



USAID WILDLIFE ASIA

COUNTER WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING PARTNERSHIP FORUM

ENTERING A NEW ERA OF REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP

September 21-23, 2021

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Cover Photo Caption: USAID Wildlife Asia focal species. Photo Credit: USAID Wildlife Asia

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACRF	ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework
ACB	ASEAN Center for Biodiversity
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AHP	ASEAN Heritage Park
AIPA	ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly
AJNE	Asian Judges Network on the Environment
AMLO	Anti-Money Laundering Office
AMS	ASEAN Member States
ARREST	Asia's Regional Response to Endangered Species Trafficking
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASEANAPOL	ASEAN Chiefs of National Police
AWG-CITES AND WE	ASEAN Working Group on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement
BMZ	Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CEPF	Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CMS	Convention on Migratory Species
COP	Conference of Parties
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease of 2019
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CTOC	Counter Transnational Organized Crime
CWT	Counter Wildlife Trafficking
DNP	Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, Thailand
EU	European Union
EU-TWIX	European Union Trade in Wildlife Information eXchange
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GWP	Global Wildlife Program
ICCF	International Conservation Caucus Foundation
ICCWC	International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime
IFAW	International Fund for Animal Welfare
IGNITE	Inclusive Growth in ASEAN through Innovation, Trade and E- Commerce
INL	Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs

INTERPOL	International Criminal Police Organization
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IWT	Illegal Wildlife Trade
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OIE	World Organization for Animal Health
POA	Plan of Action
PROSPECT	ASEAN-USAID Partnership for Regional Optimization within the Political-Security and Socio-Cultural Communities
RRG	Rapid Reference Guide on Applicable Offenses to Trafficking of Critically Endangered Species in Thailand
SBCC	Social and Behavior Change Communication
SMART	Specific Measurable Achievable Relevant Time-bound
SOMTC	Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crimes
SPA	Strategic Plan of Action
TRAFFIC	The Wildlife Trade Monitoring Network
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USAID RDMA	USAID Regional Development Mission for Asia
VCCI	Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
WCO	World Customs Organization
WHO	World Health Organization
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

According to the 2019 Global Assessment Report by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, around one million species face extinction. Although commendable efforts have been made to combat wildlife crime, including through an expansion of stakeholders involved, prioritization of counter wildlife trafficking (CWT) by legislators, policymakers, and law enforcement, and growing political will, these illicit activities continue, and with them the threats they pose. These became even more pronounced with the COVID-19 pandemic, caused by a virus of zoonotic origin. Recognizing this, development partners came together to share lessons learned and work to ensure that different efforts build on and complement each other.

The Regional Counter Wildlife Trafficking Partnership Forum was a virtual event co-hosted by the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, Thailand, and USAID Wildlife Asia in collaboration with World Wildlife Fund (WWF), the ASEAN Secretariat, Asian Development Bank, World Bank Global Wildlife Program, Global Environment Facility, and United Nations Development Programme. The forum brought together key CWT partners and stakeholders in Asia and beyond to strengthen collaboration, planning, and cooperation towards protecting biodiversity and ending the trade in illegal wildlife as we enter a post-pandemic landscape.

Almost 600 people based in 15 countries registered to attend the forum, with 388 people participating at its peak. The forum was set over three days, with virtual sessions of approximately three hours each morning. This does not include the thousands of people who watched the event on several Thai government social media channels or on participants' livestreams, for example Venerable Sompong's livestream on Facebook reached 163,000 views. Session recordings, speaker highlight videos, background reports, and other materials are available online at www.cwtpartnershipforum.org.

Day 1 set the context of how the CWT movement has grown and the resulting legacy impacts and initiatives.

Michael Heath, U.S. Chargé d'Affaires of the U.S. Embassy of Thailand, HE Dato Lim Jock Hoi, Secretary-General of the ASEAN Secretariat, and Minister Varawut Silpa-archa of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of Thailand opened the forum and emphasized the importance of regional partnerships, collaboration, and national leadership. The sessions provided an overview of how the movement has evolved over the past 10-15 years, with presentations showing how CWT has become a higher priority for the global community. Several participants noted how the COVID-19 pandemic elevated the issue of wildlife trafficking even more, as a contributor to zoonotic diseases. Presenters highlighted that while capacity to address both the supply and demand side of the trade exists in the region, future capacity building can take advantage of new technologies and opportunities for collaboration. This includes new approaches, such as social and behavior change communication (SBCC), and tools and training programs, such as the Counter Transnational Organized Crime (CTOC) package, the Global Judges Program, and a curriculum on environmental jurisprudence.

As with other transnational organized crime, such as drug and human trafficking, illegal wildlife trade (IWT) has increasingly moved online and governments are targeting efforts to combat cyber wildlife crime. Partnering with a broad range of stakeholders, particularly those in the private sector, civil society, and local communities, can strengthen CWT initiatives. Since wildlife crime crosses

boundaries, initiatives across the ASEAN region, and with other regions, can connect and reinforce each other at the local, national, regional, and international levels. It is also important to take a global view of protecting biodiversity and wildlife habitats, particularly to consider the linkages between healthy ecosystems and climate resilience.

Day 2 focused on how to sustain and strengthen the Counter Wildlife Trafficking Movement, and the importance of regional and national institutions, leaders, and champions.

The day included a panel discussion with wildlife champions from a range of sectors, including Venerable Maha Sompong Talaputto, a Buddhist monk; Cindy Sirinya Bishop, a supermodel and actress; John Roberts, from the Minor Hotel Group; Associate Justice Michael Wilson of the Hawaii Supreme Court; and Le Thi Thu Thuy, from the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry. They spoke of their efforts to bring greater understanding among the general public and members of their respective fields about the damage caused by the wildlife trade.

Day 2 also looked at the current political commitments to CWT across the ASEAN region and plans to implement these commitments, specifically those made at the ministerial level in 2019 through the Chiang Mai Statement. The statement was translated into the Plan of Action (POA) for the ASEAN Cooperation on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement 2021-2025. Participants discussed the status of that plan, which includes three main areas: 1) strengthening policies, 2) exchanging best practices and knowledge, and 3) promoting awareness and capacity building (including joint approaches in international fora). The last session of the day looked at amplifying action in counter wildlife trafficking, with presentations on initiatives at ASEANAPOL, ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly, ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity, and the Asian Judges Network on Environment. Partners welcomed opportunities for collaboration as a way to leverage partnerships to keep the momentum moving forward.

Day 3 was the Partner Dialogue, with a focus on the current CWT landscape, priorities in a post-COVID world, partner plans, and opportunities to strengthen coordination.

The last day's sessions brought together donors and development partners in a dialogue with ASEAN and the countries to discuss the way forward. They also discussed the severe impacts from the COVID pandemic, the continuing risk of zoonotic disease causing a future pandemic, and how a One Health approach could help to more effectively address this risk. Presenters and panelists discussed how to break down the silos between donors in a better way, and looked at the successes and remaining gaps in ongoing work on controlling illegal wildlife trade. Examples of initiatives aiming to improve partner coordination were an analysis on international funding under the Global Wildlife Program and associated global IWT donor coordination platform, and the IWT Project Map and Database by the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

Day 3 was also an opportunity for partners to announce new plans, programs, or funding, and their priorities for the coming years. To support concrete actions based on the valuable insights over the course of the forum's three days, the partners presented the Development Partner Dialogue Highlights. The six action points are summarized below (see Annex 2 for the full text). Dr. Rungnapar Patta Pattanavibool, Deputy Director General of DNP Thailand, and Dr. Steven G. Olive, Mission Director of USAID's Regional Development Mission for Asia closed the forum, urging participants to continue finding ways to collaborate and expand the CWT movement.

With implications for all three pillars of sustainable development—the environment, society, and economy—it has become ever clearer that there is a need to address IWT more holistically and to halt the unsustainable, high-risk, and illegal wildlife trade. This requires involvement from donors, implementing agencies, government partners, academia, and other stakeholders alike to succeed and restore the balance of ecosystems, build resilience, and end wildlife trafficking once and for all.

Development Partner Dialogue Highlights – Action Points

Joint Efforts in Asia: IWT in the Regional Context

Partners emphasized that the impact of CWT activities in Asia needs to be amplified by recognizing existing challenges of coordination in the region, taking concrete steps to overcome these, and acting in a more coordinated manner to mirror the networks and clout of organized wildlife trafficking networks and to close identified gaps, such as information and intelligence exchanges among countries in Southeast Asia.

Strengthening Coordination: CWT Initiatives and Country Alignment

Partners saw the need to build on and complement ongoing and planned initiatives to improve CWT coordination between and among various Partners, leveraging strengths and resources, and expanding CWT networks. There was a broad consensus among Partners to coordinate and align funding with the global and regional priorities for countries in the region that address unsustainable, high-risk, and illegal wildlife trade, taking note of recently passed UN Resolutions, Goals and Milestones of the Convention on Biological Diversity, CITES Resolutions, and national and regional action plans and strategies mentioned above. To that effect, Partners agreed to engage in consultations with global and regional bodies, and national governments, making sure to capture country needs and priorities, close existing gaps, and develop joint solutions.

The IWT Project Map and Database: Sharing Information on CWT Projects

Partners stressed the importance of the IWT Project Map and Database, and recognized the value of adding to this effort by regularly sharing updated project information, and supporting its institutionalization, ensuring a broad ownership of the tool by development partners. Partners acknowledged that an expansion of the database to include projects at a global scale would enable coordination among CWT projects worldwide. The option of the tool's institutionalization within a platform and the sharing of responsibility for its administration was raised.

The CWT Development Partners Coordination Platform: A New Mechanism

The Dialogues captured the interest of Partners to pursue the development of a regional CWT Development Partners Coordination Platform for Asia. The creation and utilization of such a coordination platform would allow Partners to: i) better streamline and advance ongoing and future coordination efforts in combating IWT; ii) network and share relevant information and lessons learned to avoid overlap and duplication; iii) inform various levels of project planning, alignment, and implementation (regional, national and local); iv) maximize synergies among partners and benefit for country beneficiaries; and v) develop a more comprehensive picture of the CWT landscape in the region.

The One Health Approach: IWT in a Shifting Landscape

Going forward, Partners shared the ambition to consider the strong interlinkages between human health, animal health, and ecosystem health, and address IWT holistically by factoring in the implications of unsustainable, high-risk and illegal wildlife trade impacting animal health and welfare, human health, and the balance of ecosystems in project design and implementation. Apart from One Health, Partners agreed on the need for complementary interventions, such as investments in building resilient diversified livelihoods, food security and agriculture, along with enhanced attention on demand reduction and behavior change. Partners agreed to the importance of designing projects in a more comprehensive manner to account for the strong interlinkages of human-wildlife health and acknowledged the opportunity to broaden the discussions around IWT.

Improved Sustainability: Long-term Funding and Domestic Resources

The Dialogues highlighted concrete intentions of several Partners to continue the funding of CWT activities in the region. Partners called for a more efficient allocation of scarce funds to shift to larger projects, and the strong buy-in from governments investing in national and regional CWT efforts. A suggested “organizing theme” across Partners to drive project design that is open for discussion moving forward may originate from the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework or from the Plan of Action for ASEAN Cooperation on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement (2021-2025).

INTRODUCTION

The Regional Counter Wildlife Trafficking Partnership Forum was a virtual event co-hosted by the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, Thailand, and USAID Wildlife Asia in collaboration with World Wildlife Fund (WWF), the ASEAN Secretariat, Asian Development Bank, World Bank Global Wildlife Program, Global Environment Facility, and United Nations Development Programme. The forum brought together key Counter Wildlife Trafficking (CWT) partners and stakeholders in Asia and beyond to strengthen collaboration, planning, and cooperation towards protecting biodiversity and ending the trade in illegal wildlife as we enter a post-pandemic landscape.

The overview of each day during the Forum was as follows (see Annex I for the full agenda):

- **Day 1** (Tuesday September 21): Focus on the importance of a partnership approach in furthering the CWT Movement and the resulting legacy impacts and initiatives.
- **Day 2** (Wednesday September 22): Focus on sustaining and strengthening the CWT movement by working at the regional, national, and local levels, and the importance and role of regional and national institutions, leaders, and champions.
- **Day 3** (Thursday September 23): Partner Dialogue with focus on the current CWT landscape, the impacts of COVID, priorities in a post-COVID world, partner plans, and opportunities to strengthen coordination mechanisms moving forward, including a presentation highlighting the outcomes of the Development Partner discussions.

Forum Objectives

1. Showcase the growth and potential of the CWT movement and advance sustainability of partnerships, achievements, and legacy impacts and initiatives.
2. Support and advance partner country and ASEAN CWT leadership including coordinated partner support for the implementation of regional priorities and the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action.
3. Provide a forum for partners to present ongoing and forthcoming CWT programs/funding, discuss Counter Wildlife Trafficking issues and advance coordinated action.
4. Facilitate discussion among development partners to identify new areas of investments in policy, behavior change, law enforcement and the emerging responses to Illegal Wildlife Trafficking through a One Health approach.
5. Announce the initiation of a consultation process to develop a Counter Wildlife Trafficking Development Partners Coordination Platform for Asia.

The forum was set over three days, with virtual sessions of approximately three hours each morning. The forum proceedings are reported below as they transpired, edited with reasonable interpretation where needed for clarity, cohesion, or concision, and in some places reorganized to improve flow of information.

Almost 600 people based in 15 countries registered to attend the forum, with 388 people participating at its peak. This does not include the thousands of people who watched the event on several Thai government social media channels or on participants' livestreams, for example Venerable Sompong's livestream on Facebook reached 163,000 views. Session recordings, speaker highlight videos, background reports, and other materials are all available online at www.cwtpartnershipforum.org. Please see Annex 3 for a summary on participation at the forum.

OPENING SESSION

Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To highlight the importance of regional partnerships and collaboration, and national leadership as part of a harmonized and integrated approach to combating wildlife trafficking• To help set the context and tone of the forum• To provide an opportunity for high-level speakers to share their views, and for them to inspire, motivate and help set the direction of the CWT movement• To introduce the goals and objectives of the forum
Outcome	High-level statements about the importance of regional partnerships and collaboration, and national leadership.

Veronica Pedrosa, Forum MC

This event marks a turning point in the ongoing story of combating wildlife trafficking, where we enter a new era of regional partnership. Our hosts are the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Conservation (DNP) of Thailand and USA Wildlife Asia, in collaboration with WWF, the ASEAN Secretariat, the Asian Development Bank, World Bank, Global Wildlife Program, Global Environment Facility, and the United Nations Development Programme.

This forum brings together key counter wildlife trafficking partners and stakeholders in Asia and beyond to strengthen collaboration and planning, as well as cooperation towards protecting biodiversity and ending the trade in illegal wildlife, as we enter a post-pandemic landscape. More than 500 participants have registered for the event based in 15 countries from India to the United States.

WELCOME REMARKS

Michael Heath, U.S. Chargé d’Affaires, U.S. Embassy, Thailand

President Biden is prioritizing the environmental agenda. As part of our environmental initiatives, our United States Agency for International Development Wildlife Asia Program is working with national and regional bodies in Southeast Asia to end, neutralize, and disrupt transnational environmental crime.

Wildlife diversity is declining globally at rates unprecedented in human history. The devastating impacts of climate change, the COVID-19 global pandemic, and the accelerated loss of natural habitats and wildlife species all demand immediate action. It has never been clearer that the threats to our collective survival are at stake. And it has never been clearer that collective solutions are needed to effect large-scale change.

The U.S. government has been and continues to be an enduring and committed partner in the Asia and Indo-Pacific Region towards peace, stability, and sustainable development. The United States government was among the earliest pioneers, especially in Asia, in taking the issue of illegal wildlife trafficking as a serious transnational crime. It has done this by partnering with Southeast Asian countries to support and implement programs addressing counter wildlife trafficking. Now this programming includes the current US\$ 24.5-million USAID Wildlife Asia, a major project launched in 2015 that has made significant contributions to counter wildlife trafficking in the past five years. It also involves the ongoing engagement of multiple U.S. government agencies, including USAID, the Department of State, Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Department of Justice, Department of Homeland Security, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement, amongst many others, working together with local, national, and regional counterparts on counter-wildlife trafficking and conservation initiatives.

“Wildlife diversity is declining globally at rates unprecedented in human history. The devastating impacts of climate change, the COVID-19 global pandemic and the accelerated loss of natural habitats and wildlife species all demand immediate action.”

U.S. Chargé d’Affaires Michael G. Heath
U.S. Embassy Thailand



The U.S. government collaborates with a wide range of stakeholders to strengthen the ever-growing movement to advance and accelerate a regional counter wildlife trafficking agenda. As a sign of the U.S. government's continued commitment, I would also like to announce the launch of the new USAID Reducing Demand for Wildlife Project, which will build on the successes of USAID Wildlife Asia, including support to implement the Regional Plan of Action for the ASEAN Cooperation on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement. This project will also work to advance the outcomes of this forum, including strengthening counter-wildlife trafficking partner coordination and cooperation in the region.

The World Bank estimates the economic costs of illegal logging, illegal fishing, and the illegal wildlife trade (IWT) at between US\$1 trillion and US\$2 trillion worldwide per year. The global illegal wildlife trade continues to be a serious impediment to effective sustainable economic development. The livelihoods of local communities suffer and the rule of law is diminished as these illegal practices continue. In the wake of the current pandemic when the stakes are so high, environmental crimes have far-reaching harmful impacts to humans and wildlife. The illegal wildlife trade fuels instability, fosters corruption, and erodes government institutions, the same way any other crime does. Poorly regulated wildlife trade also increases human exposure to zoonotic diseases like COVID-19.

Yet the growing prosperity of the region is creating an environment that facilitates and speeds up the illegal trade. The incentives for wildlife crimes are too high, and disincentives remain low. Transnational organized crime syndicates continue to adapt and adjust their tactics to take advantage of loopholes and new technologies and to evade justice, so there is no single solution that will solve this challenge. It needs commitment, a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach. The U.S. government is committed to embarking on a new era of partnership with all of you. With concerted and aligned efforts, the post-pandemic world offers us a chance to reset our focus, so thank you all for coming together to create a bold path forward.

STATE OF WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING AND A REGIONAL APPROACH

HE Dato Lim Jock Hoi, Secretary-General, The ASEAN Secretariat

ASEAN is home to globally significant terrestrial and marine biodiversity. Our region has the highest proportion of endemic birds and mammal species, vascular plant species, tropical peatlands, and the most extensive and diverse coral reefs in the world. This rich biodiversity needs to be conserved and sustainably managed to enhance our social, economic, and environmental wellbeing. However, wildlife trafficking still remains one of the biggest threats to our region's biodiversity.

As estimated by the Brookings Institute, the cost of this illicit activity in ASEAN is valued at around US\$10 billion per year. The impact of such large and disastrous illegal wildlife trade is a threat not only to the environment and biodiversity, but also to public health. Recent research has highlighted a clear link between biodiversity loss and the emergence of future pandemics. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) reported that trafficking wildlife animals poses greater risk for the transmission of zoonotic diseases. Wildlife trafficking continues to increase as advanced technologies have shifted illegal transactions of wildlife online where traffickers and buyers can act with anonymity, making it even harder to trace and eradicate the practice.

Wildlife trafficking is not only a critical conservation issue, but also an initial element of environmental crime and a serious transnational crime. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the region has witnessed increased stockpiling and online activities on illicit wildlife commodities, despite the general trend of reduced illegal wildlife trade activities and consumption.

Following the Chiang Mai Statement of ASEAN Ministers Responsible for the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and Wildlife Enforcement on Illegal Wildlife Trade in 2019, ASEAN has been moving forward to promote dialogue on issues related to global and regional wildlife trade policies, demand reduction, and enhanced law enforcement. The ASEAN Guidelines for Detecting and Preventing Wildlife Trafficking was adopted to serve as an effective regional mechanism for cross-border and inter-agency collaboration to deal with illegal wildlife trade.

The Plan of Action for ASEAN Cooperation on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement 2021-25 was endorsed in 2020 to identify priority actions and activities to combat wildlife trafficking. This would be further complemented with the ASEAN Handbook on Legal Cooperation to Combat Illegal Wildlife Trade, which is expected to be adopted by ASEAN ministers on agriculture and forestry this October 2021.

The ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF) and its implementation plan provide a solid foundation for getting our recovery in the right direction and addressing the regional long-term resilience. It also seeks to address the nexus between wildlife conservation and public health through promoting awareness on the risk of zoonotic diseases being spread through illegal wildlife trade and developing the ASEAN Strategy for Preventing Zoonotic Disease Transmission from Illegal Wildlife Trade.

Under its three-year work program, the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime Working Group on Illicit Trafficking of Wildlife and Timber has conducted seizures and interdiction of smuggled wildlife, as well as arrested its perpetrators, and participated in joint operations organized by Interpol to combat illegal wildlife trafficking in the region.

In addition to capacity building for the national police force on forestry and environmental crime, ASEAN member states also issue national laws and regulations to support their international obligations under CITES. The new program for ASEAN covering the period of 2022 and 2021 will continue ASEAN cooperation on illicit trafficking of wildlife and timber.

These are some of the key actions the region has undertaken. But given the complex nature of illegal wildlife trade and the diverse set of actors involved in the various activities, cross-border effort and collaborative action are needed to combat wildlife trafficking within the region and beyond. This is very critical. I would like to emphasize several key points in addressing the issue of wildlife trafficking:

- First, reducing demand for illegal wildlife trade is an important aspect to be addressed. This requires better regulatory framework, effective cross-border collaboration, and awareness to facilitate the eradication of illegal wildlife market. I again reiterate that there is a need to promote further awareness to change the behavior of consumers and producers of wildlife product through campaign, advocacy and education.
- Second, I would like to encourage advancing more robust partnerships and cross-pillar cooperation to combat illegal wildlife trade, and to enhance capacity of the ASEAN member states and effective law enforcement across borders, training programs, and provision of facilities and means to national law enforcement agencies to preserve and rescue wildlife in collaboration with external parties and dialogue partners may be considered in this respect.
- Thirdly, we need to recognize the value of sustainable natural capital investment in promoting health and livelihood of ASEAN people and ASEAN's pursuit of sustainable development goals and economic development. As there is a necessity to scale up investment in wildlife protection, biodiversity conservation and public health, the private sector should be fully engaged to support the implementation of related policies and act as a driver of innovation in this context.
- Lastly, I would like to encourage our partners to conduct research and development in the application of nature-based solutions in combating illegal wildlife and in the broader context of forest management and climate change.

NATIONAL LEADERSHIP AS CRITICAL TO REGIONAL COOPERATION AND COORDINATION

Minister Varawut Silpa-archa, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Thailand

During the last century, many people around the world have to rely on wildlife for their livelihoods and to meet their basic needs. Furthermore, demand for illegal specimens, parts, and products made from wildlife has occurred in many regions of the world. There has been evidence that consumption of wild animals is related to emerging infectious diseases in humans, including COVID-19, and we have to admit that the COVID-19 crisis is exacerbating the current planetary emergency of nature loss and climate change, putting the health of current and future generations at risk. As we enter a post-COVID-19 landscape, I would like to encourage all of us to take this opportunity to strengthen our collaboration in protecting our biodiversity and ending the trade in illegal wildlife.

Southeast Asia or ASEAN is a sub-region that occupies only 3% of the Earth's surface, but it is known as one of the globe's mega-biodiversity regions and home to many iconic species, both terrestrial and marine, that need to be preserved for our future generations. However, illegal trade in wildlife valued at almost US\$20 billion annually remains an ever-present ASEAN issue, which contributes to the continuous and dramatic decrease in populations of wild animals, such as elephants, tigers, and pangolins.

The unsustainable use and illegal trade of wildlife are among the greatest challenges of ASEAN as the economic, social, and environmental repercussions are severe and widespread in scale. The issue has recently gained attention at the international political level. It is also currently recognized as one of the non-traditional threats to the national security of many countries.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of Thailand is very well aware of this threat. We have thus elevated our efforts in countering wildlife trafficking during the past decade. The 2019

Wildlife Conservation and Protection Act has been formulated and entered into force in order to enhance protection levels of endangered species. The penalties, both in terms of fines and imprisonment, have dramatically increased. I believe that the penalties for illegal wildlife trafficking in Thailand are now the strongest in the region, which hopefully can serve as an effective deterrent for wildlife crimes.

The enactment of the 2019 Community Forest Act is also a strong societal driving force that encourages people and local communities to conserve as well as to enlarge the forest areas, which serve as wildlife habitats, as well as a buffer zone for separating wild animals from humans.

As wildlife trade is the major contributor to decreasing wildlife population, it is essential to stop its supply chain. Within the supply chain itself, ASEAN has been considered as either transit or destination sites. Thailand, through ASEAN cooperation, has seriously fought against the illegal wildlife trade for decades since the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES in 2004 in Bangkok, Thailand. The establishment of the ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network, or ASEAN WEN, in 2005 was evidence of our regional vision and strong collaboration to combat wildlife trafficking. ASEAN WEN has served as a role model for regional cooperation that inspired other regions to create similar networks and eventually to connect to each other, which resulted in enhancing efforts in combating illegal wildlife trade in many regions of the world. Later on, ASEAN WEN was further developed to be the ASEAN Working Group on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement since 2016.

The special ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Illegal Wildlife Trade was also held in Chiang Mai, Thailand, in 2019. To jointly put forward a policy against illegal trade of wild animals, the ASEAN ministers responsible for CITES and wildlife enforcement committed to step up our efforts in combating wildlife trafficking, as well as to raise people's awareness on the dangers of wild animal consumption. The Chiang Mai Statement reaffirmed ASEAN's commitment to the United Nations 2030 Agenda for the Sustainable Development Goals on urgent action to end poaching and trafficking of illegal wildlife products. It has also highlighted the importance of demand reduction and law enforcement while emphasizing the fight against wildlife cybercrime. Such policies have been translated into action through the Plan of Action for ASEAN Cooperation on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement 2021-25, focusing on the importance of a partnership approach while reiterating the need to prevent the transmission of zoonotic diseases from wildlife to humans.

As a matter of fact, no single country or region can fight this battle alone. Thailand has thus played an active role in the global community, such as under CITES, and the Convention on Biodiversity in order to cooperate with other parties to respond to transnational wildlife crimes. However, while we have put our utmost efforts to tackle the problems at all levels, as I mentioned, transboundary wildlife crime continues to be one of the most pressing challenges we are facing. This challenge has been made more difficult in the wake of the current pandemic.

As we're entering the post-pandemic landscape, we have to put our nature on a path to recovery for the benefit of our people and the planet. We have to stop illegal, unregulated, and high-risk wildlife trade and consumption. I therefore urge all of us to elevate our cooperation under the partnership approach to counter wildlife trafficking in our region and beyond. I sincerely believe that our endeavor will further our movement towards the achievement of ending illegal wildlife trade and will eventually contribute to the betterment of our natural resources and environment.

FORUM OVERVIEW

Peter Collier, Chief of Party, USAID Wildlife Asia

Developments to counter wildlife trafficking that the CWT community has recently faced include increased global awareness of the urgency to counter wildlife trafficking, resulting in increased donor funding and more organizations doing great work, but without clearly coordinated efforts to achieve our main goals. At the same time, governments across Southeast Asia and beyond have equally recognized the urgency and taken action.

As noted, the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Illegal Wildlife Trade, held in Thailand in 2019, issued the Chiang Mai Statement, which set forth bold priorities to counter wildlife trafficking, and which provided a foundation for regional action and consensus. In the sidelines of that meeting, development partners met and issued a complementary set of points in support of the Chiang Mai Statement.

Everyone in that partner dialogue agreed on the need for greater coordination in support of those priorities. ASEAN has since taken further steps, including the Plan of Action for Cooperation on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement, which is not a cure-all, and not all CWT partners are focused on supporting regional intergovernmental action, nor should they. But the next step could be for donors and partners to review and provide coordinated support in the implementation of that plan.

A final changing context is the COVID-19 pandemic, which presents a question: How should counter wildlife trafficking efforts change in response to the global impacts of COVID-19, and the continuing threats of zoonotic diseases and future pandemics? Further questions we hope to tackle over the next three days in the spirit of partnership and collective action include:

- What have we learned in the course of our work over the past decades that can increase our ability to end wildlife trafficking?
- How can we better leverage leaders, champions, and influencers to strengthen a movement encompassing all of civil society that will finally end wildlife trafficking?
- How should donors and development partners coordinate, and how can ASEAN bodies and member states, donors, and development partners all work together to coordinate effectively?
- Finally, what would you hope for in a counter wildlife trafficking development partner coordination platform for Asia to strengthen coordinated action in the region?

In addition to tackling these questions and sharing knowledge and expertise, we hope that this forum will result in a shared commitment to establish such a partner coordination platform, and that this will launch a new era of regional partnership to end wildlife trafficking once and for all.

SESSION I: SUSTAINING A COUNTER WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING MOVEMENT

Veronica Pedrosa, Forum MC

Objectives	<p>CWT - Past, Present and Future: How the CWT movement has evolved and grown over the last 15-20 years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To set the scene and provide a snapshot of how the CWT space/ movement has changed and evolved over the 10-15 years• To highlight how where we have been and where we are now can shape the future of CWT programs and activities <p>The Case for a Regional Approach: It Takes More than a Village: How initiatives connect and reinforce each other at the national, regional, and international level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To outline the importance of addressing CWT through a regional lens and how this approach can amplify impact especially through a more coordinated approach• To present the big picture and outline ASEAN's institutional structure to address CWT, cooperation with international organizations/ partners and milestone achievements, to finish with the priorities in next 5 years.• Provide the justification for a regional programming approach for partners and make the case for a transnational approach to planning, coordination and collaboration.• Explain the relationship between regional and national planning and coordination and how these different levels of planning inform each other
Outcome	<p>A better understanding of the macro-CWT landscape and the important role that regional CWT initiatives have to play in supporting CWT efforts.</p>

Veronica Pedrosa: Session I is about sustaining a counter-wildlife trafficking movement. The session overall is designed to set the context, stimulate ideas, and help inform and guide discussion for subsequent sessions. It's extremely relevant to all of the sessions to help us better understand where we've been, where we are, where we're going, and why.

CWT – PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

How the CWT movement has evolved and grown over the last 15-20 years

- *Grace Gabriel, Asia Regional Director, International Fund for Animal Welfare*
- *Steve Galster, Chairman, Freeland Foundation*

Grace Gabriel: Twenty years ago, an elephant poaching epidemic started raging across Africa, spurred by the Asian demand for ivory. At the height of that poaching crisis, 100,000 elephants were killed in just three years, incentivized by the skyrocketing ivory prices in Asia. At an emergency brainstorming meeting organized by Freeland under the USAID ARREST Program, we asked a wildlife trafficker: “Would you change to another contraband to smuggle?” “No,” he said emphatically. To him, trafficking wildlife and their dead body parts generates much higher profit, yet carries much lower risk than smuggling drugs, arms, and people.

Thankfully, the global community rose to the challenge. In the London Declaration, 42 countries collectively pledged to take action against wildlife trafficking as a serious organized crime. Since then, governments have also started to include combating wildlife trafficking on the agendas of their economic and security negotiations bilaterally and multilaterally. High-level political will to address the scourge of wildlife crime has translated into a series of ivory trade bans. The leadership China and the United States took to close their respective domestic ivory markets has created a domino effect worldwide. France, the United Kingdom, Israel, and now Singapore have all tightened their

domestic laws to prohibit ivory trade. Australia, New Zealand, and the European Union have also made similar commitments.

“The leadership China and the United States took to close their respective domestic ivory markets has created a domino effect worldwide.”

Grace Gabriel
Asia Regional Director,
International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW)



Efforts from the private sector to combat cyber wildlife crime have also grown in parallel with the internet. As early as in 2008, Alibaba and its Chinese subsidiary Taobao have banned the trade of parts and products from elephants, tigers, rhinos, pangolins, turtles, bears, and sharks. To encourage this kind of zero-tolerance policy, WWF/TRAFFIC and IFAW convened the online technology sector through a coalition approach to keep wildlife offline, and in the wild. Today, 44 internet companies have joined the global coalition to end wildlife trafficking online, comprising more than 11 billion user accounts around the world. As of this year, coalition companies have reported blocking or removing over 11 million posts and listings of illegal wildlife for sale.

The strong stand from the private sector also mobilized higher political will from governments: China, the Czech Republic, Russia, Portugal, France, and the UK have amended their domestic legislation to include cyber wildlife crime. Ivory trade bans caused ivory prices to plummet, lowering profits for trafficking. Ivory trade bans mobilized enforcement, increasing the risks for traffickers.

