LAW AND POLICY

KEY RESULTS

- 10 laws, policies, or regulations developed and adopted or implemented
- $767,584 leveraged
- 15 organizations applying new tools and practices that support conservation

KEY INNOVATIONS AND TOOLS

- *Introductory Course on International and National Environmental Law and Governance, Thailand Judicial Training Institute-endorsed 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 (2018)*
- *Africa-Asia Pacific Symposium on Strengthening Legal Frameworks to Combat Wildlife Crime Report (2017)*
- *ASEAN Guidelines for Detecting and Preventing Wildlife Trafficking (2019)*
- *ASEAN Handbook on Legal Cooperation to Combat the Illegal Wildlife Trade (2021)*
- *Asia-Pacific Judicial Symposium on Best Practice in Environmental Courts and Adjudication (2021)*

WHO DOES THE PROGRAM WORK WITH?

USAID Wildlife Asia works with judges, environmental law practitioners, policymakers, academics, and others working on environmental law issues across ASEAN.

Thailand's new Wildlife Protection Act increases penalties for wildlife trafficking.
Photo: Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, Thailand

Uneven laws and policies have created loopholes that wildlife traffickers have exploited, profiting from a $20 billion annual industry with minimal penalty. USAID Wildlife Asia helps strengthen laws to protect wildlife, create stiffer penalties for offences, and make it easier to bring criminals to justice. Working with ASEAN, the program also supports harmonizing laws and policies across the region – enabling countries to develop a united front against illegal wildlife trafficking. Strong laws and policies create the foundation that reduce demand for wildlife products and enable effective deterrence and law enforcement.

KEY IMPACTS

USAID Wildlife Asia has supported the development of the following laws and policies including drafting content and material, legal review, technical inputs, operations, and convening support and other assistance:

Cambodia

- April 2018: Proposed – National Law *Environment and Natural Resources Code of Cambodia*

Lao PDR

- May 2018: Lao Government observation mission to Thailand on *CWT Policy Best Practice*
- August 2019: Adopted – National Policy

HIGHLIGHT: THAILAND'S WILDLIFE AND PROTECTION ACT

On March 7, 2019, Thailand's National Legislative Assembly (NLA) passed the *Wildlife Conservation and Protection Act B.E. 2562 (2019),* 27 years after the country adopted the *1992 Wildlife Act (WARPA B.E. 2535)*. The new WARPA introduces new and improved offences. For offences in trafficking of CITES species, maximum fines have increased by 25 times (from $1,226 to $30,656), and maximum imprisonment terms have increased 2.5 times (from 4 to10 years). Illegal possession of CITES species is now an offence punishable with an imprisonment term of up to one year and/or a fine of up to $3,065. For reserved species (species that are accorded the highest protection under the law), there is now a minimum fine of $9,196 and/or a minimum imprisonment term of three years, while the maximum imprisonment term increased 3.5 times, from four years to 15 years.

Seized tiger parts. *Photo: Bussara Tirakalyanapan*

"We will step up our efforts to take continuous and concrete steps to strengthen cooperation in addressing the illegal wildlife trade in ASEAN. Towards this goal, extensive collaboration with international organizations, private sector, academia, and civil society is crucial to ensure the effectiveness of our efforts in combating wildlife trafficking."

– Chiang Mai Statement of ASEAN Ministers Responsible for CITES and Wildlife Enforcement on Illegal Wildlife Trade March 21-22, 2019, Chiang Mai, Thailand

National Ivory Action Plan 2019-2022

Thailand

- March 2019: Adopted – National Law
  Revision of the Wild Animals Reservation and Protection Act (WARPA)

- November 2019: Implemented – National Law
  Revision of the Wild Animals Reservation and Protection Act (WARPA)

Vietnam

- October 2019: Endorsed – National Policy
  Handbook on Wildlife Conservation Policy

ASEAN

- June 2019: Adopted – Regional Policy
  Chiang Mai Statement of ASEAN Ministers Responsible for CITES and Wildlife Enforcement on Illegal Wildlife Trade at the 34th ASEAN Summit on Advancing Partnership for Sustainability

- July 2019: Adopted – Regional Policy
  ASEAN Guidelines for Detecting and Preventing Wildlife Trafficking

- January 2021: Adopted – Regional Policy
  2021-2025 Regional Plan of Action (POA) for the ASEAN Cooperation on Cites and Wildlife Enforcement

- May 2021: Endorsed – Regional Policy
  ASEAN Handbook on Legal Cooperation to Combat the Illegal Wildlife Trade at the 16th Annual Meeting of AWG CITES and Wildlife Enforcement

HOW ARE EFFORTS SUSTAINED AND INSTUTIONALIZED?

To sustain the integration of its law and policy tools and activities, USAID Wildlife Asia is working with partners such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Thailand's Judicial Training Institute to continue the judicial curriculum on environmental law and to make the curriculum available online at UNEP's InforMEA platform.

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 crime.

https://www.usaidwildlifeasia.org