods to evade law enforcement. Growing regional wealth has increased the demand for wildlife products, driving species to extinction. The Covid-19 pandemic has spotlighted the risk of spillover zoonotic diseases associated with the illegal wildlife trade.

WHAT DOES THE PROGRAM DO?

USAID Wildlife Asia, with its network of partners, has worked to eliminate, neutralize, and disrupt transnational wildlife trafficking by strengthening the regional movement for change; generating political will; promoting innovative approaches to strengthen law enforcement, and reducing consumer demand for wildlife products; reforming laws and policies to improve sentencing and prosecution; and building transnational as well as interagency capacity and cooperation towards tackling illegal wildlife trafficking as a serious crime.

WHY A REGIONAL PROGRAM?

Wildlife trafficking is a global transboundary issue driven by international criminal syndicates. Source, transit, and destination countries crisscross and overlap in a complex web of supply and demand for key species and their parts and products. Ending illegal wildlife trafficking thus requires transnational effort and cooperation to target pressure points, disrupt and dismantle trafficking syndicates, strengthen and harmonize policies, and ensure criminals are punished to the maximum extent of the law. USAID Wildlife Asia focuses on China and key Southeast Asian countries involved in wildlife trafficking.



KEY IMPACTS

Law Enforcement

- USAID-trained law enforcement officials participated in the most widespread environmental crime operations ever organized, led by INTERPOL and the World Customs Organization, including Operations Thunderbird (2017), Thunderstorm (2018), and Thunderball (2019).
- 674 people trained in law enforcement techniques and approaches
- 90.1% of law enforcement trainees sampled reported applying skills and knowledge learned including techniques for covert operations, intercepting wildlife trades, and digital forensics
- 89.5% law enforcement trainees reported improvement in their job performance

Policy

- Cambodia: *Environment and Natural Resources Code of Cambodia* proposed
- Lao PDR: Lao Government observation mission to Thailand on *CWT Policy Best Practice* conducted
- Lao PDR: *National Ivory Action Plan 2019-2022* adopted
- Thailand: *Scaling efforts to Counter Wildlife Trafficking Through Legislative Reforms, Policy and Legislative Analysis, and Recommendations for Thailand* (USAID/National Legislative Assembly, 2017) policy document endorsed
- Thailand: *Wildlife Conservation and Protection Act B.E. 2562 (2019)* (WARPA) adopted and implemented
- Vietnam: *Handbook on Wildlife Conservation Policy* endorsed
- ASEAN: *Chiang Mai Statement of ASEAN Ministers Responsible for CITES and Wildlife Enforcement on Illegal Wildlife Trade* adopted at 34th ASEAN Summit on Advancing Partnership for Sustainability
- ASEAN: *ASEAN Guidelines for Detecting and Preventing Wildlife Trafficking* adopted
- ASEAN: *2021-2025 Regional Plan of Action (POA) for the ASEAN Cooperation on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement* adopted
- ASEAN: *ASEAN Handbook on Legal Cooperation to Combat Illegal Wildlife Trade* endorsed



Key visual of No Ivory No Tiger Amulets campaign © USAID Wildlife Asia

HOW DOES THE PROGRAM WORK?

USAID Wildlife Asia, with its network of partners, works along the supply and demand continuum targeting key needs simultaneously to make significant and lasting change. This means working to reduce consumer demand by targeting key audiences who are most likely to purchase or use wildlife products. By explaining laws and penalties for using wildlife products; making their use look unfashionable and undesirable; and leveraging influencers and change agents to promote anti-wildlife consumption messaging, USAID Wildlife Asia has reduced by half the proportion of consumers who intend to buy wildlife products.

To disrupt supply, the program works along the criminal justice chain to help ensure criminals are caught, prosecuted, and sentenced to the full extent of the law. This includes training law enforcement officials to catch illegal wildlife traffickers and build court cases. It involves working with legislators to develop robust laws and penalties for wildlife trafficking and harmonize laws across countries. It further includes working with the judiciary to ensure wildlife cases are treated as serious crimes and that sentencing reflects the severity of crimes.

WHO DOES THE PROGRAM WORK WITH?

The program works with a network of over 100 partners at the regional, national, and local levels including intergovernmental, governmental, non-governmental, and private sector bodies, organizations, and individuals. At the regional level, USAID Wildlife Asia works with ASEAN and its member states to develop replicable Counter Wildlife Trafficking tools, trainings and models; harmonize laws and policies; and promote inter-regional cooperation. At the country level, the program works with national and local counterparts including government officials to conduct demand reduction campaigns; develop and pass legislation; and train law enforcement operatives.