Ivory trade bans have also removed ambiguity in the minds of consumers and stigmatized ivory consumption, contributing to demand reduction efforts. In a recent survey, WWF found just 18% of their Chinese respondents intend to purchase ivory in the future, a drop from 43% prior to the ivory trade bans. However, in a study of ivory trade in 10 Asian countries since China's trade ban, IFAW has found significant ivory production, trade, and consumption shifting to China's neighboring countries, undermining law enforcement and demand reduction efforts in the Asia region.

Going forward, what we need is to go both linear and depth. By linear, we need to continue to address every link on the wildlife trade value chain from supply to transit to destination. By depth, every link on that chain, we need strong and clear domestic policies and laws that, combined with vigorous enforcement and meaningful penalties for violators, will have an effect on reducing demand and changing social behavior. It's imperative that we apply this holistic and proactive approach to combat wildlife trafficking. As COVID-19 shows, our success or failure impacts the health of both biodiversity and people.

Steve Galster: The three Cs that make or break good CWT are capacity, connectivity, and collaboration, which is partnerships. An overarching theme based on more than 20 years of experience in the ASEAN region is a focus on rewards rather than punishment.

- **Capacity.** There has been adequate basic CWT training conducted across the region since 2000, and a slew of good programs are available. Advanced skill building is in progress that focuses more on supply chain analysis and disruption. This is all good, but some now say, “Let's go beyond training there's been plenty of that.” We should go beyond training but don't stop training. Training is like exercise. When you stop, you lose your muscle. We have to convert the training to action.

As an example of effective capacity building, between 2014 and 2020, Thailand's Anti-Money Laundering Office (AMLO) used technology training and tips to identify over US\$40 million worth of mysterious wealth linked to suspected wildlife traffickers, and then they seized about half of that. These are well-trained officers to begin with, and we simply filled some of their gaps with technology, particularly digital forensics and specialized technical assistance over the course of five years. AMLO gets to keep a percentage of these seizures and forfeitures, so they are incentivized to improve their capacity and to use it. They are rewarded. We need to see more of that.

- **Connectivity.** Progress on this was slow at first between 2000 and 2005, with some countries denying a trafficking problem, or even finger pointing. And then the cross-border connectivity really took off starting in 2007 with ASEAN WEN being a key factor. We saw 10 countries meeting under the ASEAN flag, sharing information on wildlife trafficking, and developing relationships around the common goals of catching crooks and seizing wildlife. Perhaps there was too much focus on seizures and not enough on destroying supply chains, but you have to start somewhere. At that time, police were just coming on board while customs were, and still are, the ever-present frontline defense. By 2010, this connectivity extended to China, and then by 2012, we saw ASEAN nations, China, Africa, the United States, World Customs Organization (WCO), CITES, and the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) working together on joint CWT law enforcement operations. And these certainly did go beyond seizures to identifying pretty dense criminal supply chains and, very importantly, producing significant intelligence.

Today there are still some promising CWT law enforcement connections made across borders, but it appears less intense than before. U.S.–Chinese tensions have slowed things down a bit, as did, ironically, the higher-level priority attached to CWT. But the good news is that there is massive intelligence on the trade. We know the IWT supply chains and police and other law enforcement organizations are now more interested, so we just need to break the supply chains.

- **Collaboration.** Collaboration, or partnerships, is not the same thing as connectivity, because after you connect, you have to collaborate to achieve success. I've seen that counter wildlife trafficking collaboration in this region like anywhere works best when each partner is incentivized to play their unique role and contribute to a group effort. Here I'm not just talking about local stakeholders, but also international actors. The CWT landscape in this region has been beautifully international. Examples of successful collaboration were the original Operation Cobras. When ASEAN-WEN hosted gatherings between 2012 and 2014, China co-chaired these with the United States, and all parties were resourced and achieved major successes, and they shared the glory. Local stakeholders were put out front and even publicly rewarded by UN CITES. Those plaques and photographs still hang on many walls. We need more of that.

Another relevant use-case that shows more than half-baked success is the Thai AMLO case mentioned before, which put a major dent into a syndicate. This case could and still can do much for wildlife if it becomes an international effort of multiple financial investigation units and other agencies working across borders to destroy a cross-border criminal supply chain. There were efforts to make this happen, but there was pushback from non-ASEAN stakeholders. It was a wasted opportunity because of the turf battles. We need less of that.

So where to go from here? First, overall, recognize that the ASEAN community, including law enforcement, is more attracted to and comfortable with rewards and prevention than punishment. Two specific recommendations going forward:

1. Combine capacity building and connectivity, and focus on identifying and seizing assets. This has worked in ASEAN, including with the use of the Counter Transnational Organized Crime (CTOC) approach, which can be scaled.
2. Set up conservation restitution funds that feed off the asset seizures and forfeitures. In other words, make traffickers finance CWT.

Finally, recognize and address the elephant in the room: Competition among NGOs and government agencies, especially the non-ASEAN actors. We can all turn our passion into more impact. When CWT became a higher priority starting around 2013, that led to more money and more actors, all competing over a growing but still limited pie. It is a very good thing that more organizations are interested in CWT, but we need to manage and harness a growing landscape of CWT stakeholders for real impact. But how? I think, by embracing the revolutionary blockchain technology. Specifically, to tokenize projects and track and reward impact and collaboration. Governments, including non-ASEAN stakeholders, need to account for how they spend their time and money in CWT, and this in itself can take up a lot of everyone's bandwidth.

Blockchain technology tailored for CWT can provide the accountability that everyone needs, while rewarding and incentivizing good verified performance. I plug this use of technology for CWT in the region because, for one thing, that is what my organization is working on, but also because I really think it will allow more investments of time and money to go into direct impact rather than administrative overheads and conventional time-consuming monitoring and evaluation systems. In my experience, law enforcement in every ASEAN country can find, jail, and issue major fines to crooks when they want to—and fast—when they are incentivized, meaning the boss says, “Do it,” or when there are rewards in the form of credit, promotions, or sharing in the seizures-related bonuses. It's worth noting that some of the largest seizures in the region are sometimes tied back to one group of traffickers riding on another. So, imagine the potential for exploiting such competition and divisions.

THE CASE FOR A REGIONAL APPROACH: IT TAKES MORE THAN A VILLAGE

How initiatives connect and reinforce each other at the local, national, regional, and international level

Dr. Pham Quang Minh, Assistant Director/Head of Food, Agriculture and Forestry, The ASEAN Secretariat

Addressing the impacts of the illegal wildlife trade is always an important issue for ASEAN, and we have developed activities and policies to address this situation. My presentation will focus on three important issues:

1. Regional policy framework
2. Regional platforms

3. Partnership and way forward

Regional Policy Framework – ASEAN has three blueprints that include relevant provisions for CWT:

- ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint 2025, which includes provisions to promote sustainable forest management by ensuring sustainable resources (production), good governance, and transparency.
- ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint 2025, which includes provisions for enhancing cooperation in addressing other emerging transnational crimes, including trafficking of wildlife and timber, in accordance with relevant international conventions.
- ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint 2025, which includes provisions for conservation and sustainable management of biodiversity and natural resources.

In addition, ASEAN has several strategic plans of action (SPA) that specifically address wildlife trafficking. These include:

- SPA for Forestry (2016-15), which aims to 1) develop a framework for enforcement cooperation at the ASEAN level to address transnational illegal forestry activities and facilitate cross-border enforcement, and 2) facilitate cross-learning among ASEAN Member States in enhancing sustainable forest management practices and combating illegal forestry activities and timber trade.
- Plan of Action (POA) for ASEAN Cooperation on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement (2021-25), which aims to: 1) develop strategies for forestry and wildlife management that takes into account the need to prevent the transmission of zoonotic diseases from wildlife to humans, and 2) study/review the risk of zoonotic diseases being spread through legal and illegal international trade in wildlife, and to establish a policy and mechanisms to minimize this risk.
- Chiang Mai Statement of ASEAN Ministers Responsible for CITES and Wildlife Enforcement on Illegal Wildlife Trade, which emphasizes the importance of developing cooperation at all levels to eradicate wildlife poaching and trafficking. It includes the following key aspects: global and regional wildlife trade policy, demand reduction, law enforcement, and combating wildlife cybercrime.

Other regional policy frameworks that guide CWT work in ASEAN are as follows:

- Work Plan for Forest Law Enforcement and Governance Implementation (2016-25), which aims to achieve sustainable forest management for enhancing the international competitiveness of ASEAN's forestry products to ensure that they meet international standards and are consistent with sustainable forest management practices, including conservation and protection, as well as contributing to poverty reduction in the region.
- ASEAN Guidelines for Detecting and Preventing Wildlife Trafficking (adopted by the ASEAN Ministers in 2019), which aims to develop an effective regional mechanism and to improve collaboration among relevant law enforcement agencies responsible for detection and prevention of wildlife trafficking and other wildlife enforcement issues.
- ASEAN Handbook on Legal Cooperation to Combat Illegal Wildlife Trade a resource, reference and tool adopted by the Ministers in October 2021 to support law and policy makers at the national and regional levels to strengthen laws and policies relevant to illegal wildlife trade.

Regional Platforms – Currently, ASEAN has two regional platforms focused on wildlife trafficking:

- ASEAN Working Group (AWG) on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement under the ASEAN Senior Officials on Forestry, which is tasked to provide policy recommendations, strengthen law enforcement, and support good governance in combating illegal trade in wild fauna and flora.
- Working Group on Illicit Trafficking of Wildlife and Timber under the Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crimes (SOMTC WG), established in 2017 to strengthen cross-border cooperation in law enforcement to address environmental crime and to collaborate with other sectors in combating illegal wildlife trade.

Some challenges in the implementation of our CWT activities include: 1) a lack of resources in terms of human capacity and funding; 2) inter- and intra-sectoral coordination in law enforcement (forestry, customs, and police); and 3) data availability and exchange, and sharing of information. Of these, I believe ensuring coordination among the various agencies involved in CWT activities is one of the most important challenges to focus on.

Moving forward, ASEAN is focused on implementing the POA for ASEAN Cooperation on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement. We are committed to continuing our collaboration with our partners, including USAID Wildlife Asia, USAID PROSPECT, and IGNITE. I would like to invite other international organizations and partners (e.g., CITES Secretariat, UNODC, WWF/TRAFFIC, Freeland, etc.) to exchange best practices and explore collaboration under the POA. Potential areas of collaboration include addressing wildlife cybercrime, demand reduction, improving governance in wildlife enforcement through regional policy development, implementing the ASEAN Guidelines for Detecting and Preventing Wildlife Trafficking, capacity building, exchange of best practices and knowledge, and developing relevant protocols to strengthen CWT actions. I look forward to working with you on these priority areas of collaboration.

A CALL TO GLOBAL ACTION

Associate Justice Michael D. Wilson, Hawaii Supreme Court, USA

To put this in a global perspective, I'd ask that perhaps we reflect on those who have decided to link their lives with USAID Wildlife Asia—the members of this audience—because it raises a question: To what extent are those who are devoting their precious time to this gathering of consequence to the global community?

We've had a lot of discussion, from the importance of illegal trafficking of wildlife to the pandemic. But let me move to an issue that some of our speakers have also alluded to, which is the climate crisis. In an iconic critically important speech on December 2nd of last year, the Secretary General of the United Nations spoke about the most important issues facing humanity globally. He spoke in terms of two emergencies: the COVID pandemic, which has been discussed to a certain extent today, but he also focused on the climate emergency. He expressed the consensus of virtually all who have looked into the dire future we are headed for who shared his warning that the climate crisis is a far greater emergency than the COVID pandemic. The Secretary General made it clear that there can be no solution to preventing this existential threat to humanity, global warming, without biodiversity. He stated that biodiversity is not just cute and charismatic wildlife; it is the living, breathing web of life. Indeed, nature-based solutions, as he pointed out, could provide one-third of the net reductions in greenhouse gas emissions required to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement.

So, the work that is being done today by USAID Wildlife Asia and all of its partners is not the work of the Humane Society. Protectors of wildlife, our true environmental defenders, guardians of humanity, the practitioners of the formula for survival, and the saviors of the greatest carbon sink mechanism available to humanity: the Living Earth. Nature feeds us, clothes us, quenches our thirst, generates our oxygen, shapes our culture and our fates, and forges our very identity, in the words of the Secretary General.

I've seen the courage of those who have stepped forward to protect biodiversity in a past era, when biodiversity was seen as a dalliance of those who have an unrealistic attachment to plants and animals. As a director of the Department of Land and Natural Resources of Hawaii, I worked with heroic resource managers and protectors of nature, who never gave up, although Hawaii had the least-funded resource management program in the United States.

But this is a new era, where your work holds a solution to a fearful emergency that is the worst emergency yet faced by humanity. The International Energy Agency estimated that the cost of effectively reducing greenhouse gas emissions is US\$1 trillion a year, and that's during the few remaining years we have left to avoid catastrophic levels of greenhouse gas emissions. Two data points often discussed now: Within the next 40 years, 160 million people have to leave Bangladesh because of sea level rise. The most productive food-producing part of the world in Southeast Asia that produces rice will be dead because of sea level intrusion.

Since the International Energy Agency issued its approximation of the cost to address the climate emergency and since the Secretary General speech of last year, the IPCC has issued its report declaring that the environmental catastrophe of a 1.5-degree-hotter world is approaching faster than expected. And as the Secretary General has said, the world has not met any of the global biodiversity targets set for 2020.

Last week in Marseille, at the World Congress of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)—with some of the leadership of the partners here today, such as the World Wildlife Fund International, a thousand NGO members, and the majority of the world's nations represented—the members voted for a climate crisis commission based on a very important proposition that we must have a climate protection plan that embraces biodiversity.

The protection of wildlife and the habitat upon which they depend must be taken to an unprecedented scale of truly global proportions, and enforcement can no longer languish. Those that are on the frontline now of biodiversity are on the frontline of the solution for humanity: the protection of the pangolin and the protection of the tiger, the protection of the elephant, the protection of the rhino. It's just a symbol of protecting ecosystems that are the true carbon sink for the world. You are the true environmental defenders, the protectors of Earth's wildlife and its life-sustaining ecosystems. You are the guardians of humanity, the practitioners of the formula for survival that is now becoming apparent, and the work you do makes you the saviors of the greatest carbon sink mechanism available to humanity, which of course is the Living Earth. I salute you and honor your work and courage to work against the odds. The success of avoiding a 1.5-degree-hotter world is possible. Biodiversity can save us, thanks to you.

SESSION 2: TIPPING THE SCALES – LEGACY IMPACTS AND PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVES

Topline Initiatives, Achievements and Impacts: How strong partnership initiatives have advanced approaches at national, regional and international levels; how these approaches are being tailored, integrated and institutionalized; and what's next.

Moderator: Natalie Phaholyothin, CEO, WWF Thailand

Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Share approaches developed through partnership and joint organizational efforts that contribute to CWT.• Discuss legacy tools that can be used by the CWT community.• Have an improved understanding and appreciation of various partnership approaches, and also a greater awareness and appreciation of the various tools that will enhance CWT partnerships.• Provide insights that will be relevant to Session 3 on lessons learned.
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved understanding and appreciation of various partnership innovations and initiative in CWT and their impact in reducing consumer demand, strengthening law enforcement and policies• Awareness and appreciation of various tools that are available to enhance the impact of partnership initiatives in CWT

PARTNERSHIP LEGACIES

Panelist: Craig Kirkpatrick

When I talk about the USAID Wildlife Asia team, I mean something broader. I mean the community that USAID Wildlife Asia is a part of. There are civil society organizations like WWF, WildAid, and the Wildlife Conservation Society; religious organizations like the Vietnam Central Buddhist Association and the International Network of Engaged Buddhists; national and international organizations like Thailand's Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, Thai Supreme Court, Vietnam People's Police Academy, Vietnam Central Committee on Propaganda and Education, ASEAN Working Group on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement, ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly; and of course there are U.S. government counterparts like the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of Justice, Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Environment, Science, Technology and Health in the State Department; and of course, the UN agencies such as the Office on Drugs and Crime, UNDP, and UNEP.

When I talk about the community that we have, I mean this coalition, this alliance, this movement. Just think about what we've accomplished over the past five years. We've taken behavior change techniques that were commonly used in public health and applied them to counter wildlife trafficking and reducing consumer demand for wildlife. We've done this with II campaigns in three countries, and we're seeing dramatic reductions in the intent to purchase and in the social acceptability of the use of wildlife in China, Vietnam, and Thailand. We've shown that it works, and we have the data to prove it. We are at the forefront of having countering transnational organized crime become a new central pillar in our efforts to counter wildlife trafficking.

We've also continued to broaden and deepen the networks of law enforcement in Asia, and to reach out to Africa, resulting in ever more effective enforcement actions. And we're also making substantial progress in institutionalizing CWT training for law enforcement, with outreach to the People's Police Academy in Vietnam, and also to ASEAN.

On prosecutorial and judicial responses, we've worked regionally with the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Association and with the ASEAN Working Group on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement. Within Thailand itself, we've gone deeper, working with the Judicial Training Institute to develop a curriculum on environmental jurisprudence, and we've helped bridge the divide between law enforcement and case prosecutors through a Rapid Reference Guide to assist enforcement in collecting the information that is needed by prosecutors to successfully bring criminals to justice.

This is about much more than individual successes that we've had with Wildlife Asia. It is even more fundamentally about our partnerships, about our comradeship, and about the growth of this movement. It's a movement dedicated to peace and prosperity, to the rule of law, and the protection of precious biodiversity.

INSTITUTIONALIZING LAW ENFORCEMENT CAPACITY

Panelists:

- *Steve Galster, Chairman, Freeland Foundation*
- *Jedsada Taweekan, Regional Illegal Wildlife Trade Program Manager, WWF Greater Mekong*

Natalie Phaholyothin: Freeland has contributed to the development of tools like CTOC that have been used to strengthen law enforcement capacity. How does CTOC support partnerships and international collaboration and why is it so important? This session addresses the future for CTOC in order to prolong the movement that Craig just mentioned.

Steve Galster: Through 22 years of practice in the region, we have found that the best return on investment on capacity building is to combine it with networking, and that can be at the national or cross-border level, to support relationships and make it case-based, specifically to convene and train enforcement chains to identify and destroy criminal supply chains. There are three key elements to CTOC:

1. Convene the right officers, and “right” equals “passionate” and having the authority to arrest traffickers and/or seize their assets.
2. Provide these officers with useful training and technology to identify and disrupt these “businesses” because most wildlife trade in the region is in fact covered by legal business—it's not done in the dead of night by a few trucks smuggling across the border. It's done under legal cover.
3. Provide these officers and agencies with information or intelligence that will help them score victories.

We've developed a program with support from USAID and the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) that combines all of the training, technology, and intelligence. The program is called Counter Transnational Organized Crime (CTOC). CTOC has two parts: formal training and on-the-job training. It's being expanded now in the Coral Triangle, Africa, and South America in partnership with governments in these regions, with the support of INL and USAID. This will facilitate further cross-border collaboration through the use of common CWT tools.

Jedsada Taweekan: CTOC is trying to bring together effective interagency coordination, because actually wildlife enforcement involves not just one agency. Usually, when people talk about wildlife enforcement, they think it's just the police, because it's about environmental crime. But this is

transnational organized crime so we have to work with customs and wildlife authorities. Everybody has to work together to promote the establishment of a multi-stakeholder network, including at the highest levels of ASEAN. But one thing I want to highlight is that while we have ASEAN WEN at the higher level, WWF is trying to build networks at the local level, for example, province-wide networks where we have discussions and share information. It's important to have CTOC and interagency coordination at the highest level down to the provincial levels.

REDUCING DEMAND FOR WILDLIFE

Panelists:

- *Rabia Mushtaq, Communications Specialist, WildAid Thailand*
- *Chenyue Ma, Program Manager, International Fund for Animal Welfare, China*

Natalie Phaholyothin: WildAid and USAID Wildlife Asia worked together on social behavior change communications (SBCC) campaigns in Thailand. These campaigns aimed to reduce demand for wildlife products, driven by spiritual beliefs, and it succeeded in reducing the demand by half from potential customers. What factors contributed to the success, and what were some of the challenges that others can learn from you?

Rabia Mushtaq: There are both internal and external factors that contribute to the success of any campaign, and I would like to highlight three internal factors that really stood out from an execution standpoint and helped in reducing consumer demand for ivory and tiger products:

1. Pre-testing, which is testing your messages, messengers, and materials with your audiences to ensure they work. Even a small focus group discussion can help point you in the right direction and ensure accessibility, likeability, and shareability of the campaign message.
2. Online advertisements really worked. We used targeted Facebook ads, and that gave us the freedom to select our audience based on their interests, location, or gender. And because it was on Facebook, we saw real time discussions and adapted our future messages accordingly.
3. Strong visuals with a strong message really worked to help question long-held beliefs in Thailand. This is something we've always seen looking at the trends in Thai media, that these visuals need to be paired with a message that appeals to an audience's motivations and beliefs and questions that.

As with any campaign, there were a few challenges as well. When engaging social media influencers or pages to share our campaign messages, some turned us down. And we found that they preferred to share news that is current or related to an ongoing discussion in society, and with the freedom to create their own version, almost like ownership. We also had to deal with a lot of rejections when it came to securing social media placements in general. The challenge of reaching the 1% or 2% of the population who use these products meant that our media placements had to have a component which is very targeted, combined with a mass media strategy. The targeted media like websites and magazines declined to place our ads as they felt that our message would make their readers feel uncomfortable and not return to their platforms again. So we basically revised the strategy and focused on online advertisements as that was performing well. We were just flexible, listening and adapting our campaign messages to reach our audience as efficiently and as effectively as possible.

Natalie Phaholyothin: *Local cultures do play a very important part in either encouraging or reducing demand.*

Chenyue Ma: I agree with Rabia's point that to pretest is definitely crucial, because when we talk about social behavior change communications, we need to really listen to how society responds, so that we can react accordingly. And this is actually another strength of online promotion. Online promotion allows us to collect data in a timely manner so that we can adjust the campaign strategy to enhance effectiveness and efficiency. After the first run of the wildlife-free gifting campaign in China, we used the data collection features of the online platform to conduct a snapshot analysis of the campaign, which gave us very valuable insights on how our target audience perceived the campaign, and how they preferred to receive messages. Based on the results, we were able to adjust our strategy to make the second run promotion more targeted and effective.

Natalie Phaholyothin: *How do you think IFAW's success in engaging partners from various sectors of society can be replicated in other Asian countries?*

Chenyue Ma: One of the essential elements for successful SBCC campaigns is to create messages that are culturally appropriate, politically sensitive, and socially mobilizing. These three aspects mean different things for partners from different sectors of the society. Based on IFAW's experience, the key to establishing and maintaining an impactful partnership is to really understand the partners' needs so that strategies from both sides can be synchronized. Instead of having partners only during the campaign implementation, which is usually a one-time thing, we need to tailor-design campaign activities together with our partners, so that they will proactively invest in the joint effort. By doing so, we're usually able to leverage the continuous engagement of our partners to ensure campaign sustainability and create a network of partners, which in itself becomes a campaign legacy.

During the USAID Wildlife Asia campaign, despite the challenges we faced from the China–U.S. tension, we managed to engage several public sector partners in depth to jointly organize wider-reaching activities. For instance, we engaged with the Jinsha Site Museum to launch a themed exhibition focusing on one key message that museums should be the only place to appreciate the beauty of ivory carvings. We had several rounds of meetings with our partners to learn about their main objectives and how they would like to interact with their target audience. Eventually, one-third of that exhibition focused on elephant conservation and our Wildlife Protection Law campaign materials became an organic part of the exhibition. In summary, the most important thing in leveraging sustained partner engagement is making our campaign the partner's campaign.

STRENGTHENING JUDICIAL INSTITUTIONS IN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

Panelist: Dr. Georgina Lloyd, Regional Coordinator Asia and the Pacific of Environmental Law and Governance, UNEP

Natalie Phaholyothin: *Why are partnerships vital for judicial capacity building? Can you please give a few examples of UNEP's Global Judges Programs that harness the synergies of various partnerships?*

Georgina Lloyd: UNEP has found that judicial capacity building is really critical to provide the foundations of environmental awareness in order to successfully deter environmental crime. The sharing of judicial opinions and thinking from around the world has been the hallmark of judicial capacity building that UNEP has supported. This was stated in the *2019 Rule of Law Report* that peer-to-peer exchange amongst judges and access to decisions from sister courts can significantly increase

the number of environmental cases heard. This has been done through partnerships. We work closely with the Global Judicial Institute on the Environment and the IUCN World Commission on Environmental Law. UNEP has also supported the Asian Judges Network on the Environment together with the Asian Development Bank and through this platform held forums regionally and sub-regionally since 2012.

The key to all of these partnerships is convening and facilitating platforms that enable judges to exchange information and experiences, and for effective and efficient adjudication. Another key example of this is our partnership with USAID Wildlife Asia on the Asia Pacific Judicial Symposium on Best Practices and Environmental Courts and Adjudication that was held earlier this year in June. Those are just a few examples, but we have found and I would just emphasize that there's a really powerful impact of the cross-pollination of ideas when judges from different jurisdictions are brought together to share experiences.

ALIGNING AND STRENGTHENING PROSECUTORIAL AND JUDICIAL RESPONSES

Panelists:

- *Jedsada Taweekan, Regional Illegal Wildlife Trade Program Manager, WWF*
- *Steve Galster, Chairman, Freeland*

Natalie Phaholyothin: Are there any partnerships between law enforcement and the judicial system that have been effective? How can law enforcement and the judiciary work better together for sustained impact and long-lasting collaboration and hopefully lead to that global movement that Craig had mentioned in his introduction?

Jedsada Taweekan: Wildlife trafficking is the fourth-largest transnational organized crime, after drugs, human, and arms trafficking. In terms of drugs and human trafficking, which is very big and widely known in the region, we see a lot of connection between law enforcement and the judicial system. Unfortunately, we did not see that for wildlife trafficking. Many organizations from both the public and private sectors have been working together trying to build these bridges, mostly focusing on capacity building for law enforcement. We provided tools and techniques for them to work together for inter-agency coordination at the national, transnational, and provincial levels. We saw in the past five to 10 years a lot of arrests of perpetrators of wildlife trafficking, and we thought that was the end and we could celebrate our success. However, that was just actually the beginning because we needed to ensure that those arrests would translate to prosecution and proper sentencing, similar to drug and human trafficking.

This is why in the past few years, WWF has been working with USAID Wildlife Asia and governments in the region to develop a tool for them to work together. We successfully developed a tool called the *Rapid Reference Guide (RRG) on Applicable Offenses to Trafficking of Critically Endangered Species in Thailand*. The RRG is a tool to build a strong case against perpetrators and also to set out any powers available to court members to prosecute wildlife cases, meaning not only wildlife laws but also customs laws, anti-money laundering laws, and others in drafting charging documents.

The RRG was first developed in Botswana, Mozambique, Uganda, and Tanzania. The environments are quite different for Africa and Asia. In Africa, it's more of a source for wildlife, while in Asia, particularly in this region, it's more of the destination countries. Based on what we've seen from the use of RRG in Africa, there have been improvements in case analysis, case preparation, evidence collection, joint investigation, charging, and sentencing. We worked with Thailand's Office of the

Attorney General in collaboration with different agencies including the police, customs, anti-money laundering, and the wildlife authorities in the Department of National Parks, Wildlife, and Plant Conservation (DNP), with funding and coordination support from USAID Wildlife Asia and WWF.

The RRG facilitates the exchange of information among prosecutors and investigators and enables them to build a stronger case by improving the quality of investigation and link to wildlife crimes. In the end, successful prosecution serves as a strong deterrent for wildlife crimes in the region.

Steve Galster: The RRG is very important. It is a great product, and complementary to the Counter Transnational Organized Crime (CTOC) program, which convenes and trains multi-agency enforcement chains at the national and cross-border level. There is a seat at the table in CTOC for prosecutors. It's one that was not filled very much in the past but it's very important because if prosecutors are not involved, or the judges are not socialized, investigations would be a wasted effort. So CTOC is one way to bring prosecutors together with other agencies, and there are modules developed specifically to facilitate interagency common understanding of what the supply chain looks like and how to break it.

Georgina Lloyd: It's really critical to look across the entire enforcement chain, and to bring together customs, environment agents, prosecutors, and judges to explore all the stages of the prosecution from investigation, prosecution, and sentencing. Often these groups do work in silos and this cross-collaboration of agencies across all stages of the enforcement chain is essential. We do a lot of training for judges, and in the modules that we developed for judges we can bring in experts and provide those linkages to prosecutors and to other groups. This ensures that there is that connection between these different stages of the enforcement chain, which is so vital.

Natalie Phaholyothin: *What do you see as the next big shift or opportunity in how we approach partnerships to make large-scale and lasting change in demand reduction, law enforcement, and policy?*

Craig Kirkpatrick: I think that CWT in this past couple of years has been doing quite well, and that's in the midst of COVID. That being said, what I'm hoping for is to see this movement growing, and this building of bridges that people have been talking about between different facets of CWT: demand reduction, law enforcement, criminal prosecution, and the adjudication through the judicial system. One of the things that I thought was really insightful in YK's remarks is that we shouldn't be asking partners to join us, we should be asking partners to allow us to join them.

Also, if funding is insufficient, it tends to engender competition, not cooperation. This is why I'm particularly excited by Day 3 of this forum, when we're going to talk about ways that the donor community can start to align with ASEAN priorities, for example the ASEAN Recovery Framework. We can then align donor programs so that we are creating larger pots of money that engender this type of partnership or coalition. We need to figure out how to better resource this work, and with the examples and successes that we have, we should be able to do that.

Steve Galster: I would just like to give credit to other organizations that have worked with us on developing CTOC and my point here is to share credit and, hopefully, grow the pie. Nobody ever went poor by giving, and we all have to have that approach in order to win here.

Georgina Lloyd: It's important that we look at whole-of-society approaches and principles of public participation. These are really critical to address environmental crime, and it's essential that actors

promote and protect civic space and explore these collaborations that see civil society partners and others as powerful positive forces that can support the upholding of environmental rule of law.

Jedsada Taweekan: We need to institutionalize the tools we develop, making sure someone will carry them forward, so we don't need to start from zero, because we can build off what we have. For example, WWF is now hosting RRG and we plan to make sure it's up to date, because laws are being revised all the time and people will continue to use it for interagency coordination. Also, given the transboundary nature of CWT, we have to work internationally, even on demand reduction. With the closure of the ivory market in China, there's been an influx of Chinese buying ivory in Southeast Asia and a lot of research showing a definite spike in ivory sales in the region. We cannot just work in China to reduce demand; we also need to address the influx of Chinese buyers in Southeast Asia.

Natalie Phaholyothin: How can partnerships be strengthened and institutionalized at both the national and regional levels?

Rabia Mushtaq: We need to take into consideration working with local organizations because a lot of the partnerships that we see happening is among international organizations. It's local organizations that really have that ground-level access that we sometimes don't. We've seen some great examples in Thailand for institutionalizing partnerships, for example between DNP and the Airport Authority of Thailand during the implementation of Thailand's National Wildlife Action Plan. But while these partnerships are happening, they're mainly between non-profit organizations and other entities such as businesses or faith-based organizations. If you want to have it institutionalized, it needs to be a part of the government's agenda. A good example is the inclusion of a demand reduction component in the Chiang Mai Statement during the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting. But what's even more important than having it flagged as an agenda item is the actual practice of it. We need to ensure that what's included in this statement is actually understood by the people who are working on the implementation side at the ground level.

Chenyue Ma: At the national level, in order to really have a whole-of-society approach, it is necessary to, right away, do governmental advocacy. For example, in China, an "ecological civilization" is now one of the core elements of national ideology, and the main task for us is to make sure that CWT is deemed an essential and inalienable part of the ecological civilization concept.

At the international level, we need to segment the different aspects of CWT so that when we talk about a whole-of-society approach, we know who the key relevant players are. We can set SMART [Specific Measurable Achievable Relevant Time-bound] goals, and hold each player accountable to their specific roles. For instance, in order to address illegal wildlife trade online, WWF, TRAFFIC, and IFAW engaged internet giants across the world to launch the Coalition to End Wildlife Trafficking Online in 2018. This week, the Coalition will launch its newest progress report. The Coalition is recognized by the Chinese government as a very effective mechanism for bridging communication and collaboration among different sectors. Clear goals, detailed implementation measures, robust evaluation, and transparent communication are essential to ensuring effective regional partnership.

SESSION 2 Q&A

Natalie Phaholyothin: *What are the comparative advantages of NGOs already working on the ground in implementing and sustaining CWT activities, and what are the challenges?*

Jedsada Taweekan: NGOs have been working in this area for years, and this has helped sustainability. We have organizations that can build off what we have been doing. For example, USAID Wildlife Asia is ending very soon, and we don't want all of the great things it has done to stop. We need to continue building off what we have been doing. NGOs are able to do this, and we also have some connections with the business sectors involved in CWT. This is important, because we need to work with the private sector to monitor online wildlife trafficking.

Steve Galster: NGOs have three comparative advantages:

1. *Institutional memory.* We don't transfer as often as government officers do
2. *Flexibility.* Oftentimes, governments want to get together or do things but it might take them longer to do it through their own system, so they can use us, and then outline who does what.
3. *Intelligence and data.* Most good counter wildlife trafficking, like any program, is data-driven, and we've got data.

Natalie Phaholyothin: *What stakeholders could be better engaged in the CWT space as partners? Who should we be trying to draw in to fight the good fight? How do we build that ongoing growth momentum?*

Steve Galster: We talked about financial intelligence units and international anti-money laundering. Don't forget local tax inspectors—all of this illegal trade is under the cover of legal trade.

Chenyue Ma: Business sectors should be better engaged. They have the expertise and the budget, and they're the ones who have real capacity to master CWT in the public arena, so making our campaigns their business is very important.

Georgina Lloyd: One of the keys is building on these connections and linkages and also not looking at CWT in a silo. Instead we should look at it within the broader landscape of environmental crime because often these organized criminal groups are not just working in wildlife trafficking. They're looking at a myriad of environmentally sensitive commodities as well as others. So that would be the one thing: ensuring that CWT is looked at from a higher level and with a broader scope.

Jedsada Taweekan: We need to look for opportunities, like COVID-19. Everybody is calling it a spillover from the wildlife trade, so think about how we can use that to engage with the private sector and others. COVID-19 impacts everybody, so it could be a strong point to push when building a case for CWT.

Rabia Mushtaq: We can do a lot more in engaging the media because they're the ones who bring this issue into the national agenda.

Craig Kirkpatrick: What I hope we will do moving forward is to bring to wildlife trafficking a social inclusion lens. Think about traditionally underrepresented groups, whether that's youth or indigenous populations and figure out ways to add their voices and their perspectives to the work that we're doing.

SESSION 3: LESSONS LEARNED – ADAPTING IN A SHIFTING LANDSCAPE

Lessons Learned in CWT Programming: How they can be applied to strengthen the CWT Movement, consolidate platforms, and amplify impact.

Moderator: Mark Romley, U.S. Department of Justice

Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To capture some of the main lessons learned in implementing CWT activities and to consider how these can be used to inform and guide the way forward.• To help set the scene by providing examples of some of the key lessons that USAID Wildlife Asia has learned in the last 5 years of implementation.
Outcome	A distillation of some of the major lessons learned in the CWT space which can be shared with partners.

Mark Romley: In this session, we will look back at the work we've done, see what lessons we have for the future, and how we can make the CWT movement better in years to come.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM USAID WILDLIFE ASIA

Peter Collier, Chief of Party, USAID Wildlife Asia

I'll offer just five suggestions from the many lessons learned during the implementation of USAID Wildlife Asia. The points address broader international development and regional program implementation topics, leaving the CWT expertise to the panel discussion afterwards. But in a bonus round I will add a few more quick lessons specific to our demand reduction initiatives and Eleonora de Guzman will elaborate on those further in the discussion.

Five key recommendations:

1. **Consult partners in planning.** Assess the needs and capacities of your planned implementing partners and counterpart government agencies as thoroughly as possible in the strategy and design phase of your program or initiative. In the process, try to build close relationships with these partners built on trust and genuine partnership. Ideally, including being able to communicate easily whether it's on WhatsApp or something quite informal. At the same time, remember that counterpart government agencies frequently have very large mandates and limited time and capacity. They have full-time day jobs.

This may seem obvious, but frequently in the donor-driven rush to get programs up and running and to show progress, activity, and results as soon as possible, there is pressure to get plans finalized, and the more parties you consult, which takes time and energy, the more you have to consider and take on board what they say (their perspectives), and that process can get complex. This is important first to develop the buy-in and ownership essential for any successful collaboration, and you can't gain the support of the leadership of counterpart governments without them co-owning the process. Partnership, collaboration, and trust really are essential for collective success.

2. **Plan for adaptive management.** Even with a comprehensive and successful planning process, programs should have the capacity, readiness, and the funding flexibility to seize and build on new opportunities that emerge in the course of program implementation. The world is complex, ever accelerating, and opportunities and insights arise as we engage the

world. The idea that a new opportunity was not in your original work plan, or there's no budget allocated for this new idea or initiative, would be really myopic and a needless self-inflicted wound. And I have to say that USAID has been a genuine leader in understanding and advancing some strategies for adaptive management.

3. **Aim high.** Access and leverage the senior leadership, the highest you can. If you want to change the world, supporting broad civil society engagement to change the tide is of course our optimal goal, but don't forget the other side: the rule of law, policies, and government action are managed largely by extensive government bureaucracies which follow the priorities of their leaders. This varies in different sociopolitical contexts, but it's the leaders who make the big decisions and determine if initiatives will succeed or fail. Pursue all strategies to access and gain the support of the most senior government and non-government leaders you can. This can often be the difference between trying to get some marine park or protected area properly gazetted by working for 20 years at the local level, for example, or two months, if you get the support of the president.

To leverage leaders, consider who in your team or consortium has the confidence, the networking and representation skills, or even just the right personality to be able to reach out and upward to access, meet with, and persuade senior leaders to support your plan, goals, and objectives. This likewise also applies to the wider leadership and engagement of widely known and popular champions, influencers, and celebrities, which has significantly expanded the reach and impact of our demand reduction campaigns and messaging.

4. **Optimize and leverage different organizational mandates, capacities, and limitations.** If you're a program or initiative that includes a group or consortium of multiple partners, consider and plan how you can strategically leverage their different capacities, mandates, and limitations in different contexts and situation. For example, for a government-funded program, leveraging the convening influence of that government is often very helpful, although other contexts—maybe when we're addressing an idea or message that is politically charged or even mildly controversial—it may be an NGO partner that is best placed to have the flexibility to communicate those ideas.

The planning and organization of this partnership forum is another example. It's hosted by the government of Thailand through DNP and a regional USAID program, USAID Wildlife Asia, but in extremely close collaboration with WWF and the ASEAN Secretariat. Each of these four entities really brings very different and very complementary capacities, priorities, and mandates, all of which, when effectively integrated, contribute on the whole to the goals of the forum.

A counterpoint to this is that when different organizational mandates, capacities, and limitations are not managed constructively, even within a single program, they can often become the source of discord or internecine competition, as one organization criticizes or complains about the stereotypical professional cultures of the others, and they end up competing for resources, access, and credit, which impairs program effectiveness and just drains the joy out of life. If we all commit ourselves to collaborating better and in the best faith with all our partners, we will achieve a lot more, making the world a better place.

5. **Plan innovations and information technology tools carefully.** Many donor-funded programs dedicate extensive time, energy, and resources to developing innovative and eye-catching tools and technologies to advance capacity building objectives, whether it's

websites, apps, databases, or other online platforms. There is a large graveyard of these donor-funded innovative tools and technologies. This is not to say we do not need IT and knowledge management solutions, but they and the necessary plans and resources need to be thought out very carefully from the start to ensure these tools will be effectively managed, sustained, and updated beyond the life of the program and into the foreseeable future.

Also consider whether these new and independent tools are really needed in case there are already existing platforms that could be used instead, even those of your partners, and they might serve the same goals and objectives and avoid duplication. Finally, remember not all partners have the capacity and the IT infrastructure to easily adopt some innovative technologies, and that, particularly in the law enforcement space, there are also security limitations to how much information can be shared on various knowledge management systems.

Lessons from demand reduction campaigns:

1. **Conservation messages frequently do not resonate among current and aspiring wildlife consumers.** No matter how much we may want everyone to care about tigers and elephants or conserving biodiversity, that's often not the case, and we need to identify and address what will motivate them to change their behavior based on their values and concerns.
2. **Demand reduction campaigns need to aim for both reach and frequency of reach.** Target audiences should be exposed to messages more than once, because behavior change does not occur with just a single exposure. Also think about producing shorter versions of your full-length materials, for example, 30-second snippets or 15-second videos as reminders after the target audience has seen the longer videos.
3. **Implementing demand reduction campaigns is complex and important.** Don't leave it to the media agency. Monitor campaign implementation very closely to ensure you're reaching the audience you need to reach, whether target viewers are seeing and engaging with your messages, and whether you need to adapt your campaign strategy. Tools like digital analytics are available for this.
4. **Make sure to plan for and conduct campaign evaluations.** This helps to determine whether there are changes in attitude, intention to use, actual use, and social norms after campaigns, and what channels and strategies were effective in reaching those exposed.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Panelists:

- Lishu Li, Program Manager, Counter Wildlife Trafficking, Wildlife Conservation Society China
- Dr. Giovanni Broussard, Asia Regional Coordinator, UNODC Wildlife and Forest Crime Programme
- Kanitha Krishnasamy, Director for Southeast Asia, TRAFFIC
- Eleanora De Guzman, Team Lead, Demand Reduction, USAID Wildlife Asia

Mark Romley: *This is a roundtable to discuss the lessons learned and how we can do better on CWT issues throughout the world, although our experts will be mostly focused or have been focused on CWT issues in Southeast Asia and South Asia. First, because I come from a*

law enforcement background—I am a prosecutor in the United States—I'm mostly interested to learn a little bit more about the demand reduction side of the CWT. What is the SBCC approach, and how is it effective in reducing demand? How have you successfully run this kind of campaigns and what kind of impact can we expect the SBCC to have in the years to come?

Eleonora de Guzman: The SBCC approach was developed under the USAID C-Change Project and used in the health sector. It is based on a socioecological model that analyzes the factors, or influencers, of behavior change in the individual. We use behavior change communication to target the consumer or the aspiring consumer, and then advocacy and social mobilization to influence the environment and achieve the desired social norms. USAID Wildlife Asia used the SBCC approach to reduce demand. In contrast, in the health sector, it was generally used to create demand.

In Thailand, China, and Vietnam we have been using a very targeted approach, which starts from analyzing the consumers, their social demographic characteristics, and the drivers or motivators behind their use of products. Based on this, we develop messages and materials, and then we disseminate the information, trying to engage the target audience. So, it's a very targeted approach, and we have demonstrated that using SBCC is effective in reducing demand based on the five-step SBCC planning process. This has been demonstrated through the evaluation surveys conducted in 2020 and 2021 among our target audience.

However, there are some lessons learned. Although our campaigns with partners have been able to reduce the social acceptability of wildlife products by half, and the intention to buy also by half, there is still much to be done. Based on our research, 31% of consumers and aspiring consumers in the target segment still find wildlife products acceptable, or are neutral. Nearly 40% still have the intention to buy wildlife products in the future, or are undecided whether they will buy or not. Despite our success, much more has to be done because our campaigns were implemented for a very short duration, just one year or less, and we're very focused as far as the geographic scope is concerned. In Vietnam, it was Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. In Thailand, it was Bangkok. And in China, it was Guangdong basically and other cities. We need to implement campaigns for longer periods, and expand our geographic scope.

Mark Romley: Law enforcement has always been seen as maybe being a little bit slower to adapt than the criminals. Are we learning anything to help stop that trend?

Lishu Li: We have to acknowledge the very challenging nature of combatting wildlife crime, especially illegal wildlife trafficking. Detection for this crime is especially low because the victims of this crime cannot report the crime. They need human witnesses who are willing to report. Another thing is that there's a great range of biodiversity in the trade, which can create technical challenges for law enforcement agencies. There are several things we can do to help with that:

- Mainstream the CWT work and provide social and political support for law enforcement agencies to address wildlife crime.
- Provide attention and focus on wildlife crime with law enforcement agencies that have broad mandates and a long list of enforcement tasks.
- Provide systematically centralized data and information analysis for wildlife crime to help the efficiency of law enforcement agencies.
- Provide capacity building on the existing knowledge system of law enforcement agencies. Capacity for CWT is still low in many countries, so rather than building a new system or

introducing new tools, we should focus on understanding their law enforcement needs and helping with their learning curve of CWT.

Mark Romley: *It is true that one of the challenges for CWT is that our victims don't have a voice. I've worked with a program called "Justice for Silent Victims" that highlights just that very point, so we have to get better on the policing angle, the prosecuting angle, and the judging angle. Many of the legislative and regulatory changes that have been proposed over the last 10 years have focused on imposing stiffer penalties on wildlife traffickers. Do you think that's the right path, or is there something else we should be focusing on?*

Giovanni Broussard: I'm actually learning from you that stiffer penalties are good, as long as they are actually enforced. In ASEAN over the past 10 years, we've seen some increases in prison terms associated with wildlife crime. Some analyses in ASEAN countries suggest that the maximum penalties are on average around 10 years of imprisonment. However, there is a mismatch between this emphasis on increasing the penalties, which we all hail as a triumph, and the actual practice, where we rarely see a corresponding increase in sentences once somebody actually gets convicted. In short, I don't think that an increase in penalties per se necessarily brings any change.

There is a need to build stronger cases and stronger prosecution, and to aim for a sentence proportionate to the actual crime. There is certainly a value in having maximum penalties for wildlife crime of at least four years, because that opens up the possibility of cooperation between countries in terms of law enforcement and mutual legal assistance. Most of the countries in ASEAN with probably one exception have a maximum penalty that high, but really the emphasis should move now towards enforcing those laws and penalties, rather than just having them in the laws.

I also have to say that prison terms are not necessarily the most useful penalty in fighting crimes. There is also the confiscation of assets, such as penalties associated with money laundering that aim at taking away the proceeds of crime and the wealth that can be gained from these crimes. The emphasis should really be on that part of the equation as well, rather than just aiming for the prison term, which while relevant, is not the only component.

Mark Romley: *When I travel internationally, people are surprised that our major wildlife trafficking statute in the United States only offers a maximum of five years imprisonment, and many of our sentences don't come in anywhere near it. It's a frustration I think throughout the world. I think the focus lately is to take away the wealth, and Thailand has been a really good example that really highlights that point, with Star Tiger farms and the Boonchai Bach case with massive forfeitures following not-so-successful investigation/prosecution procedures. Looking ahead, we've had a lot of innovations in the CWT space over the last few years. Which of these is really being applied and making a difference? What do we need to do to make it fit the situation we're in?*

Lishu Li: In terms of innovation, technologies have been developed to detect cybercrime. WWF/TRAFFIC and IFAW have developed tools with a tech company using artificial intelligence to better detect online trade in illegal wildlife. That's something that still needs to be developed further and scaled up. Another area is behavior science application in demand reduction—USAID has invested in this area, and the World Conservation Society (WCS) is also working here with Behavior Insight Team in the UK. I think there is a lot of space for using behavior science in this sector and for leveraging different resources to scale up. But I also want to emphasize that we need to be patient because social change takes time. We have to admit that there is a process of trial and error, and we need to embrace some failure, and then claim the success. Also, we have to address the actual needs

of all users and all sectors based on a whole-of-society approach. This means tailoring our innovation approaches to each sector and each user to meet their needs so together we can combat the crime. Don't overemphasize innovation, and instead focus on meeting the needs and solving the problem.

Mark Romley: *That underscores Peter's remarks that we have to follow these things through, perhaps develop some way of funding these activities that doesn't require immediate, or 18-month, or 2-year success, because cultural change does take a long time. What kind of digital advancements have we seen in the SBCC space?*

Eleonora de Guzman: We have used digital marketing techniques, which use very targeted approaches based on the profiles of your target audience. In USAID Wildlife Asia, we implemented the Digital Deterrence Campaign, in which we identified potential wildlife buyers through the search words that they're using. Based on their search words, we serve them with messages designed to increase their perception of risk and decrease their perception of anonymity in going online. In three months, we served these ads to 560,000 searches at a cost of US\$0.015 per person reached. So digital technologies are very cost-effective because they allow you to really target the people that you'd like to target.

Another tool is digital analytics providing information and data. For example, during implementation, are we reaching the target audience that we want to reach? Are they viewing our materials? How long are they viewing them? These are tools that allow us to adapt our campaign implementation based on the data that we have gotten from our digital analytics.

Mark Romley: *Some argue that there's a lot of wasted money in the field of conservation. What kinds of lessons learned are there in the conservation community that will help us more efficiently allocate and spend resources in the future to ensure greater impact?*

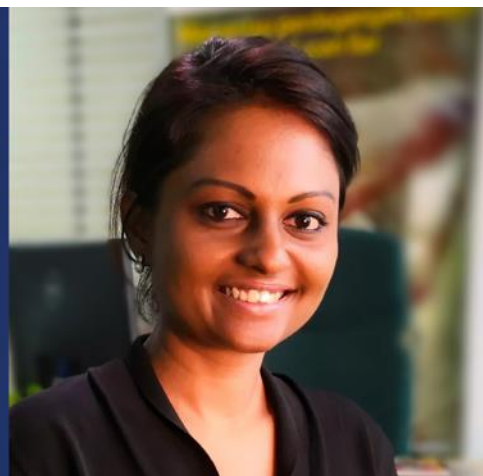
Kanitha Krishnasamy: This is obviously quite an important topic and many have varied opinions about this. It's very important to first recognize that change and actual outcomes that result in positive impact take a really long time. That's absolutely important especially for donor communities to understand, because it really drives the way that investments are being elevated. We've heard a lot in recent times about wanting judiciary-related changes, for example. It's so terribly complicated. In some cases, we've seen how just changing a law takes 20 to 30 years. So, if your law is not caught up to current times, the outcomes from a judiciary perspective are not going to be swift. It's the same for behavior change interventions. We're talking about changing the behaviors and motivations of consumers, traders, government sectors, and private sector partners. It's important to recognize that and to identify specific outcomes that we want for the short term, medium term, and long term. There are at least three key lessons:

1. **Partnerships.** It's absolutely crucial to know that no one party can solve this problem. It's too diverse, too convoluted, too complicated, and extremely political. We have to identify the right partners and the right champions who can be the influences for the change that we want to achieve. We also need to be open to new partners and it doesn't necessarily have to be partners that have been involved in the CWT arena for 20-30 years. There might be a lot of new partners out there who can bring something new to the table. And this links back to the innovation that we've talked about earlier—it's not about just bringing technological innovations to counter wildlife trafficking, but it's also about bringing new partners who have new ideas and new approaches to solving a long standing problem.

2. **Systems.** Something that's very close to the heart of TRAFFIC and many other organizations is law enforcement. We're talking about combating wildlife crime, so we absolutely have to prioritize law enforcement. It is very much about the systems and the game. It's about institutionalizing a lot of the changes that we want to happen. It's not easy. Obviously, it's going to take a really long time, but it's absolutely crucial.
3. **Accountability and transparency.** We tend to shy away from this because it's difficult, and it's political. Nobody really wants to place a high level of accountability on the various stakeholders that have a stake in trying to address this problem. But when donor communities are investing millions and millions over decades, the accountability factor is very important. We have to find the right entry point that brings partners to the table without shutting the door completely, but that accountability and transparency absolutely has to be part of the discussion.

"It's not about just bringing technological innovations to counter wildlife trafficking, but it's also about bringing new partners who have new ideas and new approaches to solving a long standing problem."

Kanitha Krishnasamy
Director for Southeast Asia, TRAFFIC



Mark Romley: *Are the governments we're working with really taking these lessons and applying them?*

Giovanni Broussard: Not really. I don't want to come across as negative or pessimistic, but we need to realize that we are still stuck in the logic of short-term projects that is not really leading to the results that we are expecting. We often see projects to combat wildlife crimes awarded again and again to the same government institutions that have not delivered. We implement activities that have already failed in the past and every time we hope that it will lead to different results. And all too often, we work on projects that are designed by consultants who are sitting on the other side of the world, and then the success of these projects is measured by some metrics that are obsolete or not fit for the purpose. Those M&E systems are more focused on counting training courses, the number of people that we train, or the number of workshops or even seizures, as if these were the results and the success of the project. The reality is that the criminal justice institutions, police, customs, and prosecutors don't really speak the same traditional language of development and humanitarian assistance.

Before we go with the theory of technical assistance, we should try to have a more pragmatic and incremental approach whereby we have longer interventions. We can't really achieve results in projects of 18 months, where we need exclusively to train X number of people on X number of topics and try to find a seizure that justifies those training courses. This is a system that has not produced results so far. It's still very difficult to actually have a frank conversation among NGOs, international organizations, and donors on how to increase the impact of our projects.

Again, we are constrained by the fact that the criminal justice institutions that we work with probably don't see wildlife crime as a huge priority. As providers of technical assistance, we need to find a way to change that, but if we simply go with our approach of repeating the same things again and again, we are probably going to repeat our failures as well. There have been changes and improvements over the year, but we're still not anywhere close to the radical changes that we need to adopt. And there is still competition for resources, and competition for visibility, and that's not really leading to the results that we all hope for.

Mark Romley: *Maybe we as governments or NGOs who are supporting this work need to be a little bit more reasonable in what we can expect out of a given amount of time under a grant or whatever funding mechanism. And if we give technology, we need to make sure it's going to be there for the long term. Technology can fail or stop working for any number of reasons. Given that, we really should make longer commitments where funding allows. If you had to pick one lesson that has stood out for you that we could all apply going forward, what would that be?*

Kanitha Krishnasamy: This is a really difficult question because I don't think there's a single lesson that we've all learned, but I suppose the main thing for me is identifying champions. With all the frustrations and the difficulties that we all face on a daily basis, the one shining light for us is that there are a number of champions within the stakeholders where we want to influence change. Whether they're within the government sector or the private sector, it's really important to identify who these champions are. For example, we've seen members of the judiciary or a magistrate or judge who's gained an understanding of why wildlife crime is important, and that understanding has influenced the way that they view wildlife crime cases when they're in court. So, it's important to know who the champions are, and to stick with it to work with them as much as we can.

SESSION 3 Q&A

Dr. Samuel Wasser, Director, Center for Conservation Biology-University of Washington: *Too often these major traffickers are committing multiple crimes and responsible for multiple shipments, and when they're prosecuted, they tend to be prosecuted for one crime at a time. That diminishes the seriousness of their crimes. How can we change that? How can these perpetrators be prosecuted for the totality of their crimes, at least for those that are linked together?*

Mark Romley: We all know it's the same bad guys doing a lot of these crimes, whether it's drugs or human trafficking. There's been a lot of evidence linking CWT to terrorism. One of the observations I made throughout my time in the region was that it takes a very flexible legal system to react to these crimes where people might be committing various types. Police have very specific duties and if the economic police first discover the wildlife trafficking crime, well then, it better be an economic crime. And if the customs police first detect the crime, it better be a customs crime. Or if the wildlife police detect it, then it better be there.

In the U.S., I think one thing we can do—and the U.S. went through its own growing pains in reaction to the Mafia prosecutions in the 1960s–80s—is to develop a better system of trust and memorandum of understanding or other letters of agreement to share jurisdiction in some of these cases. So when the crime is detected the police on the spot know that they can act, investigate, and do everything. But not every legal system is all that flexible.

Lishu Li: Some very basic awareness raising is needed with prosecutors and judges to make sure this kind of cross-sector/cross-crime prosecution happens. Something as simple as awareness raising, recognizing the endangered species, and knowing that that kind of action could be violating another law is something that's needed. Also, we need to support successful local best practices that can be replicated in other units or other locations. This can encourage joint investigations or joint prosecutions.

Giovanni Broussard: Very often in the commission of wildlife crimes, you always find elements of corruption, fraud, and even money laundering, and these offenses are not necessarily listed in the wildlife laws but in other laws. So, a prosecutor generally has to have the capacity to look at other pieces of legislation as well while investigating wildlife crimes, especially when the wildlife laws are not drafted to include elements of corruption or fraud.

I think what Dr. Wasser was suggesting is that there is a sort of crime convergence, whereby wildlife trafficking may be conducted by groups that are already committing other crimes like drug trafficking. In this case, the offenses listed in the drug laws or the penal codes generally carry higher penalties than the wildlife laws, so that's why it's important to look also at the other crimes, alongside the wildlife crime, to increase the penalty. I agree that would be a way to go. It's just that very often today the issue of crime convergence is not probably analyzed as deeply as it should be by the investigators and the prosecutors.

Hasantha, Sri Lanka Customs: *It's easy to talk about joint actions and cooperation between government agencies, but any of us who have worked in or with governments know that it's not that easy to carry out. What recommendations do you all have that could help create collaboration that is long term, sustainable, and feasible?*

Mark Romley: As with every government, at the border we have various entities that are working together. As an example from the U.S., there was a question about whether the customs and border patrol officers could share their authority with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and it was unclear whether that authority has actually been shared. So, one practice is to get those agreements done, which is difficult because everybody wants to protect their turf, nobody really wants to cede jurisdiction. Writing carefully worded memoranda of understanding or letters of agreement that spell out the actions that are being delegated, while reserving the broader jurisdiction to the agency that is mainly responsible, is one way to get it done and to encourage some cooperation. It will not work overnight. It may take a matter of years because this is cultural change we're talking about. If you think changing the culture of a society is hard, you should try changing the culture of a bureaucracy. I would argue it's even harder.

Lishu Li: It's also very important to provide more cross-agency information exchange. That's the kind of light collaboration that we can start with. And also, very importantly, this enforcement cooperation should focus on the champions in the law enforcement agencies, the individuals who are willing to work on this kind of international collaboration. We should find a way to support this kind of formal or informal exchange and collaboration. The mechanism can be different depending on the country, the region, and the issue, but I think people are very important and informal communication is also very important.

Kanitha Krishnasamy: We are talking about networking and collaboration. I just want to throw one example, which is currently taking place in the EU, the European Union Trade in Wildlife Information eXchange (EU-TWIX), which is essentially an information exchange platform between government agencies. Fundamentally we're talking about trust between various government agencies

across different countries and obviously that trust has to be built over time, but that trust has been built at least within the EU-TWIX across different agencies within a single country, and across different countries within the EU. They have essentially come to a common understanding to work together. These examples should be explored in ASEAN.

Eleonora de Guzman: For demand reduction activities to be sustained, we need coordination between law enforcement and policy. This is where advocacy and social mobilization comes in, because without coordination with law enforcement, without the right policies that will deter consumption or discourage consumption, demand reduction will not be sustainable. Agency cooperation is always based on “What is in it for me?” So, what will the agency gain from collaborating? We have to find the right motivation for the agency to sustain and grow collaboration.

SESSION 3 CHAT BOX COMMENTS

Ceci Fisher	One of the efforts supporting coordination between law enforcement and the judiciary is the Species Victim Impact Statement (SVIS) Initiative, helping prosecutors and judges to assess the impact of wildlife crime. https://www.svis.law.hku.hk/
Van Nguyen Dao Ngoc	Banking and finance sector should be the stakeholder champions across all sectors.
Rohit Singh	One fundamental rule for technology in conservation is USA (Usable, Scalable, Affordable) -- if the technology doesn't fit these criteria then it is not going last very long.
Van Nguyen Dao Ngoc	How can we better tap the long experience and lessons in drug control to address CWT? How can government and the public be encouraged to consider CWT as an undertaking as serious as combating drugs?
Sevandi Jayakody	Why is CWT still dealt alone at regional level, not as a cross-cutting issue? What incentives are required?
Garry Hall	Australia has started getting sentences on average around 3 to 5 years full-time imprisonment. Max penalty is 10 years. We are also focused on proceeds of crime
Van Nguyen Dao Ngoc	Increasing penalties does not reduce wildlife trafficking – corruption will negate any gains made from increasing penalties.
Van Nguyen Dao Ngoc	Numbers speak volumes. Having timely data is crucial to increasing the interest of decision makers in CWT.
Jane Russell	Is it in the public interest to investigate and charge for each type of offence if a guilty charge on the same does not increase the sentence?
Giovanni Broussard	There are examples of cooperation among customs authorities across Asia, like Operation Mekong Dragon. Some of these successful joint investigations are rewarded in the Asia Environment Enforcement Award by UNEP and other UN agencies.

SESSION 4: CWT LEADERS, CHAMPIONS, AND INFLUENCERS

Showcasing Change Agents: What can one person really do in terms of maximizing reach, mobilizing support, and sustaining movements and platforms? Influencers and champions speak in their own words.

Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To share personal accounts of five CWT champions representing different sectors of society (fashion/lifestyle, religious/faith-based, hotels/tourism, business, judiciary) on why they have committed to CWT to serve as an inspiration to others• To share champions' views on what more can be done to mobilize support and expand the movement for change in their own sectors• To present USAID Wildlife Asia campaign materials and brief campaign results
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased understanding and appreciation of champions and their role in advancing the CWT movement for change• Awareness and appreciation of the role of champions in USAID Wildlife Asia campaigns and activities

“HEART TALK” PANEL DISCUSSION

Moderator: Veronica Pedrosa

Panelists:

- *Venerable Maha Sompong Talaputto, Buddhist Dharma Teacher*
- *Cindy Sirinya Bishop, Supermodel and Actress*
- *John Roberts, Conservation Director, Minor Hotel Group*
- *Associate Justice Michael D. Wilson, Hawaii Supreme Court, USA*
- *Le Thi Thu Thuy, Deputy Director of Enterprise Development Foundation, Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI)*



Clockwise from top left: Veronica Pedrosa, Venerable Sompong, Cindy Bishop, Michael Wilson, and John Roberts

Veronica Pedrosa: We had overwhelmingly positive results from the spiritual beliefs campaign. A survey taken last year revealed a 74% recall with Venerable Sompong, one of the top recalled campaign champions. Among those exposed to the campaign, beliefs in the power of ivory and tiger to bring good luck or prevent harm fell by 30% from 2018. Venerable Sompong, what can you tell us about your commitment to help reduce demand for wildlife products?

Ven. Sompong: (edited translation from Thai) The commitment of Buddhist people all over the world is to give compassion and kindness to everyone, including all living things; to not trouble each other; to stay peaceful, calm and happy; and to keep the world from all kinds of suffering. This is our commitment and determination every day and every second to everyone in the world. We are friends to every living thing in the world, and we want everyone to be friends, to be brothers and sisters, and to take care of each other, including wildlife. We preach about this every day but we have to accept that in our society, there may be some animal relics, like ivory or tiger, that people believe will protect them from harm. Buddhist monks, novices, nuns, and opinion leaders try to work together so that when we preach, Buddhists in Thailand and in other countries will be imbued with the belief that we should care for wildlife. But in reality, living as the Buddha has taught us for more than 2,500 years is quite challenging. So please try to give compassion, to live a path that will lead us to our ultimate goal.

Veronica Pedrosa: USAID Wildlife Asia and Thailand's Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation launched their "Beautiful Without Ivory" campaign in 2020 to reduce demand for ivory products valued for their perceived beauty. Now the results speak for themselves. An evaluation survey found that this campaign had 74% recall and Cindy was the most recalled campaign celebrity. Among those who recalled the campaign, the perception that ivory is beautiful fell from 67% in 2018 to 48% in 2020. Their intention to buy ivory dropped from 79% in 2018 to 42% in 2020. Cindy, you've been promoting a wildlife-free lifestyle, and we'd like to know how the CWT movement can grow within the fashion and lifestyle industry from your perspective.

Cindy Bishop: I just want to give you a little bit of background of myself and how I have come to this point. It stems from growing up as my father's daughter. He was a pioneer in scuba diving in Thailand and so for most of my childhood, I spent my time exploring the underwater world by his side, and that really gave me my first love of nature and conservation because I realized that there's a whole other world outside of us. This is where the first step really comes from, opening our awareness to everything in this world.

It was a natural progression then to become the ambassador for Fin-Free Thailand, which I did for quite a few years, advocating against eating shark fin soup. We campaigned to consumers as well as hotels and restaurants to take shark fin off the menu. So, I've always been very involved in different conservation efforts personally. As a model and as an actress, I've always said no to wearing fur, or modeling any kind of jewelry that was made from ivory and exotic animal parts. It felt very wrong to me. Very much like the "Beautiful Without Ivory" campaign, I didn't understand how that is something that should be promoted. In my own small way, I would say no to this. But I think, as someone who's been in the fashion industry now for almost 30 years, I do see that there is a shift away from using such products, away from ivory.

Most brands now are quite in tune with sustainability. It's become much more in the public awareness to know where this product came from, or what kind of practices a particular brand or label supports. That's good to see, but there are still some perhaps more exclusive labels or brands that do still cater to demand for these products because there is still obviously a market for that. The challenge is then: How do we as an industry do more to promote sustainable products and really take a stance against using animals or products that are detrimental to environmental conservation? How do we expand the CWT movement in the fashion and lifestyle industry?

I think it definitely has to be a collaborative effort, both from the brands themselves and the consumers. The models and influencers taking a stance and saying, "No, I don't support this," puts

pressure on the designers to find a different material to use. And, again, social media is such a powerful tool, and as you can see from the campaign, it really does have the power to change attitudes, opinions, and ultimately behaviors. And so, how do we then continue to use this powerful tool as a way to spread awareness? And also, just leading by example, doing what you say you're going to do.