The Spiritual Beliefs campaign mobilized spiritual leaders to reduce demand for wildlife products. Photo © USAID Wildlife Asia

KEY INNOVATIONS AND TOOLS

- *Social and Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) Demand Reduction Guidebook* - English, Thai, Vietnamese (2020)
- *Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Guidebook* (2020)
- *Counter Transnational Organized Crime (CTOC) training package and online course* - multiple languages (2021)
- *Rapid Reference Guide (RRG) on Applicable Offenses to Trafficking Critically Endangered Species in Thailand* - English, Thai (2020)
- *Pangolin Species Identification Guide* materials (guidebook, poster and mobile phone application, multiple languages (2018)
- *Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT) training materials* - multiple languages (2020)
- *Introductory Course on International and National Environmental Law and Governance: Thailand Judicial Training Institute* 10-unit online blended learning course (2021)
- *Scaling Efforts to Counter Wildlife Trafficking through Legislative Reforms - A Selection of Best Practices, Key Innovations and Model Provisions* (2019)
- *The Principles of Wildlife Conservation Funds and Restitution – Additional remedy to wildlife and forest offenses (USAID/AIPA, 2017)*
- *Africa-Asia Pacific Symposium on Strengthening Legal Frameworks to Combat Wildlife Crime Report*
- *Inaugural Judicial Roundtable on Environmental Adjudication, Rule of Law and Environmental Justice* (2019)
- *ASEAN Guidelines for Detecting and Preventing Wildlife Trafficking* (2019)
- *ASEAN Handbook on Legal Cooperation to Combat Illegal Wildlife Trade* (2021)
- *Asia-Pacific Judicial Symposium on Best Practice in Environmental Courts and Adjudication* (2021)



Rescued pangolin receiving treatment. Photo © Roengchai Kongmuang

“The program was such an innovative and refreshing change to so much of the aid work that is done, having a special focus on biodiversity conservation. The loss of biodiversity, especially in the Asian region, is staggering in scale and increasing seemingly exponentially. On every indicator, we are going backwards. Unfortunately, disclosing these depressing statistics is not enough to drive the much-needed action. We need to have access to and educate people in positions of power and influence who can make a difference.... This is where the program has been making a difference.”

Justice Brian J. Preston
Chief Judge of Land and Environment Court
of New South Wales, Australia

HOW ARE EFFORTS BEING SUSTAINED AND INSTITUTIONALIZED?

By working hand-in-hand with sustainability partners, USAID Wildlife Asia’s activities and products will be carried forward beyond the end of the program. The program has responded to regional and national priorities; working through a demand- and data-driven approach using a rigorous foundation of research, analysis, and evaluations to plan and implement activities, and adapt to evolving needs. This includes working to address emergent regional, national, and local needs to understand the links between illegal wildlife trafficking and zoonotic disease outbreaks and the necessity of a One Health approach.



Some of the key program legacy tools address critical needs across the illegal wildlife trafficking supply and demand chain, and have been institutionalized by key partners.

KEY RESEARCH

- *Counter Wildlife Trafficking Digests 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020*
- *What Drives Demand for Wildlife? A Situation Analysis of Consumer Demand for Wildlife Parts and Products in China, Thailand, and Vietnam Based on a Literature Review (2017)*
- *Quantitative and Qualitative Study of Consumer Demand for Wildlife Products in Thailand (2018)*
- *Research Study on Consumer Demand for Elephant, Pangolin, Rhino and Tiger Parts and Products in China (2018)*
- *A Rapid Monitoring Survey of SBCC Campaigns to Reduce Demand for Tiger and Ivory Parts and Products in Thailand (2020)*
- *A Rapid Monitoring Survey of the Chi III SBCC Campaign to Reduce Demand for Rhino Horn Parts and Products in Vietnam (2021)*
- *A Rapid Monitoring Survey of SBCC Campaign to Reduce Demand for Elephant Ivory, Pangolin, Rhino Horn and Tiger Parts and Products in China (2021)*
- *First Assessment - Capacity Building Assessment: Examining Counter Wildlife Trafficking Trainings (2018)*
- *Second Assessment - Capacity Building Assessment: Examining Counter Wildlife Trafficking Trainings (2021)*
- *Counter Wildlife Trafficking Initiatives Reference Guide: Cambodia, China, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam (2017)*
- *Law Enforcement Capacity Building Needs Assessments in Thailand and Vietnam (2017)*



Senior Inspector Chotika Arintchai of Thailand Customs Department was trained in Countering Transnational Organized Crime and is now one of the region's top CTOC trainers. *Photo ©USAID Wildlife Asia*

WHAT'S NEXT?

While USAID Wildlife Asia technical activities will end in September 2021, a new USAID Regional Development Mission Asia 18-month project entitled Reducing Demand for Wildlife is being launched in 2021. Reducing Demand for Wildlife will build on many of the key activities and successes of USAID Wildlife Asia as part of USAID's continued commitment to supporting biodiversity conservation and counter wildlife trafficking in the region.

ABOUT USAID WILDLIFE ASIA

USAID Wildlife Asia is a five-year (2016-2021), US\$24.5 million, regional counter wildlife trafficking (CWT) initiative addressing the illegal trade in pangolins, tigers, elephants, and rhinos in Southeast Asia (Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Thailand, and Vietnam) and China. The project aims to reduce consumer demand for wildlife parts and products, strengthen law enforcement, enhance legal and political commitment, and support regional collaboration to reduce wildlife crimes.

<https://www.usaidwildlifeasia.org>