Veronica Pedrosa: John has been key to USAID Wildlife Asia's partnership with the DNP and the Golden Triangle Asian Elephant Foundation in producing this video to reduce demand for ivory souvenirs and gifts among tourists in Thailand in 2019. It's being shown on in-room channels of all Anantara hotels and major Sukosol Hotels in Thailand. John, can you tell us a little bit about your story?

John Roberts: Unlike everybody else on this panel, I'm a very small cog in a very big wheel, both within Minor Hotels, which is a very large company, and within the tourism industry in general. The reason the tourism industry in general is key is we are central to trade basically. A lot of people within the legal trade are our customers, but we are also key for illegal trade. The smugglers and the traders will stay with us, or the traders will stay with us when they come to meet the smugglers. Everybody, whether we like it or not, comes through our doors in the tourism industry.

Of course, determined criminals are probably not the first targets of the tourism industry. But one thing we can certainly do is target the casual consumer. USAID and others have done work within the tourism industry, with tourists within China and the rest of the world, showing that many of the people who buy ivory or tiger amulets or tiger parts do so almost casually. They will get to their destination, and a tour guide will suggest they go to a souvenir shop, they see something lovely, and they decide to pick it up and take it home. They are quite often unaware that that is a crime and they're doing damage, so we decided our first target was to talk to casual consumers. Thailand does have a legal ivory trade, although it is illegal for people to take ivory out of the country. The legal ivory trade can be damaging because that allows for smuggling of illegal ivory. We can talk to our guests in such a way that we're not going to offend them or ruin their holiday. We can just say, "By the way, while you're shopping, these things are not sustainable. You may not be aware, but they are hurting the environment, and you could also land yourself in a lot of hot water, either as you try and leave the country, or as you reenter your home destination."

Being a Thai conglomerate that works with elephants, ivory is the closest to our heart. We worked with USAID Wildlife Asia to put this video together. We determined that it wouldn't be branded so other hotels could use it, because the Minor Group—despite its size—is a small cog in the tourism industry. The Sukotol Hotels has picked it up and other brands are free to do so. It is still there, it is still relevant, and anybody who would like to put that video on their TVs, we would be very happy for them to do that.

Moving forward, we do have a role to play as the tourism industry within the larger law enforcement side of things. The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) has put together something called the Buenos Aires Declaration where members make commitments towards training their teams to spot the larger crimes, for example when they may have a smuggler in house, or when there may be some trading going on that is illegal. This is similar to what's being done in counter human trafficking, where there is an organization called The Code, to which Minor has signed up. Every single one of our hotel team members undergoes training every year to spot signs that a child may be in danger. The next step would be to develop something similar to that, working with WTTC, to give front desk employees or team members in housekeeping an idea when something illegal might be going on and what steps they can take to report that to their supervisors and local authorities. And in that

way, the travel and tourism industry can also be an ally to law enforcers and everybody else working hard out there to try and stop the trade. I think we can certainly help that in the same way that airlines and others are beginning to do.

Veronica Pedrosa: Justice Michael Wilson, what's your story of how you became a champion for an environmentally and wildlife friendly judiciary, and what are your views about how to expand the CWT movement in this branch of government?

Michael Wilson: I am sitting in Hawaii, which to many of our viewers is probably the vision of an ideal environment on Earth. The rule of law is often stated as the most powerful tool for peace and civilization, and the role of judges to apply the rule of law. Here you have the rule of law, with its power to do good, coming into contact with an emergency that is the greatest emergency that humanity has faced—climate change. Because Hawaii is drowning, because we have sea level rise as many of our brothers and sisters in the North and South Pacific have, it's become a very important focus.

Everybody can, with some greater or lesser effort depending on where they are in the world, use the rule of law, the most powerful tool available to humanity to protect the planet. Wildlife defenders are killed at the rate of three a week, and that is a challenge for the rule of law. Edwin Chota, a Peruvian environmental activist who was assassinated in 2014 along with three others, sought to use the rule of law to defend wildlife. When Edwin was murdered, he was trying to protect a plant that is a valuable natural carbon sink and is also sacred to his village in the Amazon: the mahogany tree. His wife Diana Rios Rengifo then decided she was going to defend the village, with the help of three brave practitioners of the rule of law: 1) Luis Tolosa, a Justice of the Supreme Court of Colombia who wrote an opinion about the power of the rule of law and gave the rights of a person to the Amazon ecosystem, with its animals and plants; 2) Ms. Margoth Quiseppe, Edwin's lawyer, a very powerful and brave woman who continues to represent his wife; and 3) Dr. Romero Estara, who has risked his life for years in Peru representing the villages, because he believes and knows that the rule of law can change the future.

Judges don't just have the obligation to find that the law is being violated. They have an obligation to take action to prevent damage and future injury, and to take care of the damage that is taking place. And if the case covers a large area like the Amazon, courts can have the power to implement a solution, such as ordering the government to take action.

There have been profound decisions made recently by courts around the world that are ordering the government to come up with plans to protect the environment. Those plans more and more will focus on those living things that absorb carbon and have meaning in human culture, including the iconic species that have been discussed by the very brave people who are in this audience who have devoted their lives to taking care of the animals and plants that are so important to moderating Earth's temperature and addressing the emergency of climate change.

I would encourage everybody to not forget the importance of believing in the judicial institutions and requiring those institutions to take the action—even unprecedented action—necessary to do things like protect the Mekong Delta, or protect Bangladesh, which is going to be flooded in about 40 years so 160 million people have to leave the country. These are opportunities that brave people like Edwin Chota, Mr Romero, and all the attorneys that are willing to put their life on the line take in order to try to protect the Earth.

Veronica Pedrosa: *Le Thi Thu Thuy has been a great influence in spreading conservation messaging, including corporate social responsibility (CSR) and wildlife protection, to thousands of business leaders over the years. Through her initiative, VCCI became a strategic partner of Chi initiative, of which the third phase was implemented through USAID Wildlife Asia. The VCCI Chi Initiative has successfully trained 50,000 entrepreneurs to incorporate wildlife protection in business practices in more than 60 provinces and conducted in-depth training activities for actors such as logistics, transportation, and tourism, which are critical links in the wildlife trade chain. Ms. Thuy, can you tell us more about why you're a champion for CWT?*

Le Thi Thu Thuy: I'm very proud to be an active champion of the Chi Initiative by TRAFFIC since 2014. The third phase of Chi was implemented under USAID Wildlife Asia. My commitment to fighting wildlife crime, protecting wildlife, reducing the amount of wildlife products, and promoting wildlife-friendly policy in business started in 2014. I have been a part of VCCI for more than 20 years now, and I'm very glad that I can help to expand CWT in the business sector.

VCCI is the national organization which represents the business community in Vietnam. The purpose of VCCI is to develop, protect, and support the business community to contribute to national social and economic development. And I believe that, to ensure sustainable growth, it is necessary for our companies to make a positive impact on the surrounding environment through CSR activities. The wildlife protection messages have been integrated into VCCI's training-of-trainers workshops and capacity building workshops for entrepreneurs, and VCCI's official communication channels and suitable events. We successfully delivered trainings in 60 out of 63 provinces of Vietnam, engaging more than 40,000 entrepreneurs in the past seven years. In-depth training on wildlife for actors such as logistics, transportation, handicraft, and tourism are organized. By pledging to combat wildlife crime, business not only have to protect wildlife, but also enhance their branding, attracting more customers, leading to a growth in profits.

To expand the CWT movement and maintain the change in the business sector, VCCI should build a network of businesses and champions in the field. A pioneer organization is needed to connect, coordinate, and engage members with CSR-focused activities, and to develop and distribute CSR tools for each and every business across all sectors and all scales. In addition, VCCI also rewards the top 100 companies for their actions towards sustainable development annually. It uses the corporate sustainability index for ranking and one of the criteria is wildlife protection.

Veronica Pedrosa: *Venerable Sompong, what further action can spiritual leaders like you do to convince people to not be such consumers of the power of wildlife parts and products to bring good luck and prevent harm?*

Ven. Sompong (edited translation from Thai): Monks like me can use our platform as preachers and teachers to influence people who believe that wildlife parts and products will protect them from harm. For example, today I am broadcasting this forum live on my Facebook account, and I will post it later on YouTube, and I expect it can persuade people that they shouldn't believe in the power of wildlife parts. We can use our platform to tell people with the wrong beliefs that killing wildlife and putting their parts around our necks is not going to protect us. And in fact, it is the Buddhist teaching on compassion that will protect us. So, please use spiritual leaders in your campaigns. I believe that we can help.

Also, I urge people who run these campaigns not to look at those people who used to have these wrong beliefs like they don't belong with us. We have to welcome them to be a part of our

campaign to take care of wildlife and natural resources, and not keep blaming them for their past behavior. We should try to turn enemies into friends and try to involve them in our campaigns.

Veronica Pedrosa: *Cindy, you're in a fantastic position to take that up and talk about what it's like being a celebrity with so many followers and with that kind of burden of responsibilities.*

Cindy Bishop: I can only speak for myself in terms of being an influencer. “Influencer” is quite a new word that came with social media. I started in entertainment as a model and actress before Facebook and Instagram, so I’ve really had to learn all the tricks of the trade or get left behind. I realize that it is now very much a part of my work. It is not enough to just to act in a movie. I then need to bring it into my other platforms like Instagram or YouTube, and so I think it's a whole 360-degree new way of working now for influencers.

But more than just being a public face, people look to you for inspiration. They really do follow people, not just for their projects, but because they want to know how they think. They want to mimic their way of life. They are inspired by who you are and what you represent. And so, for influencers and celebrities, you really need to be quite authentic with yourself and your followers about what you stand for. The choices that you actually make in your everyday life are so important. Don't wait around to be hired to do a promotional campaign. The choices that you make are important, whether it be very cliché things that you should be doing, such as using reusable straws, not using plastic bags, or recycling. Do you really do it? Don't forget that as soon as you step out of your house, you're probably going to be photographed and shared, so your followers are looking to mimic what you do. That is very powerful in and of itself.

And now there are so many tools at your disposal, whether it be doing a YouTube channel, or using Tik Tok, which is a new platform that is very exciting because you get to reach a whole new audience. How do you get creative in those messages? It doesn't have to be a very formal infographic with the pros and cons—people absorb information very differently now, so the challenge is how do you keep these being on the side of nature trendy and how do you make that accessible and relatable?

“Why would you want to sit above elephants when the experience of walking by just humbles you? There are so many other ways to experience these magnificent creatures without having to jump on their backs or force them to do silly tricks. We have to get away from this mindset that we have to dominate everything. I mean, we've done that, and the world is literally going to explode.”

Cindy Bishop
Supermodel and Actress



Personally, my family has made a pledge to never ride an elephant again, and at first it was a little bit tricky to explain that to our children. But this is what we have decided as a family and we talked about it with the children and said there are so many other ways to experience these magnificent creatures, without having to jump on their backs or forcing them to do silly tricks like painting or

football. You can walk with them in their natural environment, appreciate them for what they are: magnificent, yet extremely vulnerable. Or go rescue a turtle and release it into the wild. These are sustainable tourism activities that everyone can really just get behind. It's just a matter of educating the public and making it accessible. Why would you want to sit above an elephant when you can have the experience of literally walking with them? We have to get away from this mindset that we have to dominate everything. We've done that and the world is literally going to explode or be submerged under water. It's not sustainable.

Veronica Pedrosa: *John, wildlife-friendly tourism is offered by you guys but how can you make it so it's more affordable? Because Anantara's great but it's really expensive. A lot of people just turn up, and they don't have to pay very much to get on top of an elephant. They don't think about it.*

John Roberts: Without going down the long rabbit hole of how to look after Thailand's 3,800 elephants that are in captivity—and we have a model that works with us—to look after elephants in captivity isn't necessarily wildlife tourism. Our model is necessarily expensive because elephants are expensive to keep in a way that is nice for them. So what we do is to then take that money and use it elsewhere for wildlife protection and other projects. But that's not necessarily the only way, and it's actually very debatable whether elephants in captivity is in fact wildlife tourism. It's another gray area, without wanting to overstretch the gray pun.

There are places around Asia where people can go and get into the forest and actually directly protect wildlife, including elephants, by protecting ecosystems. One example is the Cardamom Tented Camp. It's also still quite high-end at US\$100 or so a night, but people can get into much more affordable options, and the money will pay to keep rangers on the 18,000 hectares of forest that we protect with the government. So, there are other options other than to stay at really posh hotels and spend money, and then rely on the hotelier to channel the money into doing good things. You can go to places where you can see it directly working.

Another example from Cambodia is Chi Phat, which is facilitated by Wildlife Alliance, and that's in the US\$25-50 a night range. There's Nam Nern National Park in Laos where you can go on a night safari. And in the Philippines, you've got Masungi Georeserve. There are places all over Asia where you can go and you don't have to stay in a fancy hotel. The accommodation is very good. It's nice to be in the jungle, and you can see your funds not only directly helping the rangers and enforcement guys, but also local communities. They're the people who are serving your breakfast, cooking your dinner, and cleaning your room. The vegetables you eat are grown locally, so it's a benefit for the local communities.

Veronica Pedrosa: *Ms. Thuy, what advice would you give to business leaders who might face challenges in getting commitment from their peers and business companies to be actively involved in combating illegal wildlife trade?*

Le Thi Thu Thuy: It is not always easy to convince colleagues, partners, and businesses to actively participate in CWT activities. We need to demonstrate the benefits. Once they are committed to CWT, it is good for their own reputation, enhancing their companies' profile and branding, and helping them to manage risk better and increase their profits. Especially in the COVID pandemic, it is necessary for enterprises to increase sales revenue and profit. The business sector's involvement in CWT also brings good impact to protect the endangered species and biodiversity. In addition, I think that sustainable development and applying CSR is a global trend now and actually generates better revenue for businesses.

Pledging is only the first step. It's not very difficult to sign the pledge, but following up is the most important. Businesses need to carry out follow-up actions to CWT such as developing wildlife-integrated CSR policies, which requires leaders' commitment and willingness to put into action. A coordinating organization like the VCCI and TRAFFIC needs to provide consistent support and guidance to the business community.

Veronica Pedrosa: *Justice Wilson, can you tell us more about how rule of law can protect wildlife? Is it just a stick, as it were, in the context of a carrot and the stick?*

Michael Wilson: To act through faith as Ven. Sompong does, and to act through social media as Ms. Bishop does, and to act through business as Ms. Thuy and Mr. Roberts do, is really essential. But, again, when you consider the power that's implicit in the rule of law, it is breathtaking. This is worth emphasizing because we don't have much time left. These values that support a stable, secure society are very much at risk and so there has to be the participation of citizens who care about the natural world at a macro level.

And you are given power. Everybody in this audience is given power in this age that we live in. We have a tendency to take it for granted, but if you bring a lawsuit that says that your community is being threatened, or the ecosystem upon which your village depends is being destroyed in violation of the law, then you get the power of the rule of law and that can make a big difference. For example, in the United States, a judge can stop the order of the President of the United States.

When you have massive threats to wildlife that are occurring quickly, this gives an opportunity to everybody in this audience right now to take action by bringing a claim. So, the rule of law is something that deserves thought because we still have it. It's likely in 40 or 50 years, when we have a breakdown of the kind of capitalist system and the sort of political systems we have now that are more oriented towards a rule of law, individual citizens may not have the same access to justice that they do now. But right now, it is still a robust thing and very healthy in many parts of the world, so this is what is worth emphasizing along with the other tools that we have like faith, social media, and business.

Veronica Pedrosa: *There's one thing that came to mind because I saw an article about the possibility of developing the crime of ecocide that could be heard in international courts, which I think is absolutely fascinating and would be very relevant to the situation that you described in the Amazon. And I think this is a way that the rule of law and the judiciary are making itself very relevant.*

Michael Wilson: To make the destruction of the environment a criminal offense is a really powerful use of the law. Those of you in the audience that are 40 years old or below, you face a coming existential threat that I don't face. If you're over 40 years, this collapse is 40 or 50 years away. So it's the children right now that could use a concept like ecocide that symbolizes what we're facing and why individual responsibility is important. There's also responsibility at a government level, and responsibility at a macro level that deals with the world economy. So, yes, ecocide is an extremely interesting concept that's helpful to younger generations in particular.

Veronica Pedrosa: *I would like to ask everybody what key message they would like to give to people to strengthen a multi-sector movement to counter wildlife trafficking.*

Ven. Sompong (edited translation from Thai): I strongly believe in everyone's potential because in the past we used to be the culprit ourselves, because we used to use a lot of animal parts. From this

moment on, we can attract people to help us prevent others from buying amulets from animal parts. We are part of the effort to stop wildlife trafficking, and in the future I hope we can say that we have made the world a much better place to live for people, wildlife, and nature. I hope that everything will get even better, thanks to our collaboration today. I am hopeful next time we talk, we will talk about success, although in reality, there's a long way to go. I give you my promise that I will try my best to counter wildlife trafficking. I will talk about this. I will be another voice to help realize our target, and keep on fighting for our wild animals.

Cindy Bishop: Just to reflect and echo Ven. Sompong, reflect on who you are and what your impact is. You don't have to wait to be invited to a big panel like this. You don't have to wait to be hired to do something. Really just reflect on what you can do in your everyday life at this moment. Especially if you are an influencer and a content creator, realize that you really do have the power to use your voice and platform on things that matter. Entertainment is great, but let's not shy away from more important messages.

Also, at the end of the day, please be authentic. Consumers are much savvier these days, so they get their information from a variety of sources. Practice what you preach, and in this case practice what you post. This is going to have to take a collaborative effort obviously. It's not just about influencers. It's a collaborative effort from the private sector to government, as well as—if I can inject a little bit of my gender equality advocacy—realizing that we need to also look at it through a gender lens. Too many times women are the most vulnerable group that are left out of making these decisions. Like Justice Wilson highlighted, there are some amazing women activists really working and risking their lives, and so hopefully we can bring a gender lens to this fight for conservation as well.

John Roberts: Don't get too bogged down in sector. Don't get too bogged down in what you do or what your career is. We can all be working together as this panel has proven. We're from different sectors and yet we're all working in the same direction, and the audience is multi-sector as well. So, don't get bogged down with labels. We can all do our bit, and we should all share information and work together to move forward, because our goal is ultimately the same. And don't forget local communities around the areas that we're trying to protect as well, because without them being part of the conversation, without them being protected and being part of the growth and the protection of the ecosystem, none of this is going to work.

Michael Wilson: The most important message from the point of view of a judge is that we do have the opportunity to go to court and make a really big difference. There are more and more organizations that are forming around the importance of protecting future generations. There are more and more organizations that are forming around protecting iconic animals and iconic ecosystems, in part because they're so important to protecting the environment. The access to the rule of law is there and I hope people will do their best to take advantage of it.

Le Thi Thu Thuy: Building and strengthening a multi-sector movement to highlight your business is necessary, because the work cannot be done if there are any missing pieces. Each sector has a role to play. For example, wildlife products such as reptile skins are used in the fashion industry so brands that choose sustainability can benefit wildlife conservation. The tourism sector can also play a role in wildlife conservation by pledging wildlife-friendly tour packages and sustainable hotel choices that can support community conservation and habitat restoration. No one knows an industry better than the businesses that make up that industry, and it's up to them to identify how best to support wildlife conservation and combat wildlife trafficking within their own industry.

Indeed, in an increasingly integrated business environment, each conservation and CSR plan needs to bridge sectoral gaps. There need to be regular activities in which champions from different sectors can exchange information, ideas, experiences, and resources to achieve maximum impact. One champion can play multiple roles to impact the network. For example, a leader of a tourism company can help them to connect with the tourism community. There may also be a group to bring out spiritual impact if they follow a specific religion. Only by working together and engaging business leaders from a variety of industries and across disciplines can we really achieve our goals.

SESSION 4 CHAT BOX COMMENTS

Nives Mattich	Celebrities and high-profile individuals are very busy and there are many important and worthy causes that compete for attention. How can we draw more high-profile champions to join the counter wildlife trafficking cause?
Nancy Gibson	Nives, I believe it's about finding what interests that influencer as well. You want someone who is passionate about the cause and they will find the time when they are moved by it.
Van - WWF Viet Nam	Miss Thuy, could you share how many business big sharks who are likely the buyers and users of ivory/rhino horn have you engaged and how to access and talk to them?

SESSION 5: ASEAN REGIONAL PRIORITIES FOR CWT

Advancing Regional Frameworks: How to influence and catalyze action at both the regional and national level

Moderator: Steve Galster, Chairman, Freeland

Objective	To support and advance partner country and ASEAN CWT leadership including coordinated partner support for the implementation of regional priorities and the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action.
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction and reintroduction to CWT stakeholder community of the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action for CITES and WE and Chiang Mai Ministerial Statement as existing sets of ASEAN Regional Priorities and Plans that could be advanced through coordinated support by CWT partners and stakeholders.• Discussion and suggestions by session discussants and speakers on how such policy frameworks can be coordinated and implemented effectively by regional organizations, member states and supporting development partners, which helps lay groundwork for addressing subsequent session objectives.

Steve Galster: This session will look at the current state of play of political commitments to CWT across the ASEAN region and the plans to implement these commitments, specifically commitments made at the ministerial level back in 2019 with the Chiang Mai Statement. We will be discussing the ministerial commitments, which is quite a remarkable achievement if you think about it. Ten countries at the ministerial level agreeing on what to do, and then asking their regional body to create an action plan. And then we're going to look at the status of that action plan and hearing from the ASEAN Secretariat. We will find out also to what extent non-environmental institutions are going to be involved. And finally, what help is needed going forward to progress this plan of action.

CHIANG MAI STATEMENT, SPECIAL ASEAN MINISTERIAL MEETING ON ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE

Klairoong Poonpon, Director of CITES Implementation and Monitoring, DNP, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Thailand

I would like to start my presentation by recalling the political commitments that were made in the past in order to counter wildlife trafficking:

- *ASEAN Ministerial Statement on CITES (2004).* On the occasion of 13th meeting of the conference of the party to CITES in Bangkok in 2004. This ministerial statement was made by the ASEAN ministers responsible for the implementation of CITES. It acknowledges the need to coordinate and strengthen law enforcement efforts for better implementation of CITES in the region, and to further promote regional cooperation through multilateral agreement to achieve more effective control of illegal international trade in wildlife and their products. This ministerial statement led to the establishment of the ASEAN wildlife enforcement network, or ASEAN WEN, in 2005.
- *Establishment of ASEAN WEN in 2005.* CITES at that time was not only concerned about the issue on illegal wildlife trade or international wildlife trade, but also recognized illegal wildlife as a serious transnational crime. And that's why the terms law enforcement, joint operation, regional cooperation, coordination, collaboration, and partnership were prioritized and became the important keywords for CWT.

- *London Conference on Illegal Wildlife Trade (October 11-12, 2018)*. The conference called for increasing law enforcement against poaching, reducing demand for wildlife products, and sustainable utilization of wildlife. That even brought together the global leaders, including the Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of Thailand, and there he declared the initiative of Thailand to host the ministerial meeting to support CWT in the region.

Thailand has the opportunity during the ASEAN Chairmanship to host a special ministerial meeting with ASEAN support. The Special ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Illegal Wildlife Trade was held in Chiang Mai, Thailand on March 21-22, 2019, where the ministers adopted the Chiang Mai Statement of the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for CITES and Wildlife Enforcement on the Illegal Wildlife Trade. This joint statement spelled out the ASEAN commitment in four areas: 1) Increased action-oriented global and regional wildlife trade policy; 2) law enforcement; 3) wildlife cybercrime; and 4) demand reduction.

On the global and regional wildlife trade policy, the statement recognized the important role of international agreements, in particular CITES, which stands at the intersection of conservation and sustainable use of wildlife, and committed to ensure the successful implementation of the Plan of Action for ASEAN Cooperation on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement for 2016-2020. It also noted the progress of SOMTC Working on Illegal Timber and Wildlife Trafficking towards better coordination of wildlife crime information sharing and investigation.

For demand reduction, apart from enhancing the communication, education, and public awareness, the statement also acknowledged that domestic wildlife markets need to be regulated and enforced thoroughly to prevent overexploitation and ensure the sustainable population of endangered species. It also recognized the importance and need for research to understand market drivers and specific species and products.

Under law enforcement, there were many issues but the statement mainly affirmed the commitment to strengthen regional actions to tackle the illicit financial flows associated with illegal wildlife trade in accordance with domestic laws and international agreements to combat corruption and money-laundering activities. It also highlighted enhancing related domestic legislation to deter wildlife offenses and ensuring continued efforts to combat wildlife trafficking in the region. The importance of continuous capacity building for better wildlife management and enforcement is also recognized.

On wildlife cybercrime, the statement acknowledged the contribution by governments in fighting against wildlife cybercrime in allocating enforcement resources to identify and prosecute wildlife cyber criminals, and for online marketplaces and social media platforms to join the Global Coalition to End Wildlife Trafficking Online.

The Chiang Mai Statement was translated into the Plan of Action (POA) for the ASEAN Cooperation on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement 2021-2025 through the consent of ASEAN member states during the 15th Meeting of the ASEAN Working Group on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement on April 2-4, 2019, and also endorsed by the 34th ASEAN Summit on June 23, 2019, which also encouraged the creation of an information document for the 18th Conference of Parties (COP) CITES in 2019 in Geneva to inspire other regions to do the same thing. We need to invest in political commitment, there is a high cost for that but it is crucial and could effectively create the operational plan and related actions to counter wildlife trafficking. The priority for the next step is to keep the momentum of political support.

Next steps:

- Keep momentum for political support. It is important for each country to develop their operational plan of action to ensure implementation at the ground level.
- Monitor and evaluate the implementation.
- Strengthen partnerships to support the achievement of goals.

I would like to thank the organizers for initiating this meeting, because it gives us and the ASEAN countries the opportunity to meet with partners and talk with them about what our priorities are, what is important for us in the region, and how you can support us.

"We need to invest in political commitment, there is a high cost for that but it is crucial and could effectively create the operational plan and related actions to counter wildlife trafficking. The priority for the next step is to keep the momentum of political support."

Klairoong Poonpon
Director CITES Implementation and Monitoring
Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation
Ministry of Natural Resources, Thailand



THE ASEAN REGIONAL PLAN OF ACTION ON CITES AND WILDLIFE ENFORCEMENT

Dian Sukmajaya, Senior Officer, Food, Agriculture and Forestry Division, Sectoral Development Directorate, ASEAN Secretariat

This is a good opportunity for the ASEAN Secretariat to introduce where we are in terms of cooperation, what has been done, what the member states need to do, and how the partnership can be strengthened. I would like to just briefly introduce the ASEAN POA on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement 2021-2025, and hopefully this will advance to operations and commit more stakeholders as already underlined in the previous session.

Going back to 2007, the ASEAN Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry issued a statement on strengthening forest law enforcement and governance, and the momentum increased with the issuance of the Chiang Mai Statement. The Wildlife Enforcement Cooperation started in 2005-2006, around 15 years ago, and was strengthened in 2018 with the establishment of the ASEAN Working Group on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement, which is mandated to provide policy recommendations, improve governance, and strengthen law enforcement in combating illegal wildlife trade. This cooperation has contributed to the vision of forestry cooperation in ASEAN, which is maintaining forest resources sustainably at the landscape level to meet the social, economic, and cultural needs of present and future generations and to contribute positively to sustainable development.

The POA itself contributed to the Strategic Plan of Action for ASEAN Cooperation in Forestry, in four main areas: 1) enhancing sustainable forest management; 2) enhancing trade facilitation, economic integration, and market access; 3) strengthening institutional frameworks and capacity building; and 4) ASEAN joint approaches.

ASEAN has produced several policies and guidance, and has already developed training materials with the support of the partners. In the past we received support from the ASEAN-USAID Forest Program and capacity building activities, and also the development of ASEAN Guidelines for Preventing and Detecting Wildlife Trafficking, as well as the new Handbook on Legal Cooperation to Combat Illegal Wildlife Trade.

Basically, there are three main areas under the POA: 1) strengthen policies, 2) exchange best practices and knowledge, and 3) promote awareness and capacity building (including joint approaches in international fora like the CITES-COP).

With regard to policy, the POA addresses:

1. Improving governance on wildlife enforcement through regional policy development as a pull factor for policy development at the national level.
2. Developing regional mechanisms to prevent wildlife trafficking in the region (one of the guidelines has been adopted by the ministers in 2019).
3. Developing strategies for forestry and wildlife management that take into account the need to prevent transmission of zoonotic diseases from wildlife to humans.
4. Promoting cooperation in ASEAN region to reduce trade in illegal wildlife products as underlined in the chairman statement.
5. Promoting dialogue on a single permitting system in terms of wildlife trade.
6. Conducting a feasibility study for a traceability system for trade in wild fauna and flora.
7. Developing mechanisms for data information exchange among ASEAN member states, which is very important and will be the focus of cooperation in the next five years.
8. Conducting a feasibility study to establish mechanisms to identify illegal wildlife trade online. This pertains to wildlife cybercrime.

Related to exchange of best practices and knowledge, ASEAN aims to:

1. Further developing engagement with private sectors in regional actions on demand reduction and encourage their involvement.
2. Developing a code of conduct for the private sector to comply with the rules and regulations on wildlife trade (e.g., in 2019, ASEAN developed a code of conduct for importation of timber from outside of the region).
3. Addressing the socioeconomic aspects to empower communities and improve livelihoods. Most of us agree that the communities living in, and adjacent to, the forests are quite important stakeholders whose livelihood needs should be addressed.
4. Developing an ASEAN approach and joint position on CITES and other international fora.

And, lastly, on capacity building, the ASEAN member states are still focused on the following areas:

1. Training, species identification, wildlife cybercrime detection and prevention, wildlife forensics, prosecution, and intelligence analysis among law enforcers.
2. Promoting awareness and legal literacy for local communities whose livelihoods still depend on the goods and services provided by forests.
3. Conducting a feasibility study on mechanism for identifying illegal wildlife cybercrime.

4. Developing an ASEAN approach on capacity building.
5. Promoting nature-based solutions in dealing with illegal wildlife trade (e.g., ecotourism and other potential activities to improve the livelihoods of people in the forest)

Priorities for 2021-2025 under the POA:

1. Developing a strategy for preventing zoonotic disease transmission from illegal wildlife trade. This has been agreed by the senior officials to be one of key deliverables in 2022, and we are exploring cooperation with USAID PROSPECT to develop the strategy. It is important also to engage other sectors like the health sector and other relevant actors to anticipate future pandemics.
2. Enhancing partnerships with various partners. The ASEAN Secretariat is initiating several discussions, not only with international organizations, but also with civil society organizations like WCS, WWF, and TRAFFIC. We have invited them to engage with the ASEAN Working Group Meeting.
3. Promoting nature-based solutions as part of the strategy to address illegal wildlife trade while also addressing socioeconomic aspects of wildlife trade, including the need to empower communities that depend on forest resources to improve their livelihoods.
4. Enhancing cooperation to address wildlife cybercrime.

We already have the modalities. We have a working group on CITES and also SOMTC Working Group on Wildlife and Timber. We have our clear mandate from the leaders. We have three commitments that address the need for ASEAN member states to focus on combating illegal wildlife trade, the most recent of which is the Chiang Mai Statement. We have a plan on Forest Law Enforcement and Governance and the ASEAN Guidelines on Detecting and Preventing Wildlife Trafficking, and we expect to have an ASEAN Handbook on Legal Cooperation to Combat Illegal Wildlife Trade adopted by the 43rd ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Forestry sometime in October.

Lastly, we need to develop partnerships with international organizations, private sector, and NGOs to implement the plan of action; ensure ownership of deliverables through intense dialogue among ASEAN member states and partners; enhance networking at the regional, national and the ground levels, with the inclusion of relevant agencies; develop effective communication mechanisms to facilitate exchange of data information necessary to combat illegal wildlife trade; and encourage ASEAN member states and partners to move together, working from the silo mode to more coherent action.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Panelists:

- *Dhannan Sunoto, Deputy Chief of Party, USAID PROSPECT*
- *Dr. Dindo Campilan, Regional Director for Asia and Hub Director for Oceania, IUCN*
- *Peter Collier, Chief of Party, USAID Wildlife Asia*
- *Ben Janse van Rensburg, Chief, Enforcement Support, CITES Secretariat*

Dhannan Sunoto: My interventions here would be taking from my experience working at the ASEAN Secretariat for almost 20 years, rather than from the PROSPECT Project. I think there is a need to actually address wildlife trafficking differently from the point of view of ASEAN. One is to really elevate the issue to the highest level in ASEAN—so far, it has been the concern of the

ministers, which is why there was a Special Ministers Meeting in Chiang Mai recently. But perhaps it needs to be elevated to the leaders themselves, because this problem of wildlife trafficking is really impacting not only the environment, but also economies and societies.

Perhaps ASEAN should pursue and produce a more formal instrument, if not a legal instrument, to garner greater commitment collectively from member states. ASEAN works now on many types of formal instruments, ranging from statements and joint statements to declarations and agreements, and even conventions and treaties.

The problem of wildlife trafficking here is as bad as trafficking in persons, or as bad as a lack of disaster management or emergency response. I have two examples of ASEAN agreements helping to support the development of national policies:

- Before the Asian tsunami in 2004, the ASEAN Secretariat started to talk about having a framework for disaster management and emergency response. While they were drafting this framework, the Asian tsunami happened in 2004, and within a year, ASEAN member states at the highest level signed the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management. Member states individually ratified that agreement into national law. With that type of agreement, which is binding, it triggered the national governments to look into their own national laws and create laws that are in line with the ASEAN Agreement.
- The other example that I'd like to just briefly inform you about is that ASEAN members have agreed to the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, especially women and children, which was signed in 2015 and ratified by individual member states. Because of that, many countries that did not have a law on trafficking in persons started to come up with their own laws in line with the Convention.

"With a greater commitment, particularly through a legally binding document, I think ASEAN would be able to actually invite and interest more of its partners to work together and implement what is in the regional plan of action."

Dhannan Sunoto
Deputy Chief of Party, USAID PROSPECT



I would very much like to urge this group to start persuading member states to think of coming up with a legally binding agreement on combating wildlife trafficking. Many of the policies that have been agreed to by member states cannot be implemented at the national level because there is no national law supporting those policies that were made at the ASEAN level. Without the national law, certain institutional arrangements and the entities required in the bureaucracy cannot be established, let alone allocated a budget and provided the funding need to support the implementation of those activities. But if a member state has a national law, which can be triggered at the ASEAN level through a legally binding agreement, then it will be able to justify having its own law on wildlife trafficking.

Those member states who don't already have wildlife laws can use the ASEAN agreement to start a law on it, and those who do can use the agreement to help strengthen their national regulations. With a greater commitment, particularly through a legally binding document, I think ASEAN would be able to actually invite and interest more of its partners to work together and implement what is in the regional plan of action.

Dindo Campilan: The term partnership needs some unpacking to understand how it can actually be operationalized. There are a few key questions we as supporting institutions and projects should be asking ourselves.

Do we create new partnerships, or do we enhance existing partnerships? What is the need in terms of new partnership platforms? What is the degree of formality or informality that we are expecting? WWF and IUCN are the proud parents of TRAFFIC. We thought at the time that it was an important strategic opportunity to establish a program and organization focused around CWT. We also play an important role in IUCN as the regional secretariat now in terms of Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants, which many of you are familiar with. And the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) is working in Thailand with DNP on illegal trade.

What is the action, and what is the outcome, that we expect out of this partnership? It should be the result that defines the design and the nature of the partnership platform. We hear about many other types of outcomes that are the basis for partnerships. It can include influencing policy, regulations, or setting standards; monitoring; and generating knowledge. This determines the actors that we need to bring into this partnership platform. So, I think it's important to clarify what kind of outcomes and actions we need, what actors need to be brought to the table, and then we talk about what kind of partnership platform do we need?

What is the nature and level of change that we are expecting? In regard to CWT, one of my previous lives was as a climate scientist, and we always talked about three decision points for policymakers to make when it comes to adaptation and mitigation, which is to cope, to adjust, and to transform. Cope is basically accepting the reality, and just living by it. Adjusting is introducing some form of component innovation. Then comes transformation of entire systems. What is it that we expect in CWT? Because again the nature of the partnership comes from the nature and level of change that we're expecting.

Transboundary cooperation is important. We have a similar experience in IUCN—the Meghna Knowledge Forum, which covers the Meghna River in South Asia between India and Bangladesh, provides a platform for dialogue when it comes to governance over a resource unit that transcends geopolitical boundaries. Are we talking about scoping, adjusting or transforming, or are we talking about also partnership that is within the country or across countries?

What is our strategic entry point? Because CWT is a very broad domain, I'm reminded about the UN Global Food Systems Summit, which is a very broad area and there are many players. I used to work in the area of sustainable diets, so we looked at food systems and determined that one of the key bottlenecks is around consumer and customer behavior. And that relates to CWT in the action plan—we don't have to take on the whole agenda. It might be a platform and a partnership around specific bottlenecks of shifting demand, or changing customer behavior.

What is the role of IUCN? We have three important roles we can offer to this partnership platform.

- *Convening as a union of organizations.* As the world's largest and oldest environmental organization, we have the power and the voice as a union of more than 90 state members and over 1,300 NGOs, civil society, and now indigenous people's organizations. In our recent Congress that finished two weeks ago, we had two resolutions related to CWT. One is tackling trade online, and one is on private sector engagement. Now these IUCN resolutions represent an instrument that the union brings to the Conference of Parties on biodiversity in Kunming, or on climate change in Glasgow.
- *Enabling, which is translated into resourcing.* Everything we do needs resources, and IUCN helps catalyze and mobilize resources. Our CEPF and our Building River Dialogue and Governance (BRIDGE) Program are examples of those re-granting and sub-granting mechanism. Our other enabling role as a science-based organization is really providing the tools or knowledge products. Whether it's our Red List, or our Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas, or nature-based solutions, these are the decision support tools that we can provide.
- *Access to our Commissions.* We have six commissions, one of which is the Species Survival Commission, which is supporting the work here. This is over 15,000 of the world's leading experts on particular themes.

It's also important to think beyond and outside CWT. Because these days, people are thinking COVID, or climate and conflict, and we need to be able to relate it to themes like nature-based recovery in relation to ecohealth, zoonotic diseases, and the solutions that come from nature and through utilizing the value of nature.

Peter Collier: I would like to build on what Pak Dhannan was emphasizing in terms of the need to escalate to the highest levels this issue and the need for a legal instrument, and also build on what Dr. Dindo was saying about really asking what it is we're expecting any legal body or coordination mechanism to provide for us and how.

For people's awareness, Points 6 and 7 in the Chiang Mai Statement are a call for strengthening cooperation and extensive collaboration at all levels with international organizations, private sector, academia, and civil society. Likewise, the POA 37 calls for establishment of a program and mechanism for strengthening and improving coordination with dialogue partners, including agencies and conservation organizations.

The reason why I mentioned that is because those actually are not small calls to action. Those are really big asks. There's a lot of coordination happening. Pak Dian and Klairoong, although they weren't in Session 4 with the champions and influencers, they are heroes of a different sort and the burden that they bear to coordinate so much is quite extraordinary. And I think the question is: What level of resources are we ready to commit to this? How important is this to us? Because coordination comes at a cost. To do it well and to be organized requires a high level of political commitment, resources, organization, and teams to achieve all these goals.

I recall in the sidelines of the ministerial meeting, Steve and I were discussing about the minister in his opening remarks speaking to the importance of ASEAN WEN as a regional platform and that has come to an end. There were questions about resources and who puts those forward—countries or donors? What is the mechanism to mobilize sustained resources at the levels necessary? I referenced when the U.S. proposed after World War I the League of Nations and how that failed,

because of the United States, in fact, and how we turned around again when we realized that we really needed this, and we developed the United Nations.

We talked at the beginning of this forum that we have additional resources and actors who are now aware of the magnitude of this problem and the consequences if we fail. So, maybe we need to look again: At what level do we unite ASEAN nations to end illegal wildlife trafficking, and what resources are we willing to put into it?

Ben Janse van Rensburg: The Chiang Mai Statement of the ASEAN ministers recognizes the negative economic, social and environmental impacts of unsustainable use and illegal wildlife trade, and this statement provides a strong mandate to address these issues. The regional action plan provides the roadmap on how to do it. But it's essential that these statements and regional action plans now translate into party-driven national plans that incorporate actions, timetables, targets, and requirements for funding. This is in line with what the regional plan of action asks, which is to develop such plans. Such national plans should be standardized and aligned to the extent that's possible to ensure that all the parties in the region work towards a common goal.

A good example of such plans, although it's quite specific to elephants and ivory and needs some adaptation, is the CITES National Ivory Action Plan, which is a plan in which each country commits to deliver certain activities along specified time frames and milestones. So, these national ivory action plans actually provide the framework at national level for parties and development partners to work together, to mobilize resources, and to achieve progress.

I really encourage you to consider this model as you move forward. My advice to you would be to always be ambitious, that's important. Think big, but also be realistic—that's equally important. Don't try to tackle everything at once. Be systematic in how you do it, and make sure you prioritize. Seek to identify those things that could have the biggest and most immediate impact, and then use that as the basis to expand your priorities over time.

Now, Paragraph 16 in the Chiang Mai Statement commits to enhance national legislation to strengthen law enforcement efforts and deter wildlife crime. Sound legislation is the basis for any action, and it's essential that this be pursued across all parties to ensure that wildlife crimes are treated as serious. It's also important to make sure that you consider and incorporate key elements with translating the regional plan of action into national plans.

The Chiang Mai Statement recognizes the important role of CITES, and it's essential that the decisions and the resolutions that come out of CITES processes are embedded in your national plans. Equally important is the need for evidence-based interventions. Donor investments, development partner activities, and the limited resources of our national agencies should be directed to target the gaps and address capacity building needs identified through comprehensive and systematic evidence-based assessments.

And there are tools and support available to us. A good example is the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC), with its Indicator Framework for Combating Wildlife and Forest Crime. I really encourage you to consider incorporating the use of such tools as you move forward. Furthermore, Activity 1.2.1, Sub-activity 4 in the plan of action requires developing an ASEAN reporting protocol on wildlife trafficking, with an appropriate coordination mechanism. Now, data collection and analysis to inform law enforcement responses is essential, and I encourage you when you implement this aspect of the plan to consider the CITES annual illegal trade reporting requirement. The CITES Annual Illegal Trade Report Database is currently being developed and will

be maintained by the UNEP World Conservation and Monitoring Center, and this will be an important tool to support you as you move forward.

SESSION 5 Q&A

Steve Galster: *I know that in your work, there is inter-agency cooperation, including non-environmental institutions. Can you comment on that?*

Ben Janse van Rensburg: This is really an issue that requires a response across the entire criminal justice chain. You need to work from the crimes into the courtrooms. You need to involve your wildlife authorities, your customs, your police, your judicial authority, and your judges and prosecutors. That's very essential and that's why we partnered, through ICCWC, with partners like Interpol, UNODC, the World Customs Organization, and the World Bank, in which each agency has a particular mandate to deal with specific issues. I think that's the strength of the partnership—it puts complementary mandates together. That's exactly what should be done at the national level also, which is to engage all these actors, put together their complementary mandates and expertise, and in that way, address the issue as a broad issue.

We should not try to do it as individual agencies or organizations. Collaboration is essential. And once you have the national collaboration structure in place, it's important to also expand that to regional and then global level so all of these things are like pieces of a puzzle that need to come together. And it's important at the end of the day to make sure when you engage people in certain issues that you engage the organization with the correct mandate to address that issue. Otherwise, it also poses challenges if the agencies that are engaged don't have the exact mandate. So, identify the issues, make sure the agencies that's best placed to deal with them are engaged, and make sure there's a platform for these different agencies to interact.

Steve Galster: *Can you confirm the regional action plan is a multi-agency, multi-sectoral approach?* [Ben nods to indicate yes.]

Dian Sukmajaya: On non-environmental institutions, actually the Working Group on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement includes customs and police, and together we provide capacity building to those institutions including judges and prosecutors. Working together is very important for us because wildlife trafficking is quite complex in nature.

Related to engaging the highest level of leadership and having a legally binding instrument, while ASEAN operates at different levels of government, I would agree that we need to maintain the commitment of our leaders as stated in the ASEAN Declaration on Environmental Sustainability, the ASEAN Ministerial Statement on Forest Law Enforcement and Governance, and the Chiang Mai Statement. We are working at different levels, while also trying to maintain momentum of the commitment at the national level in each member state to develop, for example, a protocol, which has a more binding force on member states. For example, the protocol for exchange of data, information, intelligence, and data sharing among ASEAN member states needs to be promoted in the coming years and hopefully that will provide good direction for the next planning cycle in 2025, when the current POA ends.

Regarding partnerships, there are many entry points for partnership. We are now working to strengthen cooperation with CSOs, using letters of intent, memorandums of understanding, and other instruments to finalize partnerships. We already receive support from and collaborate with USAID Wildlife Asia, PROSPECT, and IGNITE in developing the POA. In previous years, we only

hired a consultant to develop it, but we are now trying to engage partners to identify their priorities, and we discuss these with the ASEAN member states. I think this is a good way to enhance the partnerships. I would agree that we need to strengthen cooperation at different levels.

In terms of a wider enforcement network, we already have national law enforcement networks in 10 ASEAN member states with membership from different institutions, including non-environmental organizations. We need to support and promote this during the five-year implementation of the POA. And taking note of the intervention from CITES, we need to mainstream the POA at the national level.

We do have some monitoring during the annual meeting to gather updates from ASEAN member states on particular issues and activities under the POA. I also agree that we need to be realistic and prioritize. A five-year POA is not long term, so we need to identify priorities every year. I hope we can pursue this approach. In particular, ASEAN is encouraging support for ASEAN member states and partners to implement and operationalize the POA. For next year, one of our key deliverables is a strategy for preventing zoonotic disease transmission from wildlife trade, which requires the involvement of all actors, including the health, forestry, and other relevant sectors.

Klairoong Poonpon: In response to the panelists' comments, we have the Chiang Mai Statement, we have the political commitment, and a lot of policy guidelines; now what we need is resource mobilization. We need the resource, and we need the team. By team I mean not only the partnership providing financial and technical support to ASEAN but also the team working. We don't need only your technical support and money, but we need your collaboration as well. So, I think that is a change from the past to now and the future. This is the current emerging trend in the working relationship between the government sector and our partners.

As to the question about what kind and level of change are we looking for: We need more tangible action for the future, not just a national or regional team, but an actual operational team, a real task force. In terms of capacity building, I agree with what Steve said yesterday: Don't stop with training, but don't stop training. The training should focus on case-based capacity building, not only training like we did before. I agree with Ben that we need to be realistic, and if we don't have any resources today, we can use the existing resources and platforms that are provided by our partners, and to basically do what we can with what we have.

SESSION 6: AMPLIFYING ACTION IN COUNTER WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING – LEVERAGING REGIONAL AND NATIONAL EFFORTS THROUGH ASEAN INITIATIVES

Amplifying Action in Counter Wildlife Trafficking: How to leverage regional and national efforts through partnership

Moderator: Steve Galster, Chairman, Freeland

Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To provide an opportunity for the other ASEAN organizations to present on their CWT efforts and how those efforts are or can be aligned coordinated with the priorities presented in session 5
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• For the other ASEAN organizations to introduce to the CWT Stakeholder Community (CWT Development Partners, Donor and Stakeholders) of their CWT program/efforts• For the other ASEAN organizations to better align and coordinate their CWT efforts with the ASEAN priorities on CWT• For the ASEAN organizations (including AWG CITES and Wildlife Enforcement) to collaborate more effectively going forward• For the CWT Stakeholder Community to better support such alignment, coordination and collaboration.

Steve Galster: This session will focus on regional initiatives that can be leveraged to coordinate or help implement what the 10 ASEAN Member States have committed to in terms of CWT.

ROLE OF ASEANAPOL IN CWT

DAC Jim Wee, Executive Director, ASEANAPOL Secretariat

Wildlife trafficking or wildlife trading is not new. We've been assisting ASEAN in the last 40 years, but in the last decade the ASEANAPOL Secretariat was established and we are helping to coordinate programs for the ASEAN Chiefs of National Police. We have been working pretty hard to encourage countries to increase efforts in the crackdown of the wildlife crime, including initiating strategic collaborations and partnerships with nonprofit entities to find the best practices and approaches to combat wildlife crimes, not just those that originate in the region but elsewhere. While there has been a lot of discussion, strategies, and plans at the ministerial level, we don't necessarily see the progress that we want to see.

From the policing perspective in ASEANAPOL, we cover many areas of crime, so our focus depends on the countries concerned, the timing, and having the right people to run the program. We at ASEANAPOL want to focus on organized crime syndicates, and more often than not, wildlife trafficking and other crimes like illicit drug trafficking and trafficking in persons all involve transnational organized crime syndicates. These syndicates hop on the opportunity and take advantage of the terrain or the situation in the country, and then exploit the local people to get illegal gains from the trade.

Beginning last year, with the sudden eruption of the COVID-19 pandemic, we noticed that there has been more focus on wildlife trafficking because of the risk of zoonotic disease transmission and the ongoing discussion that COVID could have spread by zoonotic transmission. From the ASEANAPOL perspective, every year, we have a meeting where our member states put in the commitment to fight wildlife trafficking. We have a joint communiqué which states that we will continue the existing bilateral and multilateral cooperation among our ASEANAPOL member countries, including but not

limited to, conducting joint and coordinated investigations or operations in accordance with respective domestic laws in the fight against wildlife crime.

We also agreed to actively participate in various capacity building programs and training provided by the ASEANAPOL member countries, our dialogue partners, and observers to learn about experiences from experts at regional and international levels. We also participate in international and regional campaigns against wildlife crime in order to create more awareness among the public. Internally at the Secretariat level, we encourage the sharing of information on wildlife trafficking through our existing communication channels, whereby we can share information in a more secure manner with each other. And we also try to group the right people that are managing wildlife crime at the police level, so that we can share the correct information, and then we can get the action done properly.

Recently, we were lucky enough to get engaged with USAID Wildlife Asia. Having the right partners, the right spirit, the right camaraderie, we managed to put up a program on June 8-10, 2021, whereby we had USAID Wildlife Asia come in to share experiences through a virtual training. The Secretariat is trying to start with training for the correct group of people from the police that may be coordinating with other agencies. We know that fighting wildlife crime is not just a police issue. It also involves other parties within the country concerned. In some countries, they have a wildlife authority that takes the lead but the police participate as one of the partners.

We have succeeded in bringing together the 10 member countries' police that are involved in CWT with their partners in their own respective countries. From there we are trying to move toward a case study program that will look at past case studies and even develop new ones. And in the near future, we're looking at working closely with Freeland. Perhaps we can work out some more detailed training with groupings from the ASEANAPOL member countries that are tackling this wildlife crime issue. From there we move on to developing operational mechanisms to crack down on the organized crime syndicates behind wildlife trade.

Believe it or not, more organized crime syndicates have expanded their businesses during this time, and then perhaps they will move on to actually getting involved in legitimate businesses as their fronts, which will allow them to launder money from their crimes. So, we are working hard to work with partners. The relationships and networking among the strategic partners should be continued on a regular basis. Each partner should play a role in program implementation, e.g., police focusing on sharing information and networking on organized crime where possible. At the national level, continuous education of the people and improving the country's economy should continue. If possible, review the laws to enhance the system, making it more difficult for the organized crime syndicates to operate, e.g., implementation of anti-money laundering acts at the national level.

To wrap up, let me just say that crimes are always going to be here, whether they're domestic or transnational crime. We have been through COVID-19 and now most countries are moving into the endemic era. Crimes are just like COVID-19 in that they will remain there; they will never be wiped out. Most importantly, we the police, need to consistently work with counter wildlife trafficking partners to fight against wildlife crime so as to cripple the major transnational organized crime syndicates. We also need to evolve our traditional ways and thinking to fight against such organized crimes. We need to think outside the box and see what we can do besides following the normal protocol.

“Most importantly, we the police, need to consistently work with counter wildlife trafficking partners to fight against illicit wildlife crime so as to cripple the major transnational organized crime syndicates.”

Executive Director Jim Wee
ASEANAPOL



Being in the CWT committee, we need to be even more cohesive in our information sharing and program implementation. While we may not be able to stop the crime completely, at least we do our best to bring down the crime and stop the transnational organized crime syndicates. So, we want to tell people that we have this organization called ASEANAPOL and we have our own Secretariat that is open for discussion. If you do have any programs, or anything that you want to achieve with us, do contact us. The Secretariat looks forward to more opportunities to collaborate and work on any implementable projects that we could help so that we can work together to bring this threat down to the minimum and keep the region safe.

ROLE AND ENGAGEMENT OF THE ASEAN INTER-PARLIAMENTARIANS IN COMBATING WILDLIFE TRADE IN THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Nguyen Tuong Van, Secretary General, ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly

Southeast Asia is a global hotspot for wildlife crime and a regional transportation hub for protected wildlife and wildlife products. The borders through ASEAN suffer from uneven enforcement, loopholes, and weak penalties for violators of wildlife protection regulations. Over the past two decades, ASEAN has facilitated strategic responses to emerging non-traditional security threats in the region, including wildlife trafficking. In 2005 ASEAN created the ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network (ASEAN-WEN) to fight against biodiversity exploitation and trafficking of endangered wildlife species throughout the region. The ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) consists of parliamentary members from 10 countries in Southeast Asia and has played an instrumental role in familiarizing the people of Southeast Asia with the goals and priorities of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025. AIPA has reinforced the region’s commitment to combat cross-border crime and, significantly, has included trafficking of wildlife, putting it on par with other transnational crimes.

In 2012, the ASEAN parliamentarians passed a resolution to support the ASEAN-WEN National Task Force and the implementation of Asia’s Regional Response to Endangered Species Trafficking (ARREST). During the 34th AIPA General Assembly in 2013, the Legislative Council of Brunei formally hosted a meeting with ASEAN-WEN, USAID-funded programs, ARREST, and others. ASEAN-WEN emphasized their policy role in providing direct support to the National Task Force. In the process, Freeland, the implementing partner, called on AIPA leaders to discuss concrete partnership engagements, such as policy support to national parliaments, joint fundraising, and capacity building activities.

Together with governmental efforts supporting the harmonization of environmental laws to combat transnational crime and wildlife crimes, in 2015, the AIPA General Assembly approved a resolution

to strengthen law enforcement and regional cooperation in order to combat wildlife crime. Member parliaments have emphasized the importance of regulation reforms in order to stop wildlife trafficking and protect biodiversity in the region from extinction, as well as discuss national initiatives and possible common legislations.

In 2016, AIPA also held the 8th Caucus Meeting in Lao which aimed to determine areas where harmonization of laws is necessary in this region. The legislators discussed wildlife and CITES implementation. With the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, AIPA in coordination with stakeholders, including ASEAN, USAID, Freeland, International Conservation Caucus Foundation (ICCF), UNODC and other relevant agencies, conducted discussions to end the pandemic through legislative initiatives. This would create an original legislative framework to combat wildlife trafficking as the origin of the pandemic.

“We should continue to place wildlife crime onto the permanent agendas of ASEAN and AIPA and call upon AIPA MPs to review, upgrade their wildlife and criminal legislation to maximize the deterrence effect on wildlife trafficking.”

Nguyen Tuong Van
Secretary General
ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly



In the first week of 2021, AIPA co-organized a webinar with Freeland focusing on long-term solutions to combine human health, animal health, and ecosystem health. In May 2020, AIPA and Freeland also jointly organized a webinar on wildlife trade and the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic for AIPA staff. In 2020, AIPA co-hosted with ICCF a virtual briefing on the origins of COVID-19, preventing future pandemics, and the wildlife trade. The outcome of the briefing was that members of parliaments from across Southeast Asia were informed on the linkages between the wildlife issues, illegal trafficking, and the prevention of the next pandemic, and they are better prepared to continue tackling these challenges. This event was an important path to progress with the collective efforts of the international and regional law enforcement agencies. It also strengthened the legal framework to effectively address the problem.

From the perspective of AIPA, we'd like to offer the following recommendations:

1. Continue to place wildlife crime onto the permanent agendas of ASEAN and AIPA and call upon AIPA member parliaments to review, upgrade their wildlife and criminal legislation to maximize the deterrence effect on wildlife trafficking.
2. Call upon AIPA member parliaments to take appropriate measures to support law enforcement agencies by ensuring that financial and legal frameworks are in place to adequately support their work.
3. Encourage the creation of AIPA national parliamentary groups on CWT in member parliaments to provide oversight in the implementation of national strategies involving CWT.

4. Continue cooperation with CWT stakeholders. We highly appreciate and continue to establish and implement joint programs in coordination with stakeholders such as USAID, Freeland, ICCF, and other partners to form the AIPA platforms where members of parliament can share their country-specific results and good practices in CWT.
5. Strengthen cross-sectoral/pillar ASEAN coordination on CWT. Cross-sectoral and cross-pillar cooperation on wildlife trafficking is really important and should be encouraged among all the sectors and pillars within ASEAN.
6. Encourage roles of member parliaments on social media for public awareness raising on wildlife trafficking and links with the pandemic.

With the ASEAN Community Vision 2015 coming into effect in the next few years, the need for improving national laws and creating a proper regional legislative framework to combat wildlife crime is becoming increasingly urgent. There is much work to be done as CWT still faces a number of challenges, such as the lack of political will in some countries, corruption, the need to augment legislations to adopt new laws in wildlife conservation and management, and combating wildlife trafficking around the world, especially in Asia. We also see failures of law enforcement capability, so I think that the COVID-19 pandemic is a wakeup call. We need to be proactive by focusing on promoting and scaling up long-term and sustainable prevention solutions.

THE ACB'S PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES ON CWT

Dr. Theresa Mundita Lim, Executive Director, ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity

Of the known 24,889 species assessed in the ASEAN region, more than 9,000, or 37%, are found nowhere else in the world. The ASEAN region is also at the center of the East Asia/Australasia flyway, a route traversed by 50 million migratory water birds from 250 species populations, many of which are classified as globally threatened birds. The region is also a breeding and feeding ground for charismatic marine species and highly migratory wild fish. Unfortunately, because we have unique and diverse wildlife species, and are a haven for wildlife as they travel across the world, the region has also become vulnerable to wildlife trafficking.

The ASEAN Center for Biodiversity (ACB) was established by the 10 ASEAN Member States (AMS) in 2005 to respond to the challenges of biodiversity loss, including loss of species diversity. The ACB facilitates cooperation and is contributing to an integrated approach in support of the region's efforts to counter wildlife trafficking and align with the plan of action of the ASEAN Working Group on CITES-WE. These efforts include strengthening the science-policy interface, addressing demand through public awareness, and addressing supply, particularly at the source.

ACB, together with some of ASEAN's dialogue and development partners, supports the AMS in ensuring that protected areas are effectively managed, and that these wildlife habitats are conserved and protected. This support is channeled through various programs, particularly the ASEAN Heritage Parks (AHP) Program, one of our banner programs. The ACB conducts and facilitates training on wildlife monitoring and provides enforcement equipment to several AHPs and protected areas, based on country priorities under our Biodiversity Conservation and Management of Protected Areas in the ASEAN of the ACB and the European Union.

The ACB also supports strengthening community-based monitoring of illegal activities through active local community engagement to complement national level enforcement actions. The Center also promotes citizen science and provides opportunities for relevant academic research to be translated

into actionable areas on the ground. Our collaboration with experts and development organizations to improve the taxonomic capacities of local stakeholders in the AHPs has resulted in the development of field guides and the enhancement of existing databases. We hope that by strengthening mechanisms to protect natural ecosystems, we can help prevent wildlife from being taken out of their habitats and keep them off the market and out of the hands of vendors, thus reducing unnecessary close contact with the public.

As poverty and lack of opportunities drive communities to resort to illegal wildlife trade, providing socioeconomic support to communities through alternative livelihoods and capacity development programs is also crucial. Through the AHP Program at the ASEAN Heritage Parks, we work with communities to enhance livelihoods and reduce pressure on wild populations from poaching and human-wildlife conflicts.

In partnership with the German Development Bank, the ACB awards grants to local organizations to support initiatives that balance biodiversity conservation and sustainable livelihoods interventions, encouraging the active participation of the local population in the protection and management of the AHPs. We have also had successes in implementing a Biodiversity-Based Products project in partnership with the German government that supports villages around protected areas in developing new additional livelihoods from local biodiversity resources.

Efforts should also leverage raising awareness and changing behaviors and attitudes, including consumer groups, towards wildlife trade. The ACB has organized and supported the participation of AMS in regional virtual public sessions on the inter-linkages between zoonotic diseases and biodiversity conservation to broaden the discourse among AMS across sectors and engage a wider audience through the media. We also have the ASEAN Youth for Biodiversity Program that empowers young people to be our allies towards behavioral change. They themselves are consumers and influencers who can play a leading role in the fight against poaching and wildlife trade.

The ACB plays a unique role in facilitating transboundary collaboration and regional cooperation through the sharing of biodiversity information, knowledge, and good practices, including in protected areas that are under multiple jurisdictions but share ecological ranges of wildlife species. In pursuing its mandate, the ACB underscores the ASEAN priorities on cross-sectoral collaboration and multilateralism to effectively mainstream biodiversity in various decision-making processes, in line with the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework. This year, the ACB also launched the #WeAreASEANBiodiversity campaign to gather stories of dedication, hardships, and successes in protecting and conserving biodiversity. It is hoped that generating broader stakeholder support will also enhance our efforts to reach out across pillars and sectors in the ASEAN to achieve our common vision.¹

ASIAN JUDGES NETWORK ON ENVIRONMENT AND ITS WORK ON CWT

Biony Eales, Law and Policy Advisor, Asian Development Bank

Within ADB's law and policy reform program, we have worked with judges in Asia and the Pacific for a decade supporting them with the adjudication of environmental law and climate change disputes. We realized the critical nature of judges as development partners. So often, money is channeled into legal reform or work with enforcement agencies, as it should, but judges can be left

¹ Additional information available at:
http://chm.aseanbiodiversity.org/index.php?option=com_wrapper&view=wrapper&Itemid=378

out of the conversation and it's hard to uphold the rule of law without well-skilled judges. The role of judges in government is really as gatekeepers, sometimes even emergency managers for climate change and the environment. Without skillful judges, sometimes prosecutions fail or you get inadequate remedies and that's why we do the work that we do.

On the flip side, we actually also do work with environmental law trainers. Obviously, if there's no one there to seek enforcement of laws, then the whole system fails as well. So ADB has built a network of environmental law educators across Asia and the Pacific, and we frequently offer training-of-trainer programs to environmental law teachers, trainers, and practitioners.

Over the last four years, we spent four years studying climate law policy and litigation across Asia and the Pacific. We published the results of our research late last year in a four-part report series entitled [Climate Change Coming Soon to a Court Near You](#). A primary goal was sharing knowledge, so that practitioners and lawyers in complementary jurisdictions dealing with similar issues could see what legal frameworks were like in surrounding countries, but also how other judges deal with similar issues. While the reports do focus on climate law, we actually cover biodiversity conservation litigation. Protecting endemic species boosts ecosystem resilience, and that enhances adaptation action across Asia and the Pacific. Preventing the illegal trade of wildlife is also essential for biodiversity protection, so it's important for judges to see the whole picture.

In the next phase of our program over the next four years, we will continue to work very closely with judges in Asia and the Pacific to provide more in-depth and sustainable support to their judicial education programs. We will create tailored curricula and work with the national judicial academies, and also hopefully the regional body of the Council of ASEAN Chief Justices, so that we can embed an environmental and climate law curriculum within their training programs. An important part of that curriculum are modules on illegal trade of wildlife.

We know there are other development partners who have been specializing in building capacity on counter wildlife trafficking. Indeed, we have a team at ADB who work with environmental prosecutors, but we're hoping to collaborate with other development partners to learn about their experiences in working in these programs. It's important for us to understand what works and the judges' needs so that we can actually embed that in the judicial curriculum and give a broader perspective.

Another aspect of what we do is the creation of networks. Our team has worked on the Asian Judges Network on the Environment (AJNE), and we created this network to give environmental law judges a community of peers. They often get isolated and it's important to bring them together in regional events, which is what we do. To create relationships between them so that they can share ideas, we have law resources on the [AJNE website](#). Over the next phase of our program, we're hoping to ramp that up with more information about regional laws and jurisprudence.

We have also created a [dedicated website for environmental law champions](#) across Asia and the Pacific, and that provides access to online webinars and online training programs, which people are able to do as certificate courses through [ADB eLearn](#).

In summary, it is really important to keep judges in this conversation. They're the ones who see these matters in court, and that's why we are so passionate about the program. We are looking to collaborate with other partners. Our program is very broad and CWT is one element, so please allow us to learn from the wisdom of other development partners who have been doing this.

SESSION 6 Q&A

Steve Galster: *Is there a way to bridge the programs and structures that we've heard about today to realize some common goals? What are the barriers? What issues, if any, have you heard from the other speakers that you want to build on as a separate question or issue?*

Mundita Lim: The ASEAN has provided us with guidance from the ASEAN leaders and the different bodies. In recent years, and especially with the adoption of the ACRF, it's already promoting cross-sector and cross-pillar collaboration within ASEAN. It's not as easy as it sounds, because we're still just starting to do that, but the ASEAN Secretariat has been very supportive of this cross-sectoral collaboration. We are taking the approach of always anchoring on our leaders' statements on policies that are issued at the ministerial or the leadership level. I think the guidance is already there. What is important is how we will be able to operationalize it, which would really require us reaching out across the fence and across pillars.

Briony Eales: It's really important for judges to get a more holistic perspective. So, while it can be hard to get that collaboration, as Dr. Mundita mentioned, it can also be informal. When we do our training, it's important to have speakers from outside the judicial world who can explain some of the challenges so that other perspectives are given. Some judiciaries are really willing to be involved and would like to be consulted, because there are certainly things that they would like other agencies to understand about what they need to see when a matter is brought before court. Cross-fertilization of ideas and that interchange could be informal, as well as some that could be institutionalized.

Jim Wee: We already have a lot of CWT mechanisms and programs, some of which are managed by several authorities. From the policing perspective, we are looking at not just crippling illegal activities, but actually crippling the transnational crime syndicates behind these operations. While certain authorities may have stopped certain wildlife trading activities between countries, they need to look further than that and perhaps work with the local or national police in the countries concerned to identify the syndicates behind those activities and cripple them. In other words, cut illegal wildlife trade at its roots. The ASEANAPOL Secretariat is certainly open for discussion with everyone working in the CWT space.

SESSION 6 CHAT BOX COMMENTS

Hosur Veerabhadrappa Girisha	Ms. Briony, your team can collaborate with Wildlife Crime Control Bureau for understanding Indian judicial system and partner with judicial academies to sensitize Indian judiciary. Girisha, Joint Director, WCCB.
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SESSION 7: TOWARDS A POST-COVID WORLD – PIVOTS AND ACTIONS

Accelerating Change to End Illegal Wildlife Trafficking: What still needs to be done? What are the priorities? How do we leverage the moment and maintain momentum?

Moderator: Steve Glaster, Chairman, Freeland

Objectives	Part I – Regional and National Perspectives <ul style="list-style-type: none">To share personal accounts of five CWT champions representing different sectors of society (fashion/lifestyle, religious/faith-based, hotels/tourism, business, judiciary) on why they have committed to CWT to serve as an inspiration to othersTo share champions' views on what more can be done to mobilize support and expand the movement for change in their own sectorsTo present USAID Wildlife Asia campaign materials and brief campaign results Part II – “Hard Talk” Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none">To present and understand the different viewpoints on the current pandemic and how they can be used to catalyze and expedite efforts to end the illegal wildlife trade.Key points of agreement/ common ground identified to consolidate and guide CWT efforts moving forward.
Outcomes	Part I – Regional and National Perspectives <ul style="list-style-type: none">Increased understanding and appreciation of champions and their role in advancing the CWT movement for changeAwareness and appreciation of the role of champions in USAID Wildlife Asia campaigns and activities Part II – “Hard Talk” Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none">ASEAN and CWT Stakeholder Community hear different perspectives from conservationists and scientists on what is needed to accelerate changes to end IWTASEAN and CWT Stakeholder Community are better informed about covid and other zoonotic diseases and how this is linked to the wildlife trade and conservation efforts more generallyASEAN and CWT Stakeholder Community are better able to prioritize the development/ implementation of activities

Steve Galster: Today's sessions will bring in the donors and development partners in a dialogue with ASEAN and the countries to discuss the way forward. They will also try to tackle this question on what the CWT response to COVID-19 should be and the continuing risk of zoonotic disease causing a future pandemic.

PART I – REGIONAL AND NATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Moderator: Sallie Yang, USAID Wildlife Asia Policy Team Lead

Sallie Yang: *Part I of Session 7 addresses accelerating change to end illegal wildlife trade. What still needs to be done, what are our priorities, and how do we leverage the moment and maintain the momentum? Since COVID-19 was declared a pandemic in March 2020, it has continued to upend lives and disrupt livelihoods around the world. Given the scale and impact of the pandemic, ASEAN recognizes that addressing the crisis requires coordinated action, not only within the region but also with its partners. The ACRF serves as the consolidated exit strategy from the COVID-19 crisis. Overall, ASEAN's recovery efforts will focus on five growth strategies. So, what does the ACRF have to do with CWT?*

REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE (ASEAN FRAMING): ASEAN COMPREHENSIVE RECOVERY FRAMEWORK

Dian Sukmajaya, Senior Officer, ASEAN Secretariat

The ASEAN Secretariat would like to brief this forum about the ACRF and our experiences. The pandemic has brought about significant socioeconomic impacts, particularly to the food system and the forestry sector. Given the scale and impact of the pandemic, ASEAN recognizes that addressing the crisis requires coordinated and coherent actions, not only within the region, but also with its partners, even beyond the region. As a body, ASEAN also concurrently considers collective action and long-term socioeconomic recovery strategy, and we do expect that we could enhance our collaboration efforts in the near future.

There are several reports that say the pandemic has increased illicit wildlife online trading. This is because online transactions open the distribution chains of illegal wildlife, and it also increased domestic illegal wildlife trade. As a result, the challenge of coordinating operations in the AMS has become more significant, in particular when different agencies are involved.

The ACRF and its implementation plan were adopted by the 37th ASEAN Summit in November 2020. It consists of five broad strategies: 1) enhancing health systems, 2) strengthening human security, 3) maximizing the potential of inter-ASEAN markets and broader economic integration; 4) accelerating inclusive digital transformation; and 5) advancing toward a more sustainable and resilient future.

The forestry sector is part of the resilience strategy under the ACRF, and the ACRF has served as a concerted strategy for all the sectors in ASEAN to emerge more resilient and stronger from the COVID-19 crisis, giving consideration to the hardest hit sectors and the most vulnerable groups. For the forestry sector, there are several measures or initiatives that have been proposed as part of the resilience strategy under the ACRF:

1. Implement ASEAN Guidelines for Detecting and Preventing Wildlife Trafficking and its activities to, among others, promote awareness on the risk of zoonotic diseases being spread through the illegal wildlife trade. Our experience and also many studies show some connection between wildlife trade and the pandemic, and this is also an important area where ASEAN members need to work together with partners.
2. Formulate recommendations to minimize risk of zoonotic disease transmission from wildlife trade, and high-risk consumptive behavior and interaction with wildlife, especially associated with zoonotic diseases.
3. Address wildlife trafficking from different viewpoints of biodiversity conservation enhanced cross-sectoral coordination. We cannot stand alone to address this pandemic. We need to engage other sectors and actors, including the youth to highlight the importance of nature-based solutions to prevent future pandemics.

Lastly, some updates on ASEAN's progress and future activities to support the implementation of ACRF:

1. Webinar on the risks of zoonotic disease transmissions conducted in February this year.
2. Development of the ASEAN Handbook on Legal Operations to Combat Illegal Wildlife Trade, with the support of partners, including USAID Wildlife Asia, WWF, and World Organization for Animal Health (OIE).

3. Onboarding of new partners to support the implementation of policy development in the region.
4. Development in 2022 of a strategy under ACRF for preventing zoonotic diseases from wildlife trade, for adoption by the ASEAN Ministers. We are exploring collaboration with partners to support the development of this strategy, including partners from other sectors like OIE and civil society organizations that may be interested, because this strategy is cross-sectoral in nature.

PANDEMIC PREVENTION THROUGH A STRUCTURED APPROACH TO ONE HEALTH FRAMEWORKS: THE INTERDEPENDENCE OF ENVIRONMENT, WILDLIFE, AND HUMAN HEALTH

Dr. Mary Elizabeth (Betsy) Miranda, One Health Consultant, WWF Asia Pacific Counter-IWT Hub

The emergence of zoonosis has become an urgent global health and international concern. It is associated with risk-prone human-animal interactions, including contact in the wildlife value chain. Animals are the source of more than 70% of all emerging infectious diseases in humans, and the recent outbreaks and the current pandemic have resulted from spillover of pathogens from a wildlife reservoir. These include the current COVID pandemic by SARS-CoV-2, the original SARS outbreak of 2003, Ebola and Nipah viruses, and zoonotic avian and swine influenza.

The One Health approach is a multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary mechanism for coordination, communication, and collaboration to address national and global health threats at the human-animal-environment interface. There exists tripartite collaboration among FAO, OIE, and WHO, and now UNEP. It includes strategic and successful partnership in the implementation of international standards to effectively prepare for, detect, assess, and respond to emerging and endemic zoonotic diseases.

Zoonoses risk pathways are associated with demand for wildlife use and consumption, and in relation to biodiversity fragility, this amplifies the drivers for disease emergence, including food insecurity, food sourcing/supply activities in traditional live animal marketing, and attraction to benefits that the wildlife value chain offers. So, we need to understand and address these intersectoral drivers by investigating the interactions between the environment, animal, and human health dimensions.

Enhanced zoonotic disease prevention through One Health supports efforts on combating illegal wildlife trade. The ASEAN One Health Agenda includes the prevention of zoonotic disease drivers associated with unsafe and unsustainable wildlife use. Ecological security is one of the main objectives of the ASEAN One Health collaborations, which puts attention to insecurity or fragility of biodiversity and aims to achieve balance. The ASEAN and its member states are expanding, institutionalizing, and strengthening regional and country multi-sectoral One Health mechanisms, ensuring adequate inclusion of wildlife management stakeholders. One Health activities are being aligned to the Global Initiative on Preventing the Next Pandemic (PnP) and the Tripartite Guide to address zoonotic diseases.

Risk management frameworks in ASEAN focus on pre-empting, reducing, and managing risks of spillover of pathogens among domestic animals, wildlife, humans, and the ecosystem interface. These include the ACRF, ASEAN Strategic Framework for Public Health Emergencies, ASEAN Working Group on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement, Wildlife Health Management Framework–OIE Southeast Asia, ASEAN Health Cluster 2 Health Development Agenda “Responding to All Hazards and

Emerging Threats”, and the ASEAN Coordinating Center for Animal Health and Zoonoses (ACCAHZ).

The ASEAN Strategic Framework for Public Health Emergencies elaborates the current public health emergency arrangements and procedures for utilizing existing ASEAN and WHO mechanisms. Coordination, command, and action are carried out through the ASEAN Center for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases–ASEAN Emergency Operations Center, as part of ASEAN’s obligations under the International Health Regulations of 2005.

The ASEAN One Health Capacity Strengthening Strategic Framework includes the multi-sectoral One Health Coordination System; strategic planning and preparedness; surveillance, investigation, and response; risk communication and advocacy; risk and impact assessment and mitigation; and institutional legal framework.

The roadmap for One Health Collaboration in CWT has the following objectives:

1. ASEAN to strengthen cross-sectoral collaborations through the ASEAN Coordinating Council Working Group on Public Health Emergencies to ensure the integration of non-health sectors in public health emergency strategies directed at the underlying social, economic, environmental, and political determinants of health.
2. One Health multi-sectoral participation to expand to include representatives from industries that are implicated in causing ecological disruption and driving food insecurity and reliance on wildlife trade.
3. Countries to strengthen law enforcement that will prevent proliferation of illegal wildlife trade and promote sustainable wildlife use and management.
4. Quantifiable targets set on reduction of deforestation, ecological degradation, and achieving full ban on wildlife trade.
5. Taking stock of and enhancing public awareness campaigns organized by AMS.
6. Poverty reduction and safeguards on livelihood security within local communities to divert them away from illegal wildlife trade.
7. Understanding the relationship of local wildlife consumption to international wildlife consumption and trade demand, and the motivations to engage in hunting and trading.

COUNTRY PERSPECTIVES: WHAT CHANGES RELATED TO CWT HAVE COUNTRIES MADE IN RESPONSE TO COVID?

Malaysia

Kamarul Ikram Abdul Halim, Principal Assistant Secretary, Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources

COVID-19 has affected our activities since last year when the government announced movement control several times in Malaysia due to the increasing number of cases. In May 2020 the government launched the National Task Force/Ops Benteng to control our border in response to the pandemic, but at the same time, helped to detect and prevent wildlife trafficking in Malaysia. It aims to further strengthen the nation’s borders (land, sea and air) to prevent imported COVID-19 cases, but was also used monitor the illegal wildlife trade, especially those happening near the border area. This National Task Force involved the armed forces, police, maritime enforcement agency, and border control authorities, including the Department of Wildlife and Natural Parks under the Ops Bersepadu Khazanah. So, in total, for this Ops, there were 19 agencies involved.

Since the launch of the operations until September this year, there were a total of more than 15,000 illegal immigrants, more than 1,000 boat skippers, and 781 smugglers arrested by the National Task Force under this Ops. And furthermore, more than 2,000 land vehicles and more than 500 ships and boats were also seized.

Looking at the wildlife side, the operations recorded quite a number of successful arrests. The most trafficked species were songbirds, the white-rumped shama and oriental magpie robin. The operations not only successfully seized the trafficked wildlife, but also netted the suspects, especially in the southern area of Peninsular Malaysia.

Positive results from the operations include:

1. The National Task Force, which initially aimed to contain COVID-19 by strengthening borders, resulted in stronger cooperation and awareness among enforcement agencies on the issue of wildlife trafficking. So, we have started to gain much stronger buy-in or cooperation from important enforcement agencies, such as the armed forces, police, Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency, and Malaysia Border Security Agency.
2. Significant increases in successful operations, seizures, and detention of suspects.

The operations have also been quite successful in the region of Borneo (Sabah and Sarawak), where the strengthening of border control has helped the country especially in the case of smuggling of turtle eggs and illegal activities happening, including online, in Sarawak.

Singapore

Presentation by Anna Wong, Director, Wildlife Trade National Parks Board

Illegal trade in wildlife continues, and there is an increasing trend. The supply doesn't stop, and the demand doesn't stop. What we have seen is that a lot of transactions are being done online. It can be through third-party platforms, chat groups like Telegram, and also directly from the website of the shop itself from other countries. And it's so easy to do. It's just a click of a button, and the item gets sent to you. We have seen merchandise being sent over to Singapore via postal parcels—it's really surprising how e-commerce can be conducted. Difficulties with livelihoods, especially in the source countries, have people turning to poaching and smuggling.

CWT requires comprehensive enforcement measures and international cooperation. Singapore has stepped up inspections and strict border controls for cargoes and individuals that are coming through the checkpoints. Apart from land and air checkpoints, we have also stepped up Coast Guard patrols at our water borders.

These are some of the seizures we've made since COVID-19 happened:

1. January 2020 – One of the first cases we detected was at the airport, where a South African was transiting to Vietnam through Singapore, and he was found with 11 pieces of rhino horns weighing 22 kg.
2. June 9, 2020 – Three postal parcels were found to contain elephant ivory accessories, which were actually bought online via Facebook from Vietnam.
3. July 13, 2020 – This is another case of air parcels containing elephant ivory accessories being detected because we do 100% X-ray screening of postal parcels coming through to Singapore.

4. July 22, 2020 – A truck was allowed to come through Singapore because it was delivering essential items (e.g., toilet paper) from Malaysia into Singapore, but during routine screening, police found seven leopard tortoises hidden behind the passenger seats.
5. January 2021 – During a regular patrol, the Police Coast Guard seized 129 lovebirds, 58 canaries, nine cockatiels, and two turkey birds in four boxes that were thrown into the sea during a chase. No smugglers were captured, but information about the seizure has been shared through INTERPOL, and with relevant countries.
6. 28 January 2021 – Following a tip-off, Singapore intercepted an air parcel which was in transit from Africa to Vietnam. The rhino horn was hidden inside a Buddha statue and wrapped in carbon and aluminum foil to avoid detection.
7. July 2021 – Shipment from France to Singapore and transiting in China was found to contain an ivory vase.

We enhanced our measures in a few ways:

- *Deploying canine units at our border checkpoints.* They are trained to detect wildlife products, such as elephant ivory and rhino horn. They are also deployed at our airport to check passenger baggage.
- *Monitoring online sales.* We see a lot of local sales and possession of exotic wildlife. We monitor these online sales, which happen mostly in closed group chats. The transactions involve different types of animals, including highly venomous ones.
- *Conducting public awareness campaigns online.* Because of COVID, we are not allowed to have huge gatherings, so a lot of our events, such as our public ivory crash in August 2020, was done online. We also use webinars and roadshows.
- *Engage with e-commerce platforms and logistics companies.* We work with them to create awareness about online sales and what part they can play to combat illegal wildlife trade.

In addition, the Centre for Wildlife Forensics opened this year in August. The Centre has the capability to identify and analyze specimens involved in illegal wildlife trade using different methods, e.g., physical (morphological) and molecular. We would like to extend this capability to countries in the region and elsewhere. We welcome collaboration and also provide assistance.

Thailand

Presentation by Dr. Klairoong Poonpon, Director CITES Implementation and Monitoring, Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Conservation, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

Zoonotic disease is not a new issue for us because we have had to cope with it for a long time. Thailand adopted the One Health approach in 2005 after we were hit by the avian influenza in 2004. We formulated the National Strategic Plan for Emerging Infectious Diseases to drive cooperation on health issues, including wildlife-related zoonotic diseases. Since then, we have regularly conducted surveillance of confiscated live specimens to diagnose disease in wildlife, such as infection of coronavirus in primates. We also focused on disease investigation in cases of discovery of abnormal pathogenicity in captive wildlife or imported animals. We have also collaborated with academic institutions to study and monitor viruses in bat species and migratory birds for more than 10 years.

For the time being, the pet and wildlife market a risk area for transmission of zoonotic disease, so we launched random checks for disease in animals in Chatuchak Market in Bangkok in early 2020.

We did this twice last year, and those inspections showed that no wildlife pathogen that could cause contagious disease or COVID-19 was found there. However, to effectively prevent future pandemics, we conducted four research projects to further investigate coronavirus and zoonotic diseases in four animal groups: bats, birds in the wild, live confiscated specimens, and selected exotic pets. The results of this research are expected to be used for initiating guidance-based practice for zoonotic disease prevention and control, and for formulating wildlife and market management.

Our statistics show that travel restrictions and lockdowns due to the pandemic, including the temporary closure of many markets and free trade zones at the borders, seem to have helped prevent the movement of large shipments of wild animals to their destinations. The number of seizures made between 2020 and 2021 decreased by about 30% for both domestic and international cases. We also found that the smuggling method was changed from formerly hiding live animals of high value species or products, such as baby tigers or rhino horns in hand luggage, to smuggling small animals such as insects and reptiles via postal parcels. In response, we started collaborating more with the transportation sector for more effective inspections of illegal shipments. We hear from some legal traders that their business is going well during the crisis because of lower competition due to the decrease in illicit trade.

We can never know what will happen in the near future when the pandemic is over. The best thing to do is to get ready for an upsurge in commercial-scale wildlife trafficking when the country is fully open. There are three points of action that we would propose:

1. Pay more attention to animal market management, and implement more management measures to ensure that markets are disease-free, along with monitoring and surveillance of zoonotic disease in animals, including animals from international trade.
2. Strengthen cybercrime investigation along with surveillance of wildlife trafficking through airports and borders.
3. Reduce demand for wildlife and their products by encouraging people to learn from the lessons that COVID-19 has taught us.

PART II - “HARD TALK” DISCUSSION

Showcasing the diverse perspectives on what’s needed to move forward

Moderator: Dararat Weerapong, Senior Project Manager, TRAFFIC

PANEL DISCUSSION

Panelists:

- *Dr. Amanda Fine, Health Program Associate Director, Asia, Wildlife Conservation Society*
- *Dr. Daniel Schar, Senior Regional Emerging Infectious Diseases Advisor*
- *Steve Galster, Chairman, Freeland*
- *Natalie Phaholyothin, CEO, WWF Thailand*
- *James Compton, USAID Wildlife TRAPS Project Leader, TRAFFIC*

Dararat Weerapong: While the impact of COVID-19 has been devastating in all spheres all over the world, it also represents a golden opportunity to unite and rethink our relationship with nature and drive us to take immediate action to prevent future pandemics and safeguard our environment, wild animals, and the well-being of people across the planet.

Today's panel will discuss what's needed to move this pathway forward. Amanda, is banning wildlife trade the answer in preventing future pandemics or is it more complicated than that?

Amanda Fine: When we think about infectious diseases, we have to talk about contact rates because that is how those infectious agents move between person to person or between animal to human in the case of zoonotic diseases. To prevent future pandemics, it is going to be critical that we reverse the current trends of really ever-increasing contact between wildlife and people. And this is driven by habitat encroachment, but also the wildlife trade that we've been discussing across these three days. The wildlife that are the natural reservoirs for many of these infectious agents that have pandemic potential are in natural areas. The wildlife trade, in essence, takes them out of those natural areas and places them into human-dominated landscapes where we also have our domestic animals and dense populations of people, providing that opportunity for those pathogens to move across species, from wildlife to domestic, and from wildlife to human, and create those spillover events that we understand very much contribute to the emergence of a new pathogen.

Bans definitely have a role to play in our global efforts to reduce those spillover events and the emergence of a virus with pandemic potential. When you talk about bans, you have to look at jurisdiction, who has the authority, and where those mandates can be put in place. But I definitely think it's where we need to be looking, and I was very encouraged by the presentations from ASEAN and then the countries represented, where steps are being taken to both raise the awareness of the need to crack down on illegal wildlife trade, but also to assess the legal trade as well, to put in place a ban, ultimately, that reduces in volume and scope the trade in wildlife globally.

James Compton: In many contexts, including the CITES context, when we talk about "wildlife trade" that includes flora as well as fauna, terrestrial as well as marine and freshwater species. So it's fair to say that in terms of disease risk management, we're focused on terrestrial wild animals mostly, and a subset of taxonomic groups that may be more high-risk than others. For example, mammals and birds are more likely to carry diseases than reptiles and fish. There are many different ways to attack the problem, and one example from the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management, which includes the secretariats of CITES, Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), and others like FAO, OIE, and IUCN have tried to look at the fact that blanket bans at a global level may not be able to address the underlying causes like habitat destruction, land conversion, or biodiversity loss overall.

One of the principles that the CWT partners recommended was to focus clearly on the regulation, management, and monitoring of wild animal harvest, use, and trade to ensure that it's safe from disease risk, as well as the criteria of being sustainable and legal. In terms of bans, perhaps we need to be aware of the context that it may be more effective at a national or subnational level to control specific aspects of risky trade in wild animals. The interim guidance from WHO in April this year on Reducing Health Risks Focused on Mammal Species in Traditional Food Markets recommended suspension of trade as an emergency measure unless demonstrable effectiveness of regulations and adequate risk assessment are in place. That gives a clear guidance about what some of the minimum conditions are in order to allow any safe trade to take place.

In conclusion, I think that effective responses and mitigation measures to the zoonotic disease risk will really depend on multi-track interventions: the policy and regulatory changes, the law enforcement and compliance checks, and remembering that this is really about managing human behavior and shifting behavior away from high-risk practices. Unless those underlying factors are addressed, long-term reform may not be possible.

Dararat Weerapong: Dr. Schar, as a scientist, what is the research and science showing in terms of the best way to prevent the emergence and spread of a disease such as COVID-19?

Daniel Schar: Obviously, we can see the pace of zoonotic disease emergences intensifying, and we just have to look at the last 20 years. A number of those viruses that spilled over in the last 20 years or so circulate primarily in natural reservoirs largely in wildlife species. We know that because when we go out and sample those animals, we can find those viruses, and when we look at people that are at high risk for exposure—people that work in the wildlife trade, or those that harvest bat guano—we find evidence of spillover in those populations.

In fact, our surveillance systems are probably only picking up a very small percentage of spillover events. We know that this is largely a function of human activity, of land use change, of agricultural intensification, and how we produce our food. We go in and build roads. We disrupt landscapes. We extract wildlife, and we market them with domestic animals in live animal markets. We present those conditions that favor spillover events and disease emergence.

We have to shift the paradigm. It's really important to recognize that we are presenting those conditions that allow for diseases to spill over, and therefore we have the power to dial them back and reverse engineer those drivers of spillover events. And I think that's a very empowering prospect because, really, the control is within our hands.

What does that mean? If we're really serious about ending epidemics and pandemics, first we've got to ask ourselves, "How can we live within planetary resource bounds? Can we sustain existing economic growth without disrupting natural landscapes in an aggressive way? How do we produce our food?" And importantly for this forum is committing to end commercial trade in wildlife.

Dararat Weerapong: Based on what you described, in your opinion, what would be the immediate steps that the countries in the region take in order to prevent zoonotic disease spread like COVID-19?

Daniel Schar: Broadly, when we look at the spillover events, there are two ways that we can fashion prevention: 1) avoid those spillover events at their source, and 2) recognize that not all spillover events can be avoided. It requires early detection, early containment, and taking the opportunity to identify the earliest stage at the source of these viruses, before they can spark epidemics and pandemics. And so, we're looking more upstream at preventing spillover risk.

There are several tangible things that can be done, including reducing risk associated with human behavior. Part of that also is how we produce food. Can we reorient our food production systems to be lower risk and lower impact? Looking at emerging disease risk assessments on any land use change projects or activities that are being planned is another tangible way to really look at emerging disease risk. If we look at that second category of early detection and early containment, I think that's largely a need for additional surveillance and disease intelligence that will help direct our understanding of where the spillover events are happening, which populations are at the most significant risk, or which spillover pathways are most critical. That can often be dependent on the country, and even sub-national, level. And of course, having foundational health systems that are strong, robust, and connected on disease intelligence is also really critical.

There's a really underappreciated, and often overlooked, economic dimension to these events. There is right now a very compelling business case—there always has been really, but it has often been overlooked for investments in preparedness, in prevention, and in response capacities. Even

before COVID-19, there was modeling that showed that the cost of a moderately severe influenza pandemic was in the order of US\$570 billion a year, and we see these events with regularity. The IMF indicates that last year alone, the impact of COVID-19 on global GDP on average was approximately 3.5%, or upwards of US\$3 trillion. And we know that when we invest in this space, we can get some financial returns on investment.

I think it's natural human tendency not to put resources where we don't see an immediate threat, and we fall into this cycle of panic and neglect associated with pandemics and epidemics. I think it's really time we recognize that these are immediate threats, they're very real threats, their impact is often much larger than other contemporary threats when we analyze them, and if we do nothing, we will continue to see more of these events in the coming decades.

But there's a silver lining to that: If we really work to protect our natural resources to ensure the resiliency and health of ecosystems, to strengthen foundational public health globally, and to invest in disease intelligence and surveillance, that pays dividends not just for pandemic prevention but really broadly in a much wider way across sectors.

Steve Galster: The EndPandemics Campaign alliance that I co-chair was formed shortly after the breakout, and we've now got 80 partners. We are often asked the question, "Why have people not learned from past mistakes as we look forward?" I think there are three main reasons:

1. *Language.* This issue has really been dominated by scientists and to some degree politicians, so the public and even other policymakers are confronted with a lot of technical jargon and sometimes political mudslinging. That really confuses people or diverts our attention away from creating a consensus that would lead to a logical solution, which is prevention based on nature-based solutions. So, the lesson learned there is that health and environmental experts need help from public communication experts because we're speaking to a broader audience.
2. *Urgency fades once the health threat is past.* We've learned from social and behavior change communications campaigns in the past that health threats don't last. We've seen this over and over with HIV, MERS, bird flu, Ebola, etc. As our associate alliance Preventing Pandemics put it a couple of weeks ago when we did an event with the Vatican, a lot of people still think we can vaccinate our way out of zoonotic outbreaks, but clearly, we can't.
3. *Money.* The inconvenient truth here is that legal trade probably poses the biggest threat here. It masks illegal trade, and it masks viruses, because viruses don't discriminate between illegal and legal animals. So, a solid prevention precautionary approach logically dictates that, at the very least, we should be banning commercial trade in wild animals, because that is the safest thing to do. But this trade makes a lot of money for some people, and banning commercial trade in wild animals harms poor people. We need to make clear that a ban would not impact subsistence hunting. They're completely different things.

Dararat Weerapong: *Natalie, many agree that this pandemic represents an opportunity to raise the issue of illegal wildlife trade and catalyze actions to bring an end to wildlife trafficking. Do you think we're too late for that?*

Natalie Phaholyothin: I'm an eternal optimist. Working in this sector, we have to be optimists to have energy to keep going, so I would say it's never too late to act. I think COVID-19 has created a window of opportunity for raising public awareness because it has become a pandemic. Ironically, the window is also short, if we want to act, react, and get public support. The good news is, it appears that there's now more public support to end wildlife trade and trafficking. And why is it

noteworthy? Because politicians react when there is public buy in, when the public says they want something.

We gained this insight because WWF has commissioned a public awareness survey. According to our [2021 COVID survey by GlobeScan](#), in Thailand, 75% of people believe closing high-risk wildlife markets would be effective in preventing pandemics in the future, and 84% of Thais surveyed are likely to support government efforts to close these markets. Those are both high numbers, which is good news for our colleague Dr. Klairoong in DNP, and for her efforts to continue their excellent work in this area. The survey was done across five countries: China, Thailand, Myanmar, Vietnam, and the U.S. In these countries, four out of five people surveyed actually supported government action to tackle the causes of pandemics, which are wildlife trade, both legal and illegal. So, if we look at what's happening in governments in Asia, Vietnam has their Directive 29, while Thailand has always tried to step up efforts with their One Health Approach.

As an eternal optimist, I would say let's not lose track of the momentum that's already taking place. Preventive action is the most cost-effective thing to do, and let's not forget that one of the preventive actions should be to look at the root cause, which is the interfacing between nature and human activity. The disruption of nature at this point in time is occurring at unprecedented speed and unprecedented scale, and if we don't address the root cause, we are going to push that tipping point faster than we think. The worst-case scenario of living through COVID-19 is that we as a collective whole have not learned anything from COVID-19. If we forget about it because diseases come and go, and it becomes business as usual, we would totally lose that opportunity.

James Compton: Definitely, this One Health imperative can bring more attention to the wider damage done by illegal wildlife trade or wildlife trafficking. We should definitely welcome this political will and capitalize on it by encouraging governments to prioritize resources. As you noted, it's already helped to shift public opinion in some countries and that links to drivers of wildlife trade use and consumption. Even some work done by the GEF-funded project in Thailand specific to wildlife meat consumption saw some very important insights into how these perceptions and motivations of potential users and consumers are changing post-COVID. It gives us some insight into what levers to pull in terms of behavioral messaging and supporting government regulatory efforts. But in the end, I think it will come down to that's resourcing, and that's human resourcing and technical abilities as well as the finances from government budgets at the national level. And this national government resourcing will depend on that political will.

Much of the illegal side of wildlife trade and particularly with wild animals inherently involves high-risk practices that can contribute to the conditions of disease transmission. This could be an incredibly valuable point of persuasion in making illegal wildlife trade a priority, and law enforcement a political priority. This investment will also help us prepare for what may be a surge of trade in all kinds, including wildlife, once human movement and transport networks start recovering from restrictions during the COVID pandemic and this general economic downturn.

Dararat Weerapong: *Some countries in the region have taken action to prevent future outbreaks of zoonotic disease by banning wildlife farming and the legal trade in the species. Is this the way forward and a potential model for others to follow?*

Amanda Fine: Absolutely, and I think we should definitely mention what has happened in China, because it has been very significant in terms of the reform of its legal regulation of the wildlife trade. Specifically at the very highest levels of government, a standing committee of the National People's Congress made a decision in February of 2020 to prohibit the raising of terrestrial wild animals, the

trading of those animals, and their consumption as food those wildlife species. That decision came from the top but from the very beginning, multiple authorities were involved in putting that declaration into implementation. It has resulted in the establishment of a new biosecurity law, but also revision of laws on animal epidemic prevention, including wildlife.

Also, the national list of endangered and protected species was revised, adding 517 species. Many of these countries understand what needs to happen, but they haven't had broader political support from society to do that. And I think it absolutely is an opportunity. China is an incredible example, along with other initiatives beginning in the ASEAN region as well.

If you do look at national systems like in Singapore, there are examples of ways to phase out practices over time, and to compensate those actors currently involved in the legal trade as that trade becomes illegal. I think we should definitely look to those examples and try to replicate them definitely at the national level. But there's also an opportunity for this global commitment to grow around reducing contact and moving to a ban on commercial trade in wildlife, making sure those resources get to the places where the challenges will be greatest. So, yes, I think there's definitely an opportunity and examples that we should continue to follow.

Dararat Weerapong: From your perspective, what would be the most important thing that we can learn from this?

Natalie Phaholyothin: Maybe I can go beyond just that question and take it to another paradigm. What I heard also from many people was that we need a consensus, we need a global movement. When we say, “Let's try to prevent the next pandemic from happening”, in my mind, it is big systems change we're trying to effect here. It's a cultural shift we're trying to make, and it has been done before, because cultures are not monolithic constructs. They change. Take a look at slavery. At this point in time, I don't think anybody would want to say they engage in the trade of human beings. Later on, it was women's empowerment. I don't think anyone today would say they're against girls getting education, or women having equal participation in the workforce.

What can we learn from the pandemic today and from previous successful global movements, so that we have this cultural shift and 30 years from now nobody would say they consume wild meat or enjoy wildlife products? Let's get to the hard part of the talk and ask, “How do we get a whole societal shift?”

Dararat Weerapong: What message would you like to send to the governments?

Steve Galster: I think the message we would like to send to everybody—governments, donors, all of society, is prevention, prevention, prevention. We've talked about One Health. Some people don't know what it is, but it's prevention. And we have to remember the cost of COVID to the world in terms of sickness and lives, but also money. We heard US\$3 trillion but there are projections that this may hit around US\$12 trillion. It's like \$60 billion per country in the world (cost of the pandemic), on average, and there have been studies that the cost of prevention, to prevent the ills of extinction and pandemics, combine it all we're talking about biodiversity protection, climate change mitigation, doing regenerative agriculture, all these things bundled together actually, would cost less than 1% of what we're paying for the damages. So, I think we need to combine budgets and approaches, because the drivers of climate change and pandemics are largely the same; there's big overlap.

The message is, “Let’s pay our insurance premium through a bundle of nature-based solutions.” If done right, governments can actually just repurpose existing funds to pay for it, because nobody really wants to go out and tax people more money. They don’t need to because the money’s already there, and One Health can bring these approaches together. It’s not easy to do, but we’ve got ADB here. They’ve got a Green Recovery Program. Ask them for money if more money is needed. We at the EndPandemics Campaign have created a roadmap which is very specific to governments, corporations, NGOs, and individuals, and it includes, for example, using a tiny percentage of the recovery money to pay legal wildlife traders a one-off compensation to move into a different field. So, bring it all together, pay our insurance premium through nature-based solutions, and we don’t have to experience this again.

Amanda Fine: There is a discussion about bringing this global effort together towards developing a global treaty on pandemic prevention, modelled on the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. It should be important for governments to get engaged. It could be a way to coordinate to make sure these upstream drivers are addressed in a comprehensive way, and link with the economics and the social discussions. I would promote continuing to be optimistic, but also very realistic about what we’re dealing with, and the paradigm shift, the new societal approach, is definitely where I feel we all need to be moving.

Daniel Schar: This panel highlights in particular the inextricable link between humans, animals, and ecosystem health. My message is that we’ve got to really seriously look at how we live within planetary health bounds. We see it with global climate change as well. If we want to manifest a different reality—one without the threat of pandemics and without the threat of an unlivable future—then we have to commit to change what is into what can be. We all have a role to play in creating the conditions that will ensure a livable planet and a livable future for generations to come.

James Compton: We’re hearing the truth that wildlife trade is a serious business. It connects biodiversity conservation, valid goals for sustainable development, and that economics is inherent in the trade practice. It connects the human, animal, and wildlife with environmental health and this integrated approach I think defines the ultimate bottom line. The pathogens themselves are agnostic, whether the trade is legal or illegal, the disease doesn’t discriminate. Humanity needs a coherent effort to reduce risk across the board in order to prevent pandemics. Investing in the technical knowledge and the financial and human resources to manage these risks—it’s not an option but an imperative. Risk assessment and risk prevention is ultimately going to be cheaper, more effective, and more inclusive than dealing with the pandemic’s fallout.

Natalie Phaholyothin: For me, the key message to government is don’t burn your own house down. If you don’t do anything, it’s a recipe for future deeper damage than what it is today. Look at the climate crisis. People are only beginning to wake up, although the science has been clear for a long time. So we should take the COVID-19 pandemic as the real last signal that we need to bring in the nexus of nature and humans to be able to live in harmony.

"We should take the COVID-19 pandemic as the real last signal that we need to create the nexus where nature and humans coexist in harmony."

Natalie Phaholyothin
CEO, WWF Thailand



SESSION 7 Q&A

Nives Mattich, USAID Wildlife: What can donors and partners do immediately to support a One Health approach in the CWT space?

Steve Galster: Get together, break down the silos. We often deal with folks funding climate change, biodiversity, and human health. They've got to come together just like we're being asked to come together, and we can actually save money and have higher impact. The drivers for pandemics are the same as those for climate change, so let's pool efforts but also pool the funds. It's going to take a while to do that, but that's the first step.

James Compton: We have to make sure that that investment reaches the ground. There's a lot of effort put into coming up with great plans and programs and protocols, but unless it hits the ground, we're not going to see the change. I think that's where donors have a responsibility to program at the most effective level of investment.

SESSION 7 CHAT BOX COMMENTS

Hasantha (BCNP Sri Lanka Customs)	Congratulations Singapore on setting up the wildlife forensics laboratory. Much needed facility for the Asian region. Can you please explain how it is possible to obtain its services?
Anna Wong	Hi Hasantha, if countries require any assistance in identification of a specimen through morphological or molecular techniques such as DNA, we can extend that assistance.
Brian Gonzales (WWF-HK)	WWF / GlobeScan report titled, 'COVID-19: One Year Later: Public Perceptions about Pandemics and their Links to Nature' is available at https://globescan.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/WWF-GlobeScan-COVID-19_One_Year_Later-Highlights_Report-May2021.pdf
James Compton, TRAFFIC	Some insights into SBC approaches on wildlife trade and disease risk messaging can be found here: https://www.traffic.org/publications/reports/situation-analysis-covid-19-wildlife-trade-and-consumer-engagement/
Steve Galster, Freeland	Securing the more significant pots of money from large donor organizations requires administrative qualifications, or application

resources that go beyond frontline organization's capacity or profiles. While in theory, the larger applicant orgs/contractors sign up frontline groups to help implement, a large portion ends up going into overheads and relatively top heavy management. How can the donor community ensure that (a) their funds are used efficiently; and (b) converged to support the holistic implementation of I health approach, noting that drivers of pandemics and climate change are largely the same? (See <https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/wildlife-conservation-climate-change-g7-b1863187.html>). It would improve impact if donors could move from reimbursement process to advance payments.

SESSION 8: ENTERING A NEW ERA OF REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP: DEVELOPMENT PARTNER PLANS AND PROGRAMS

Fireside Chat on Enhancing CWT Investments and Support in Asia through Donor Collaboration: An overview of donor priorities in Asia Pacific and an opportunity to take stock and celebrate successes of recent or ongoing CWT projects.

Moderator: Alistair Monument, Acting Regional Director for Asia Pacific, WWF

Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To support and advance partner country and ASEAN CWT leadership including coordinated partner support for the implementation of regional priorities and the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action. To provide a broad overview of CWT donor priorities and project activities in Asia and to find solutions to the remaining challenges in donor coordination• To highlight the importance of regional partnerships and collaboration and to discuss possible ways going forward, e.g. through a partner coordination platform• To provide an opportunity to stock take, celebrate successes of recent or ongoing CWT projects, and to share lessons learned with partners
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emerging CWT initiatives, innovative tools, and funding opportunities presented in support of regional commitments• Consultation process initiated to develop a Counter Wildlife Trafficking Development Partners Coordination Platform for Asia

Alistair Monument: This session focuses on how we can break down the silos between donors in a better way, getting an overview of donor priorities in Asia Pacific, and looking at the successes and sometimes maybe the failures of recent and ongoing work on controlling illegal wildlife trade. This is also an opportunity for some partners to announce some new plans, new programs, or new funding, and their priorities for the coming years. We hope to get a better understanding of donors’ priorities and how to improve coordination for on-the-ground efforts.

IWT PROJECT MAP AND DATABASE: OVERVIEW, ANALYSIS, AND CHALLENGES

Cecilia Fischer, Asian Development Bank and World Bank Consultant

“Where in the region do you see a potential to invest in and launch a marine protected area project?” In one of my previous projects, my boss asked me that question, and it was an incredibly difficult question to answer, because in order to say what is required, you need to have an excellent overview of what is already there. Only then can you determine the gaps and propose solutions.

All of us have knowledge in our respective fields, but personally, I would never claim that my knowledge of implemented projects is comprehensive. Maybe it's close to the truth when we talk about the countries that we work in, but how about other countries? How about that region? That requires a really good network, a lot of research, countless emails, and phone calls. That was the first time that I thought about how great it would be to have a map that I could just look at and see all the projects that are out there, who implements them, and what do they target.

ADB is currently implementing the GEF-financed Combating Organized Environmental Crime in the Philippines Project, which is part of a larger regional technical assistance called Protecting and Investing in Natural Capital in Asia and the Pacific. We were asking ourselves how to account for this regional aspect in combating IWT, seeing that it is a transboundary crime. I wrote a report assessing counter-IWT projects in the region and deriving recommendations for the Philippines called *Illegal Wildlife Trade at the Philippines-Southeast Asia Nexus* and was published last June. The stocktaking produced a large amount of data, so we were contemplating what to do with it. When I

see “we” I mean myself and Dr. Francesco Ricciardi from ADB, who supported this endeavor throughout. There’s enough data already out there that sits in some dusty paper boxes in some offices, or in remote corners of somebody’s hard drive, and nobody knows that exactly the research that they’re looking for has already been done. This database is really about creating a tool that enables a more efficient use of resources.

We thought that this data is better presented on a website, in particular an IWT Project Map and Database, which would be publicly accessible so everybody can see it. There was no database that presented detailed and desegregated information on counter-IWT projects. There is no need to reinvent what’s already there. We simply need to use the information that is available in a more structured and systematic manner with the ultimate impact to combat and halt illegal wildlife trade.

The ADB launched the database in May this year, and it’s really great to see how much interest the initiative has sparked to date. The objectives of the IWT Project Map and Database are:

1. To facilitate coordination among donors and other development partners.
2. To guide future investments and allocate scarce resources more efficiently.
3. To inform project design and implementation based on the best available data.

All counter-IWT projects identified were recorded in an Excel file with the following data, among others:

- country
- project title
- description
- project start
- project end
- sites
- donor agencies
- type of funding
- implementing agencies
- donor funding in USD
- co-financing in USD
- type of funding
- project range

Data sources included the GEF database, U.S. Foreign Aid Explorer, UNDP database, and UK IWT Challenge Fund Listing. This was further complemented by additional sources like project fact sheets, project documents, organizational websites, personal conversations, feedback, and project verifications, which is very important. We also had active outreach by organizations who saw the database, thought it was interesting, and wanted to see their project featured.

A project was included when a project title or description referred to IWT-related matters: poaching and hunting, or when SMART, enforcement, patrols, “no kill zones,” illegal activities, and emergency responses for injured animals were interpreted to be related to IWT. Another criteria was that the project was completed in or after 2015. So, the cut-off was 2015, except when the project was only considered a “phase” of a long-term initiative, in which case the entire project (including earlier phases) was included.

Projects were not selected in the following cases:

- focused only on reducing human–wildlife conflict;
- focused on illegal fisheries;
- population assessments;
- general project on natural resource and biodiversity conservation;
- does not provide desegregated information on the countries;

- created for the sole purpose of financing, for instance, a report or a conference or workshops; or
- project ended before the year 2015.

We used a map that's based on the U.S. Statistics Office to help classify different regions and how they're grouped. This is the basis that I used for identifying if a project was implemented on a regional or on an international level. For instance, if there was a project that was implemented in Vietnam and in China, it is classified as international. The map has a lot of color-coded markers, and you can expand the map or zoom in further. Clicking on one of these markers shows details for that project. There's also a search function, where you can filter by donor, country, species, and other criteria. The website has still a lot of other features, but there are just two that I would like to briefly present to you as well:

1. *Global Initiatives*. This presents an overview of initiatives on a global scale, like the Coalition to End the Trade, Coalition to End Wildlife Trafficking Online, EndPandemics, and others.
2. *Resources*. This shows the most relevant reports that have been published on illegal wildlife trade. Again, you have a search bar, so let's say you're interested in financial flows and anti-money laundering, you can just type in "finance," and then you get the reports that deal with that topic. And at the bottom here you have other counter-IWT mapping tools and databases that you can explore.

There are currently 555 projects mapped, including 255 unique national projects, 31 unique regional projects, and 40 unique international projects. "Unique" means that there are no duplications. A lot of projects are implemented in several project sites, so the number in the map is higher. The website enables you to conduct a variety of analyses, including the following:

- National-level wildlife trafficking project funding for selected ASEAN member states from 2015 onwards.
- Regional and international unique funding. For example, the total national unique funding in U.S. dollars for counter-wildlife trafficking projects from 2015 onwards for these selected ASEAN member states amounts to US\$546 million. For regional unique projects, that's about US\$5.8 million, and for international unique projects, that's US\$76 million.
- Number of counter-wildlife trafficking projects per country.
- Countries that were most often part of regional level projects.
- Taxa per country. For instance, you can look into the funding for tigers in selected ASEAN member states. Or you could look at the type of intervention. For example, for Indonesia, most of the projects focused on enforcement, followed by capacity building, then SMART, and demand reduction/awareness.
- Geographical hotspots. I imposed the IUCN world database of protected areas map for this region, so now you can see the protected areas in this region in dark green and in dark blue, and the assumption is that large populations of iconic species or target species to be protected from illegal wildlife trade are in these protected areas. You can see where projects are already implemented, and where they're not, so this can serve to identify gaps and inform future project design.

As you see, the data is available. It still has to be interpreted to see what the implications of this data really are, and there are more analyses that can be done. Everyone is welcome to get the data from

the database, do their own analysis, and try to identify potential gaps, and then close them together with their partners in the region.

What are the benefits?

1. *Time and money.* You spend less time and money conducting research on counter-IWT initiatives and on analyzing these.
2. *Project design.* You can base new projects on the best information available with geographical focus areas visible at one glance.
3. *Funding guidance.* You can efficiently allocate scarce funds and benefit from facilitated donor coordination.
4. *International cooperation.* It's easier to identify partners and synergies among different projects across borders and reduce competition for funding.
5. *Easy navigation.* You can sort projects, search by keywords, and download a data selection, or all of the data as a .csv file.

Of course, we also encountered some challenges, and we also have some proposed solutions for that.

1. *Availability of data.* Data is available in large databases like GEF or the U.S. Foreign Aid Explorer, but not for smaller projects and unfortunately, also not for NGOs. Even international NGOs often don't have publicly accessible databases, project descriptions and websites are often outdated, and also there are no funding figures. This requires an exploration of a voluntary annual sharing mechanism.
2. *Security.* Normally there is no issue because the projects and project locations are well advertised and published on websites. But there are some smaller projects, and those project managers were a bit careful as they perceived there may be retribution if they published information. They were still interested to publish the data, so right now we're looking into recording much more aggregated data in these cases for one marker.
3. *Co-financing is not a part of the dataset.* This is an important indicator for future investments, for political support for counter-wildlife trafficking activities in the countries, and also to put the donor funding into proportion. But there were only a few databases that listed to co-financing as well, so the recommendation is that this forms part of the reporting.
4. *Institutionalization of the database.* Our project will end this year, and we would really encourage ownership from various development partners in this initiative. We would like to possibly anchor the website in a coordinating mechanism.

What are the next steps?

1. We would like to continue the worldwide expansion of the database, so if you would like your projects to be featured on the website, please contact me at cfischer.consultant@adb.org and I will send you an Excel template to fill in the project information.
2. We're about to add an interactive analytical dashboard, so the analyses that you just saw would be available on the website as well.

Someone new to the field recently asked, "How are these projects connected? How do they relate to each other?" In order for all of us to be able to respond to this question, the World Bank, ADB,

and WWF, in partnership with USAID and others, are initiating consultations right now with development partners on a Counter-Wildlife Trafficking Development Partner Coordination Platform for Asia to strengthen donor and partner coordination in combating IWT in the region.

We should keep in mind that the IWT Project Map and Database is living tool, and that means that new projects are added continuously, and analyses like the ones that I just presented are just snapshots. The tool is only as strong as the data it contains, and as effective in facilitating collaboration as we want it to be. We need more and better coordination to win this fight. Projects should complement and build on each other, and you use synergies, instead of duplicating efforts or even investing in activities that already proved not to be effective. Better coordination enables us to avoid gaps and ensures that we can plan the next steps together.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Panelists:

- *Lisa Farroway, Program Manager, Global Wildlife Program, World Bank*
- *Saraj Srisai, Program Officer, EU Delegation to Thailand*
- *Roopa Karia, Deputy Director, Regional Environment Office, USAID Regional Mission for Asia*
- *Dr. Francesco Ricciardi, Senior Environment Specialist, Asian Development Bank*

Alistair Monument: Back in 2016, a GEF-financed, World Bank-led Global Wildlife Program released a report of donor funding in illegal wildlife trade across Africa and Asia. It showed that over US\$1.3 billion had been committed by over 24 donors between 2010 and 2016, so about US\$190 million a year. In 2018, the funding had actually increased to US\$2.3 billion, or about US\$260 million a year. About 26% of that went to Asia, and then another 10% went to more global projects, so quite a lot of that money is coming to our direction. One of the recommendations from that study was to enhance donor engagement, and to bring together the international donors to increase communication and collaboration.

Starting off with Lisa Farroway, can you tell us how global investments in IWT have changed and evolved, and maybe also give us a snapshot of the GEF-financed Global Wildlife Program led by the World Bank, and how that affects us in this region?

Lisa Farroway: The Global Wildlife Program is funded by the Global Environment Facility, and it's one of GEF's largest programmatic investments in biodiversity conservation. While it's led by the World Bank, it's very much a partnership between the participating countries and the many organizations that are supporting the country projects or providing technical expertise. To date, we've done two point-in-time assessment of donor funding in combating illegal wildlife trade, looking at investments across Africa and Asia in 2016, and an update in 2018. I just have a couple of points that I want to raise from that.

Ceci [Fischer] talked about the value of looking at intervention types and that was something we did assess. If you look at some emerging trends emerging, we saw the highest investment overall in protected area management. There was up to 45% of the overall investment across Africa and Asia that was being counted as supporting counter wildlife trafficking. But then, between the assessments we detected a bit of a trend away from that towards more investment in law enforcement, and particularly towards more investment in sustainable livelihoods. During the 2019 partners dialogue that we had in Chiang Mai, we identified livelihood support as a gap in partner or donor investment, so that trend was going in the right direction. But of course, since then there have been quite significant impacts on livelihoods due to COVID-19.

Second, I just want to note that demand reduction was the lowest of all intervention categories at less than 5% of total donor investment. And that actually dropped between the two assessments. While there was an overall increase in funds, the amount in demand reduction didn't increase at the same rate.

In terms of more recent changes, I think many of the speakers today in these sessions will touch on these shifts, such as the emergence of COVID response grants. This might be moving towards a greater focus on livelihoods diversification to avoid overreliance on tourism, or perhaps a further shift of funds towards sustainable livelihoods support, and in parallel, a broadening of investment towards One Health or wildlife-health linkages. And these go beyond the intervention categories that were defined in the CWT assessments that we did, which shows how the investment landscape has changed, and the way we might even define “CWT-linked investment”. We're planning to complete an updated analysis of donor investments, so we can look at these changes and compare it against our earlier data.

Now, about the Global Wildlife Program, it now includes 32 countries across Africa, Asia, and now Latin America and the Caribbean, and they have a coordinated set of projects aiming to combat IWT. There's a total of US\$230 million in GEF investment, with over US\$1.3 billion of co-financing from governments, international and local NGOs, donors, and increasingly, the private sector.

A key point I want to note is that the Global Wildlife Program is country-driven. It's governments' decision to join and to prioritize their national GEF allocation towards combating illegal wildlife trade. The program has a broad framework for combating poaching, trafficking, demand, and a wildlife-based economy. Governments identify the focus of their national project within that frame, based on their specific context and national priorities. I think that flexibility to work within the broader framework helps connect national and global priorities.

Of the 32 participating countries, 10 are in Asia: Afghanistan, Bhutan, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam. Through these countries, around 30% of that total investment that I mentioned is being invested in Asia. The projects are connected by a global knowledge platform that's coordinated by the World Bank. The Program has been running for over five years now and we are increasingly seeing cross-project knowledge transfer and interest in learning from the experiences of other countries and regions. Now that we have put in place a platform for these exchanges and maintained it for some time, we find that the exchanges and learning are happening, and we don't need to facilitate them as much.

Recognizing the value of this coordination and exchange, and the interest of countries in being part of a broader community of projects and partners working together to combat illegal wildlife trade underpins the success of the program and makes it a flagship investment of the GEF.

Alistair Monument: On to you Saroj [Srisai]. A newspaper article once quoted Europe as a silent hub of IWT, but at the same time the EU is active in CWT investments outside its borders, such as the Partners Against Wildlife Crime in the Greater Mekong, Malaysia, and China, and also the EU-supported ASEAN initiatives such as the ACB. How do you think the pandemic will impact or alter EU's approach to CWT in Asia going forward in terms of its priorities, but also around COVID? Is wildlife protection still a priority for the coming years? How do you envisage working with other donors to amplify the impact of EU support?

Saroj Srisai: Yes, people would perceive that Europe is a silent hub for wildlife trafficking but we do things outside. Let me first give you a breakdown of what we already did in the region under our

multi-annual financial framework. The most recent was 2014 to 2020, which includes two projects in the region.

- *Asia Wildlife Enforcement and Demand Management.* This project was implemented by UNODC. The focus of this project was to reduce the illegal killing and illegal trafficking activity in Asia. UNODC worked with the CITES Secretariat, IUCN, and TRAFFIC on this project. The project ran for five years from May 2016 and ended in April 2021. The focus species for that project included both African and Asian species traded or trafficked in Asia. A total of 15 countries were involved, five from South Asia, and the ASEAN countries, except Brunei and Singapore, plus China and Hong Kong.
- *Partners Against Wildlife Crimes.* The second project is still ongoing, and is led by Wildlife Conservation Society or WCS. The main purpose to build up civil society partnerships to lead into government action on illegal wildlife trafficking. There are four focus species: tiger, elephant, turtle, and Siamese rosewood, and the geographical area covers five countries in the Greater Mekong (Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos) plus Malaysia and China. We selected sites where we could focus on each of our focus species. In Thailand, we have two sites, one for Siamese rosewood and the other for tiger. In Myanmar, the focus species is elephant. In Malaysia, it's tiger, and in Cambodia, it's turtle.

This is the first year that we entered the new multi-annual financial framework 2021-2027. When the current Commission started their duty in December 2019, they launched this very big initiative called the European Green Deal, which is now the main EU strategy on anything related to the green issues. Under this new plan, there are eight interlinked pillars, one of which is biodiversity, under which wildlife trafficking falls. All of these pillars will have its own strategy and the programs under each pillar will have a concrete action plan or roadmap. For wildlife trafficking, we expect the new action plan to come out later this year or sometime early next year. Just this summer, the EU has released what it calls Fit for 55, which proposes concrete steps for the continent to reduce emissions by 55% by 2030, so that in 2050, Europe would be a carbon-neutral continent.

In answer to your question, the key message here is that we have the external dimension, which involves working with partners. That will be attached to the action plan, and that's from a thematic perspective. From a geographic perspective—hot off the press—just last week, the EU launched its EU Indo-Pacific strategy, which puts a very strong focus on seven priority areas, and one of these is biodiversity, including CWT. Furthermore, the EU has been a dialogue partner to ASEAN for 40 years, and in December last year, we elevated this EU-ASEAN partnership to what we call EU-ASEAN Strategic Partnership, under which the green issues will remain, including biodiversity and CWT. We are very pleased that the EU-ASEAN partnership is currently chaired by the Philippines, which assumed the chairmanship in August, and will remain chair for three years, until August 2024. The Philippines is actually the country that hosts ACB, so we are sure a lot of good things will come out of this new EU-ASEAN partnership.

The EU-ASEAN partnership boils down to the bilateral level, although of course the EU sees wildlife trafficking to be more at a regional level. We do want some of the bilateral funds to also include IWT, and under the EU Indo-Pacific strategy, there are two countries that are specifically identified, Thailand and Malaysia, with which the EU plans to have a Partnership and Collaboration Agreement. The green initiative is a first priority. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen last week at the State of the Union made a public statement that she will double the external funding for biodiversity, and just yesterday at the UN General Assembly, she gave the same message. This confirms the continuation of EU support. The European Commission, Council, and Parliament all

have put a very strong focus on making sure that the next generation of Europe will be green, digital, and strong. And green is always Number 1. We'd be happy to work with all the like-minded partners here.

Alistair Monument: *Let's shift from the EU over to the U.S. Since the early 2000s, the U.S. government has initiated many investments into countering wildlife trafficking, creating regional task forces or wildlife enforcement networks, initiating partnership opportunities for demand reduction, and championing multilateral bodies to prioritize IWT. The U.S. also issued many important legislations and rolled out many high-impact funding opportunities in this region. Roopa [Karia], what do you think are USAID's biggest achievements and the lessons learned so far, and how are you shaping the future of cooperation through these various counter wildlife trafficking partnerships that we have?*

Roopa Karia: USAID has worked regionally on wildlife trafficking in Asia since about 2006, and of course, we've worked on biodiversity conservation in Asia for much longer. For USAID, conserving wildlife is core to our work on sustainable development. In Asia, I think one of our biggest achievements so far, together with ASEAN and many of the organizations here today, is to raise the profile of counter wildlife trafficking globally and in the region. Over 15 years ago, when USAID first launched the ASEAN-WEN Support Project, there were not as many of us talking about or working on IWT. And since then, and in a relatively short amount of time, the number of stakeholders focused on this issue has expanded greatly. We see more focus on counter wildlife trafficking by legislators, policymakers, the judiciary in the region, and law enforcement. We see growing political will at different levels, and the public—consumers—are definitely much more aware of their impact and how they can make a difference.

This gets at what we think is the biggest lesson learned for us at USAID: The centrality of partnership and cooperation and how a sustained effort and sustained commitment can really effect change in IWT. Wildlife trafficking as a transnational organized crime cuts across countries. It cuts across borders, and it's beyond the scope of any one of us to address alone—any one country, any one police unit, any one stakeholder, any one donor—and the only way for us to make significant progress moving forward is by working together, by leveraging our strengths and our resources, and expanding our network to combat IWT.

At USAID, we do this by working from the global to the local level. As a regional office, we connect our work to global priorities and also to national and local efforts. We try to develop activities that leverage and reinforce each other to maximize impacts at these different scales, and we of course work with a lot of other U.S. government agencies. We work with the Department of Justice, Department of State, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. USAID has worked hard to support a whole-of-U.S.-government approach to addressing the wildlife trade. We can take this opportunity to do the same with the partner community working on this issue.

There are a few different ways that we at USAID can help strengthen our partnership to combat wildlife trafficking moving forward:

1. *Enhance mechanisms for cooperation.* As co-host of this forum, we're so happy to see engagement from so many different organizations. We've all been moving really fast to deal with the growing threats to wildlife, and this is a great opportunity to take our partnership to another level. There's absolutely more we can do to align partner and donor efforts and leverage our strengths to maximize impacts. We can enhance mechanisms for sharing, cooperating, and harmonizing our work, for example, toward implementation of the ASEAN

Cooperation on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement Plan of Action, and ensure we have really well-defined goals that shape our partnership mechanisms.

2. *Bring in new sectors and new disciplines like health food security and agriculture, including by using a One Health approach.* Expanding the issue of CWT to take it beyond conservation to health and food systems helps us build a broader coalition, and that lets us add new resources, new tools, and new approaches, and at the same time help to prevent future pandemics.
3. *Build the movement to combat wildlife trafficking to include new partners and stakeholders.* This is alongside all the efforts that we talked about this week: strengthening law enforcement and legal frameworks, and reducing demand for wildlife products. But there are still more stakeholders that we can and we should engage. We can better include women and marginalized groups. We can leverage the creativity of youth to help shape their own futures. We can also work to improve how we include communities, including indigenous groups, to combat wildlife trafficking, and at the same time, support and reinforce their right to manage and benefit from wildlife. A critical question here is how can we better elevate, engage, and support communities as critical partners and also sources of knowledge.

At USAID, we're definitely committed to advancing the outcomes of this forum, and we're launching our new Reducing Demand for Wildlife activity this year. At the same time, we're looking forward to our next long-term regional activity, and we look forward to everyone here and our partners informing that next activity and also working together with us on that.

Alistair Monument: Over to Francesco [Ricciardi]. You're managing a complex IWT project in the Philippines, which has yielded lots of new innovations, policy reforms, and real enforcement impact on the ground. What's next for the ADB in terms of programming priorities in the area, and what is the importance of this Development Partners Coordination Platform that we've been discussing? How do you think this could shape wildlife conservation, protection, and financing in the region, given all the challenges that we have, the different situations, and the different countries?

Francesco Ricciardi: We're proposing new legislation that we're trying to get approved in the Senate to strengthen the counter illegal wildlife trade measures in the Philippines, and we're trying to start some very good innovations. I have a few examples, although there are many more:

- *E-Learning course for law enforcers in the Philippines.* As is probably common in many countries, law enforcement officers are subjected to very high turnover. Sometimes new officers are not up to date on the task, so having a training available on demand is a very important feature of these agencies.
- *Artificial intelligence and machine learning to detect online IWT.* We are piloting studies using artificial intelligence and machine learning applied to social media to identify potentially illegal trade online, which apparently is becoming prominent worldwide in terms of volume of trading. This is a very important tool that we can develop.
- *Electronic permits.* We are also trying to develop an electronic version of a CITES permit, so there is a lower possibility of having fake documents.

ADB is also entering the space of One Health. Unfortunately, in my opinion, when we talk about One Health, the focus is still on human health. There is still not enough importance given to environmental health, of which biodiversity conservation and wildlife trade is a very important

component. We need to shift the mindset of people working in this space to help member countries to develop these activities as well. We are trying to get more funds and partnerships around developing a regional One Health approach.

Having a stakeholders coordination platform is very important because we all know funds are scarce and there are a lot of projects being proposed. We need coordination to deliver results on the field. And we need coordination because there's a plethora of projects out there, all of them very important and achieving incredible results, but we run the risk losing the big picture. It looks to me that the illegal traffickers have way better coordination than law enforcers, so maybe we need to copy the international relationship that they have in place to fight the illegal wildlife trade. Especially in Asia, where each country has unique needs, different kinds of trafficking, and different kinds of species that are sold in the market, it is very important to have a coordination platform where everyone can come together to get buy-in from governments, align activities with the government's priorities, and bring together the international actors and funders like the ADB, the World Bank, USAID, the European Union, and everyone interested in this space.

We also probably need to help the governments understand how important this issue is. For example, I heard from a previous presentation that COVID recovery funds are allocated mostly to economic stimulus, and very little (if anything) is going to CWT activities. I think illegal wildlife trade is probably the last issue the government would think of when we talk about economic recovery. Having a coordination platform will allow us to invest more efficiently, for instance in specific species that are most targeted, or in some interventions that we know are working better, or in geographical areas that we need to prioritize.

Alistair Monument: I'd just like to go back to Lisa and ask her to respond to what Francesco was saying there on the CWT coordination platform.

Lisa Farroway: At the World Bank, we've experienced running a global donor coordination platform in parallel with the donor investment analysis that we did. Another benefit that we found was the value of using that platform to capture and share lessons between donors, and to really dive deeply into the lessons. This often comes from the point of identifying factors that underpin success, but it's equally important to have a space where people can more openly share failures, or unanticipated mistakes. That's another benefit of the value of coordination that hasn't been mentioned, so I just wanted to add that one.

SESSION 8 Q&A

Steve Galster: Securing the more significant pots of money from large donor organizations requires administrative qualifications or application resources that go beyond the frontline organizations' capacity or profiles. While, in theory, the larger applicant organizations or contractors sign up frontline groups to help implement, a large portion ends up going into overheads and relatively top-heavy management. How can the donor community ensure that (a) their funds are used efficiently; and (b) converged to support the holistic implementation of the One Health approach, noting that the drivers of pandemics and climate change are largely the same?

Roopa Karia: That's a really critical question when you're operating as a donor, to ensure that your resources are being used wisely, and that they're effectively making it to proven approaches. Part of it is ensuring that the work that we support has the data and analysis behind it to make that

investment really worthwhile. That's something that is always a challenge, especially when you're working on an issue that's changing quickly, and where there's a lot of urgency behind it.

Saroj Srisai: I second all the speakers that coordination is really vital and needed to the extent that we could. But again, as everybody knows, when it comes to donor coordination, each of the donors will have its own requirements, particularly on this One Health approach. For us, if it's anything related to wildlife, it will fall under our biodiversity fund, but if it's anything that would have a flavor of the pandemic or the One Health approach, it will fall under the human security pillar. In any case, that doesn't mean that coordination cannot happen. We could certainly have a cross-pillar internal fund from other side as well, as long as we work together from the beginning to understand the requirements from all sides.

Also, we need to understand the needs of our partner countries, and not just the donors. The EU has done this in many other platforms and we will be happy to work with like-minded partners to the extent that it still falls under our requirements. For example, we have a basket fund for the Greater Mekong countries with many other donors and we have regular donor coordination. I believe the same model can work here. But from our side, as I said, we are in the transition period. We are waiting for policy directions from Brussels, which we expect to get within this year or early next year.

DISCUSSANTS' COMMENTS

Discussants:

- *Stefanie Lang, Executive Director, Legacy Landscapes Fund*
- *Hoang Thanh, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, VN*
- *Sara Oberg Høper, First Secretary, Program Specialist Environment & Climate Change, Development Cooperation - Regional Asia, Embassy of Sweden Bangkok, Thailand*
- *Marie Delattre, Deputy Customs Attaché, Embassy of France, Bangkok, Thailand*
- *Andrew Beirne, UK Foreign Development and Commonwealth Office*

Stephanie Lang: What we heard today is that coordination is important, learning from each other is important, and from the panel before, execution and on the ground work is important. The Legacy Landscapes Fund is a very young organization. We were created at the end of last year, and I took over this position a couple of months ago. We are trying to go to the base where all of this illegal wildlife trade is basically starting—the protected areas. We are dealing with a very agile industry here. Whenever you have a protected area that is not protected enough, where law enforcement is not happening enough, the industry jumps and then they are resourcing illegal wildlife wherever the weakest point is. We can see that with states, with nations, with entry ports, and with exit ports. We can also see this with protected areas.

We can't have a project that lasts for five years where we strengthen law enforcement, and then the project ends and we're back to square one. The vision and the mission of Legacy Landscapes Fund is to fund and secure protected areas' basic running costs, for eternity. At the moment, we're looking at two pilot sites in Asia: One is in Indonesia in the Leuser Ecosystem. The other one is in Cambodia in the Central Cardamom Mountains. All of you who have been in the region know how threatened both of those ecosystems are, how difficult it is to secure those remaining parks, how important illegal wildlife trade is here, and how poaching is threatening the integrity of these areas. So, I'm very happy to hear about the IWT database and eLearning courses for law enforcement, because those are the things we now try to integrate, so that our funding for those protected areas is as effective and efficient as possible, and that we really live this partnership that we are talking here.

My message is just to not forget that all illegal wildlife trade starts in a protected area, and we need to ensure that these protected areas have the funds, the means, and the finances that they need to hinder illegal wildlife trade from the very start. So this includes working and investing in law enforcement. That's one of our missions and one of our aims.

Sara Öberg Höper: I would also like to thank Ceci [Fischer] for her presentation of the really useful database of projects. This will be of much use from a donor perspective also, and coordination and collaboration are key. I would like to list some priorities related to CWT from Sweden:

- *Biodiversity conservation and restoration.* Strengthening biodiversity and conservation are priorities for Sweden's government, and also our development cooperation. The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency is currently working on a government assignment to analyze how we can integrate some biodiversity in all our operations. Later this year we are expecting a decision on the new Regional Development Cooperation Strategy for Asia and the Pacific, to be implemented in the coming five years. Biodiversity is most likely going to be one of the priorities in this strategy. We know that one of the drivers behind biodiversity loss is illegal wildlife trade, which is why this is an issue we want to explore further.
- *Safeguarding ecosystems for nature and people.* On the global level, Sweden supports WWF's program called Voices for Diversity – safeguarding ecosystems for nature and people. This program is partly implemented in Vietnam, where the focus is to combat illegal wildlife trade. WWF Vietnam is implementing this in partnership with the National Assembly of Vietnam, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, and local civil society organizations.
- *Gender equality and human rights.* I would also like to highlight that supporting gender equality and a human rights-based approach is key in all Swedish development cooperation. Respecting and protecting human rights, especially the rights of indigenous people and other local communities, is an obligation under international law, but it is also an effective, equitable, and cost-efficient conservation strategy that should be applied in all our efforts to safeguard nature. I'm very pleased to learn about the newly released report from WWF called *Gender and Wildlife Trade: Overlooked and Underestimated*, which provides a roadmap for systematically bringing gender analysis into programs and policies to combat illegal wildlife trade. It's encouraging how it shows that bringing gender analysis into this work improves the likelihood of success, and that it can be a catalyst for challenging social inequalities.
- *Youth.* And I also want to echo that youth can play a really important role in combating illegal wildlife trade, and that we should include them as an important stakeholder in this.

Hoang Thanh: The *2019 Global Assessment Report by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services* shows that around a million species already face extinction, and the largest direct driver for the global decline in nature are land and sea nutrients and direct exploitation, which encompasses illegal wildlife trade. With the rate of biodiversity degradation, there is a strong need to address the issue more holistically. This requires involvement from various donors, implementing agencies, government partners, and other stakeholders to prevent the extinction of wild species from illegal wildlife trade and the degradation of ecosystems, and to promote sustainable use of biodiversity for human well-being and the economy.

The Vietnamese government recognizes the great importance of biodiversity conservation and wildlife protection, and has put it as a priority in our national policies, strategies, and programs. In

early 2021, the government also adopted a resolution supporting the Leaders Pledge for Nature, committing to specific actions on nature to protect human and planetary health. In recent years, many efforts and initiatives have been implemented to conserve wildlife and counter wildlife trafficking in Vietnam, including the project Building Partnerships to Protect Endangered Species under the Global Wildlife Program supported by the Global Environment Facility through World Bank, the Saving Species Project supported by USAID, and other programs initiated by different partners and the government sector. Many activities have been carried out to reduce threats to biodiversity and counter illegal wildlife trade.

The Vietnam Wildlife Protection Partnership Forum led by the Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Agency was initiated in 2013, with nearly 600 members willing to connect with the regional network. A new Strategy for Biodiversity in line with the Global Biodiversity Framework has been developed, and a new National Action Plan for Wildlife Protection until 2030 has been initiated. We welcome the cooperation of donors, development agencies, government partners, and other stakeholders to strengthen these efforts to ensure the achievement of the regional and global goals for the conservation of biodiversity.

Marie Delattre: These last three days have really shown that there is a really big renewal of the awareness of the importance of CWT, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Because of its importance, we are trying at the French Embassy to work on the subject and we are conducting a project with AMBITUS, the European program fighting against environmental crime focused on law enforcement agencies and offices. Through this organization, we want to set up an international seminar with Asian countries in Bangkok, hopefully as soon as next year when the situation permits.

The point of this would be to set up communication channels and build personal relationships between officers from different backgrounds and different countries, including judges, police, customs, and others. The idea of breaking down silos is important in the law enforcement community where a lot of good procedures could have been done if there had been a bit more communication and if they had more knowledge. We hope that this regional network that we're trying to put in place to enhance partnership and cooperation, will facilitate sharing of knowledge and essential operational tools that can be used in the field, with which we would be much more efficient if they could be democratized in CWT.

Just to give you a couple of examples, tools like genetic databases, or a new microscope that is currently being developed could help to detect instantly what kind of wood is in a truck, and whether or not it is CITES-controlled. Officers are not specialists on the matter, and they might not know if the wood being shown is actually what the person is telling them it is, or if it is in fact a CITES-controlled product.

All these ideas are developed and all of these operational tools that are being put in place are not known by everyone. There is no communication between sectors and between countries on how to democratize these tools, and how to get them to officers in the field that are the ones who will use them.

We are very interested in cooperation with any country or organization that might be interested. Ambitus, the European program we're working with, really believes in cooperation with Asia to fight against wildlife trafficking. They are supported at the highest level at the European Commission, so we're very optimistic about the possibilities that the new 2021-2027 financial framework and the action plan that comes with it will enable in the future.

Andrew Beirne: I remember our discussions in 2019 on this, and I'm really grateful to the organizers for allowing us to meet again to follow up on what was a really valuable session led by the Thai government. The UK government funds a decent number of projects around the world on illegal wildlife trade, but like many of the other speakers, we've come increasingly to see nature, healthy ecosystems, and a healthy environment as underpinning all of our existence—global food and nutrition security, direct livelihoods for millions of people, and of course, helping us prevent and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

When we look at illegal wildlife trade, we're seeing a lot more in the context of biodiversity loss and in the context of climate change. We know that although climate change is the third-biggest driver of biodiversity loss, biodiversity loss in all its forms also can exacerbate climate change, with more carbon being released into the atmosphere and so on. Our top priority globally now is working on those links and challenges, even more so, probably, than on COVID, and it's been really welcome to hear this broad view shared by so many of the panelists.

In my view, we're very focused now on thinking about what more we can do on the ocean side. Eighty percent of the world's species are in the oceans. Particularly in this region, there is a phenomenal amount of biodiversity. We've been pushing quite hard for what we're calling the Global Ocean Alliance 30by30, which is 30% of the world's ocean protected, or covered by marine protected areas, by 2030. That's one of our top-level priorities along with climate change at the moment.

In terms of illegal wildlife trade specifically, we share many of the sentiments that others have expressed over the course of these recent days about the challenges that it creates in terms of governance, corruption, instability, impact on species that are nearing extinction, and of course, the challenges for livelihoods in the world's poorest communities. We have built four priorities when it comes to being a donor country, which drop very neatly out of the four global conferences on illegal wildlife and also out of Thailand's excellent conference in 2019:

- Eradicating the market for illegal wildlife trade;
- Ensuring effective legal frameworks and deterrence;
- Strengthening law enforcement; and
- Providing sustainable livelihoods and development.

Much of what we feel we can do most usefully is listen to those of you who are in the region more, and try and build on your ideas. One of the earlier speakers mentioned that there's a big gap in demand reduction at the moment. We're aware that this is a globally underrepresented area, particularly in Asia, and so we're seeking to address that in our work and seeking partners who can help us address that in our funding.

The second area that we're focused on quite a lot is closing gaps in legislation and improving enforcement. We're conscious that there have been some really positive efforts in the region in the last few years and some good news stories, but there's always more to do on this.

We have a couple of funds that I want to mention:

- *Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund*. This fund is opening for bids probably starting next month. We would welcome projects and bids on that. This fund is about US\$60 million over the past six or seven years and continuing. It's effectively a competitive grant scheme that funds projects to tackle the illegal wildlife trade and aims to reduce poverty at the

same time. Bidding is not trivial, but bids from any relevant and qualified organization are always welcome. Our Challenge Fund tries to capitalize innovative approaches, build partnerships, support local solutions, and develop the evidence base. If you have a strong evidence-based project, they will always be interested in working with you in the region.

- *UK Biodiverse Landscape Fund.* This fund will be about US\$150 million and focus very much on biodiversity protection and conservation. It is going to cover Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam, but it may cover other bits of ASEAN and Asia more broadly as well. It will likely look at protection and restoration of landscapes through nature-based solutions and tackling climate change, while providing sustainable livelihoods for communities. We will tell you more about that when we know the details.

Alistair Monument: This whole discussion gives us a good basis to work to align donor funding with the priorities of the countries in the region. Many of the speakers we've heard throughout the session highlighted the importance of building on and complementing the existing initiatives that we have, and improving coordination among all the different partners and the different stakeholders involved.

The IWT Project Map and Database gives us a really good opportunity to add value to this effort by regularly updating shared information. In cooperation with the governments, we need to really make sure that we capture those country needs and priorities, to close existing gaps, and develop some joint solutions.

And finally, I think many agree on the importance to make sure that this work really does lead to impact in landscapes, that there are conservation benefits, and also real benefits to the lives of the people in those landscapes.

SESSION 9: ASEAN COUNTRY – DEVELOPMENT PARTNER DIALOGUE: CONVERGING COUNTRY AND DONOR PRIORITIES AND COORDINATED ACTION

Fireside Chat on Aligning Donor Investments with ASEAN Regional Priorities: Focusing on the “Broad Strategy 5: Advancing Towards a More Sustainable and Resilient Future” of the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework”. New funding opportunities as governments design programs, enhance legislations or invest in counter wildlife trafficking measures of One Health approaches.

Moderator: Sallie Yang, Policy Lead, USAID Wildlife Asia

Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To identify new areas of support or co-financing opportunities through new CWT funding opportunities.
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Other ASEAN organizations have introduced to the CWT Stakeholder Community (CWT Development Partners, Donor and Stakeholders) their CWT program/efforts.• Other ASEAN organizations better aligned and coordinated their CWT efforts with the ASEAN priorities on CWT.• ASEAN organizations (including AWG CITES and Wildlife Enforcement) collaborate more effectively going forward.• The CWT Stakeholder Community better supports such alignment, coordination, and collaboration.

Sallie Yang: As governments design programs, enhance legislation, or invest in CWT measures, taking into consideration One Health approaches, there's an opportunity here to support broader-based CWT through new funding opportunities and combining efforts. After hearing from ASEAN in Session 7 on the ACRF and working towards a post-COVID CWT landscape, and from the donors in Session 8, we now turn our attention to how we can align this investment with ASEAN regional priorities, specifically focusing on Broad Strategy No. 5, advancing towards a more sustainable and resilient future of the ACRF. It concerns ASEAN's commitment to develop a recovery framework that is durable, long lasting, and inclusive, capable of safeguarding the region's natural resources, social fabric, and prosperity of its people. It is a reminder to ask why we are here: for the wildlife that are being decimated by illegal wildlife trade, for the biodiversity which is under serious threat of collapsing, and for the communities that are suffering as a result. Case in point, the COVID-19 and climate change crises that we're suffering from now.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Panelists:

- *Dr. Ronello Abila, Sub-regional Representative for Southeast Asia, World Organization for Animal Health*
- *Hannah Fairbank, Senior Biodiversity Specialist and Asia Regional Coordinator, GEF Secretariat*
- *Dr. Francesco Ricciardi, Senior Environment Specialist, Asian Development Bank*
- *Dr. Wolfram Morgenroth-Klein, Head of Division Pandemic Prevention, One Health, Animal Health and Biodiversity, German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development*

Sallie Yang: *I'll start with Dr. Abila. The OIE is a regional coordinator of the tripartite partnership on One Health with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), World Health Organization (WHO), and UNEP. The OIE General Assembly also recently launched a new wildlife framework. Can you start by telling us how wildlife, IWT, and the One Health approach relate to each other, and how the tripartite plus UNEP and OIE's partnership with ASEAN will shape CWT approaches in the region?*

Dr. Ronello Abila: One Health was brought about during the epidemic of the avian influenza, which really influenced the governments and the tripartite, working with the World Bank during that time. This concept of One Health was originally conceived by the environment and wildlife sector. The wildlife sector was promoting One Medicine, One World, One Health early on, and in 2008, because of the avian flu epidemic in Southeast Asia and the neighboring countries, we adopted the One Health approach, recognizing that contact with migratory birds is very much the main risk factor in the spread of avian flu. The risk factors involving trade in wildlife was not highlighted during that time and instead focused on mitigating the risk involving spillover of disease from wildlife in their natural habitats.

It was COVID last year that really brought the whole world to really look at the role of wildlife trade as that main risk factor that threatens our planetary health. We developed the Wildlife Health Framework to strengthen the work of the OIE, which is mainly focused on veterinary services, by working together with its counterparts from the environment and wildlife sectors to promote wildlife health. This meant expanding our mandate, and at the same time, encouraging the ministries of environment and forestry to also start working on wildlife health. Prior to One Health, their main task was on conservation and not much on wildlife health, so there is a disconnect.

With the launching of the Wildlife Health Framework in May this year during the General Assembly, the OIE came up with a resolution stating that the OIE should continue to work with partners, including various agencies like CITES, INTERPOL, FAO, ASEAN, and wildlife NGOs, to reduce the risk from agro-crime and illegal and legal trade in wildlife. This resolution gave the OIE the mandate to work on wildlife trade. With that, our activities and engagement with ASEAN and the wildlife sector will be further strengthened.

We started our engagement with ASEAN last year, including a webinar organized with the ACB on conservation and zoonoses, and we've started working with the ASEAN Working Group on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement on IWT and zoonoses. The signing of the new MOU between OIE and ASEAN in May 2021 (the first MOU was in 2008) will further strengthen our work with ASEAN to prevent future pandemics by controlling diseases not only in domestic animals but also in wildlife.

Sallie Yang: *In Session 8, we heard from Lisa Farroway about the Global Wildlife Program, which is the GEF and World Bank's flagship global investment to combat wildlife trafficking. I'd like to invite Ms. Hannah Fairbank to give her statement on GEF's future plans in the CWT space and how it aligns with the priorities of ASEAN and the countries in the region.*

Hannah Fairbank: I have been incredibly heartened by the conversations, listening to the panels over the last three days, and also just reflecting on the dynamism and diversity of the group that has been present. It's really evolved a lot in the last 15 years, so that's great. I'll focus my comments today on three areas: 1) the depth and evolution of the work of the GEF with countries around the world in the CWT space; 2) describe some of the contours of the proposed GEF-8 strategy, the next generation of GEF investments in wildlife conservation and CWT; and 3) reflect just a little bit on how this may align with ASEAN and country priorities.

The GEF strategy responds directly to the guidance coming from the Conference of Parties for the three Rio conventions and the two chemical conventions. There's really been a shift in GEF programming to more systems thinking-based design, addressing drivers, taking more integrated approaches, and focusing on the transformation of key economic systems, for example, urban systems, food systems, and working through supply chains. We are very much embracing the

approach to break down silos between sectors, work across ministries, and have more flexibility in the use of funding across environmental sectors and mainstreaming the environment.

GEF investments in the CWT space have really evolved and deepened over the last decade. Our first significant foray into this space was with the Global Wildlife Program (GWP) starting in 2014 with a focus mostly on African megafauna. This was catalyzed by increasing awareness and interest in this area due to the African poaching crisis, and both donor and recipient countries of the GEF were really interested in investing in this area. In GEF-7, which is the current Global Wildlife Program iteration, we broadened out geographically to include more regions, but also have a focus on wildlife-based economies and are looking a little bit more at the incentives. In terms of our scale, GEF-7 was US\$4 billion over four years, including about US\$1 billion for biodiversity conservation writ large, and US\$130 million from the Global Wildlife Program just in GEF-7.

We're now designing the negotiation phase with donors for the GEF-8 strategy. That would run from 2022 to 2026, and the draft strategies are actually online. I just want to thank many of you who have contributed in many different ways to the second draft. We've been working on this for quite some time and had much feedback and consultations. And of course, we're doing all of this in the context of the pandemic, which has influenced our strategy incredibly. In the GEF-8 strategy, we're really embracing this post-COVID-19 Blue-Green Recovery, both the challenges and opportunities, and recognizing the strong dependency of human health and well-being of society overall on a healthy planet, so we're calling this the "Healthy Planet, Healthy People Framework" (HPHP).

What are we proposing to do in the IWT space and to conserve wildlife in GEF-8? We're proposing a wildlife conservation for development integrated program with the goal to secure wildlife populations and landscapes for the benefit of people and the planet. This is really building on GWP, and it's an upgraded approach that would include not only GEF country allocations but additional financial incentives related to the amounts allocated by countries for projects under this integrated program. It will have three components:

1. *Wildlife for Prosperity*. This component is focused on incentives, diversification of livelihoods, and support for the recovery of the nature-based tourism sector.
2. *Combating wildlife trafficking*. The second component addresses the illegal wildlife trade and working through a supply chain approach, with increased emphasis on behavior change and demand reduction. We've heard some of the calls for increased funding in that area and that is absolutely part of what we're planning for.
3. *Human-Wildlife Coexistence*. The third component is on mitigating and preventing human-wildlife conflicts, working at a landscape conservation scale, and then bringing in the wildlife monitoring and health aspects to reduce zoonotic spillover risks.

I do want to emphasize that this proposed program would also have a global coordination project that would support those areas that aren't easily accessed or programmed at the national level.

I'll just make a few comments about potential alignment with ASEAN and country priorities. I've reviewed the comprehensive recovery plan out of ASEAN and the POA for ASEAN cooperation in the CWT space. Within the limits of the GEF mandate, there's great alignment in three ways:

1. *The GEF is country demand-driven*. Projects are designed by country government ministries in cooperation with GEF agencies to align with country priorities, including regional frameworks, and clearly contributing to countries' commitments under the five UN

multilateral environmental agreements that we support within this strategy. This is a really important point to remember when we consider GEF contributions going forward.

2. *Complementary mechanisms.* Although we aren't the financial mechanisms for CITES and CMS implementation, we can certainly support activities that are complementary and make positive contributions to the strategic thrusts that I read about in the POA for ASEAN cooperation and to the extent to which those fall under the GEF strategy.
3. *Multi-stakeholder, cross-sectoral, and global coordination.* In terms of alignment, we really do sit in a unique position to support not only the country or national projects, but also to convene multiple stakeholders, mobilize finance, and target activities in areas that national projects can't reach as easily, including the transit and transboundary issues, global and regional donor coordination, cross-sectoral partnerships with One Health, and knowledge management, including a new emphasis on behavior change, social science mainstreaming, and south-south collaboration.

In closing, we're proposing this GEF-8 strategy and the Healthy Planet Healthy People Framework to provide timely support for countries for CWT in the Asia region, but also the strategy overall is focused on systems transformation, increasing policy coherence, breaking down those silos, addressing subsidies that are working against the environment, and mobilizing more resources to meet global environmental commitments and recover from this pandemic crisis. Combating wildlife trafficking is a really important piece of this puzzle that is much more complex, and we really look forward to continuing our collaboration with all of you and charting a great path forward.

Sallie Yang: Dr. Morgenroth-Klein, the German government has championed CWT in many important multilateral fora, such as the UN General Assembly. The German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) has invested in multiple IWT demand reduction, law enforcement, and source protection projects in Africa and in Asia. The German Government is also a top donor in ASEAN in protected area conservation, CWT, and regional policies. With COVID-19 and clear signs of the need to proactively respond to the pandemic, how has Germany positioned itself in the region and its upcoming priorities in nature protection?

Dr. Wolfram Morgenroth-Klein: BMZ is one of the bigger donors in the field of biodiversity protection. We have a portfolio of more than 600 natural protected areas which we support. This was and still is the starting point of everything that has to do with the combating illegal wildlife trade since we know that poaching is, in economic terms but also in health terms as we see now with a pandemic, one of the most dangerous risk factors for the existence of healthy and long-lasting protected areas, which are so important for our well-being.

I would like to present two initiatives. One is a bit older, but we are continuing it, and the other one was just launched this year.

First, we have the Partnership Against Poaching and Illegal Wildlife Trade in Africa and Asia. This older initiative is where we focus on the entire illegal trade chain of ivory and rhino horn, both in countries of origin in Africa, and also in consumer countries in Asia. Without looking at the whole chain, it will be very difficult to reduce the poaching. It is as important to go to the demand side and create awareness in the countries where these products are most in demand. The partnership involves all relevant German ministries, and we try to establish great flexibility to react to change trade patterns in the different geographic areas.

In Asia, a twin-track program is being pursued: 1) Halting illegal trade by strengthening the capacity of law enforcement agencies, and 2) curbing demand by raising awareness on the negative impacts of consuming illegal wildlife products and changing consumer behaviors. The current pandemic gives us a unique opportunity to convince more people than before of the dangers and negative effects that all this implies. We still don't know exactly how much the pandemic may have affected poaching in many of the protected areas we have. For example, income from ecotourism has decreased a lot, so the need of some parts of the population to create income is higher and, at least in some places and some geographic areas, this has increased the pressure for people to poach, with some very negative impact.

The challenges we see in this partnership is that the illegal chains are very complex. It is organized crime, so it's also dangerous to go into these issues. The level of trading is still very important, so it is a long-term task we face here, and that is why we will continue with this project. We have also initiated, together with the WWF, the project Reducing Demand for Ivory in China by cooperating with online marketplaces and targeting consumers through social media campaigns and we are proud to see that this has reached more than 22 million people.

The second thing I wanted to talk about was the new initiative, which we have launched at the recent IUCN World Conservation Congress in Marseille this year. It is called the International Alliance Against Health Risks in Wildlife Trade, which is an inclusive and interdisciplinary platform with the participation of some 80 national and international political and civil society organizations, including indigenous communities as well as research institutions. This Alliance is focused on legal wildlife trade, not illegal trade, because we also see health risks on the legal side of the wildlife trade, as well as other risks for biodiversity conservation.

The Alliance will translate the commitment and will of the many members we have—and we welcome more members, of course—to catalyze joint action by stakeholders from the fields of nature conservation, human health, and also animal health, as well as development cooperation and social sciences. Its objectives are:

1. To respect the cultural identity, traditional knowledge, and practices, because we know that many local communities also depend on the consumption of wildlife and its products at a local level;
2. To substantially reduce the risk of zoonotic spillovers from wildlife; and
3. To enhance international and national awareness, knowledge, and policies. We know wildlife poses a high risk for human health through spillover of zoonotic viruses, but as soon as we go to the details, we still need to know much more.

In Asia, the Alliance has activities in Vietnam for reducing health risks along the value chain of wildlife products. These include, for example, the formulation of minimum standards for wildlife farms, and a list which recommends wildlife species that should or should not be farmed for commercial purposes. In Southeast Asia, we are now trying to initiate, together with the Buddhist Wildlife Trade Demand Reduction Initiative, a campaign for public awareness and demand reduction in Vietnam, Bhutan, and Mongolia. Here we can draw on Buddhist principles of compassion towards all life, and universal responsibility and interdependence, and we can reach a huge number of people who are otherwise more difficult to reach by other means. We are quite optimistic that this will also give a great push to reducing the demand for wildlife products, and thus reducing viral spillovers.

In the Philippines, a small-scale project aims to enhance the domestic capacity for One Health, trans-disciplinary research, and knowledge translation. Here we also try to push capacity building for the next generation of One Health leaders in different sectors, including government, environment, health, and those dealing with wildlife in general.

I believe that the new GEF round gives us a very good opportunity, together with the good results we expect from CBD/COP/15, to increase our cooperation and to achieve more results.

Sallie Yang: Let's move to Francesco Ricciardi. In what way has and can ADB provide leadership within ASEAN and ensure that CWT remains on the policy agenda? How can we encourage governments to adapt to new challenges, such as the pandemic, and achieve successful cooperation?

Francesco Ricciardi: ADB is uniquely placed to assume a leadership role in this. We have very deep relationships with governments and civil society organizations. It's very important to take the step of moving beyond this space where we are discussing now. We have met each other in countless events in the last few months, so we know each other, and we know that we agree on some points. The difficult part now is going out from this space and talking to politicians, economists, and others that don't know anything about animals. Maybe they think we are tree huggers, that we love animals, and we don't want them to be trafficked. That is true, but also, it's very important to have a clear view of the final implications of this trade and the health risk for everyone.

We also know that most of the funding for CWT is grant money, which unfortunately is limited. So, it is also important to talk with the governments and try to mobilize their internal resources, because if they do that, it is also easier for us to get co-financing and raise even more money. We need to convince the governments that this kind of investment has a huge financial return. It's not just a matter of how much money it's going to cost us. We need to ask ourselves, "Can we afford doing or not doing anything?" How much is it going to cost us to do nothing; the cost of inaction is even higher.

"We need to ask ourselves, 'Can we afford doing or not doing anything?' How much is it going to cost us to do nothing; the cost of inaction is even higher."

Francesco Ricciardi
Senior Environment Specialist
Asian Development Bank: IWT Projects mapping and upcoming opportunities for collaboration



Sustainability requires a complete economic paradigm shift towards financial planning that includes environmental costs. Another important paradigm shift is to convince people that investing in nature and biodiversity conservation is development. Development is not just building roads, ports, or hospitals. It's important to consider the environmental costs of this infrastructure. For example, if you build a road in the middle of the forest, you will probably have economic benefits because you connect cities and businesses, but you will also have economic costs linked to environmental losses, and not everyone is aware of that, or they believe it is a negligible or unavoidable cost. ADB and our

other partners in the region should try to take this message to the government to make them understand that.

Another important point I want to make is that we need to keep ourselves updated, so use new tools, invest in new technologies, and include the private sector. It's not just the governments that need to work on it. Some colleagues from WWF, for example, are working with shipping companies to make them aware of the risks of wildlife trafficking. Someone was also talking about DNA testing of traded wildlife or its parts. Now we have very quick DNA testing to identify exactly what species are traded, and it's almost impossible to falsify a DNA sample. And, as I was mentioning before, we can use artificial intelligence and machine learning to scan digital media for wildlife trade activities.

This pandemic is teaching us that nobody can single-handedly control the risk, not even the most advanced countries can do it by themselves. It's a global issue. We can try to shelter ourselves. Each country can lock their borders and try to fight the pandemic on their own, but if you really want to win this war, we need to collaborate with other countries and other organizations, and everyone.

I hope we can all convey this message to policymakers, because it's worrisome to see that very little stimulus money is going to CWT and biodiversity conservation. There is very worrisome data saying that less than 10% of the economic stimulus money is going to green measures, with much of the money going to funding the status quo, or to the way things were before the pandemic. We are missing a vital opportunity here, and as ADB and all our partners, we need to work together to make people and governments understand how important this is. In ADB's case, we will try to convey this message to our member countries.

Sallie Yang: I totally agree with you. The whole economic model and strategy need to be restructured globally, especially in view of this pandemic and its fallout. The current economic model from the industrialization age is outdated and, quite frankly, has played a big part in creating the situation that we're in right now. That's just my personal opinion but, yes, there has to be a paradigm shift.

DISCUSSANTS' COMMENTS

- *Dian Sukmajaya, Senior Officer, Food, Agriculture and Forestry Division, Sectoral Development Directorate, ASEAN Secretariat*
- *Dr. Steven G. Olive, Mission Director, USAID Regional Development Mission for Asia*
- *Dr. Theresa Mundita S. Lim, Executive Director, ASEAN Center for Biodiversity*
- *Dr. Prasert Sornsathapornkul, Director of Wild Fauna and Flora Protection Division, Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation*
- *Dr. Noriaki Sakaguchi, Senior Advisor for Nature Conservation, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)*

Sallie Yang: Dr. Dian, can you share with us how donors can support the implementation of the POA and the ACRF more effectively?

Dr. Dian Sukmajaya: First, I would just like to recognize that, at the moment, we already have a robust partnership with the OIE and we are entering a new MOU. Also, we have other international partner organizations like FAO, and we are initiating discussions with the World Bank and ADB. In the past, ADB also supported ASEAN on the avian influenza. And we have several projects supported by the German government related to climate-smart measures, which is a good opportunity for us.

I'm delighted and optimistic that we can align our Regional Plan of Action for ASEAN Cooperation on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement 2021-2025 based on your presentations. We have the same view that in addressing illegal wildlife trade, we should focus on three aspects: socioeconomic, economics of wildlife trafficking, and environmental and biodiversity conservation. I also learned that we need to address livelihoods, such as nature-based tourism, as well as combat illegal wildlife trade through addressing supply chain risks and human-wildlife conflict. All of these are actually in our ASEAN POA, so I am very optimistic that we can align the resources available at the different international organizations to support regional and country priorities, and to move in the right direction.

We also learned that based on the framework presented by our panelists, we can align for more robust partnerships and collaboration among ASEAN member states and with international partners. The resources are there. Technical advice, funding, and infrastructure are there. We just need to improve our current efforts at different levels through more effective collaboration with different stakeholders. This Partners Coordination Forum is one good example for us moving forward, and hopefully there will be a regular partnership forum to provide updates on what have been done and what the partners plan to do together with the ASEAN member states.

In terms of timeline, the Partners Forum could be organized before the Working Group Meeting so that it can directly contribute to the discussion and we can align the partners' vision and mission to the POA for the ASEAN Cooperation on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement. In short, the ingredients are there. We just need to have a good chef.

Sallie Yang: And a good kitchen. We need a chef, a sous chef, and assistance.

Dr. Steven G. Olive: USAID greatly values partners like ADB, ASEAN, and other regional partners, and that's certainly how we want to go forward. Looking back, what have been some of the accomplishments that we can celebrate? Francesco [Ricciardi] mentioned the DNA testing we can now do as an example, but do others have major achievements that we can celebrate? Because progress in this area is very slow. Working with all of these partners and governments can be very slow. What have been some of our key achievements? Or looking forward, what do you think are the major opportunities coming up in the next 5-10 years that you think we can all accomplish together?

Hannah Fairbank: I had the pleasure actually to work for USAID for many years and had a hand in the design of some of the earlier projects on CWT in the region. It's been just a great pleasure, and now with a little bit of historical perspective, I think one really obvious point for me is that this issue is on the global agenda in a way that it certainly was not 15 years ago. And it wasn't just the pandemic.

I don't know that that is necessarily all a success. Part of it is due to just higher visibility of the issue overall because of the gravity of the situation and increased awareness of it. But there has been progress in terms of getting this more into the mainstream of the transnational organized crime agenda, and in the policing agenda to some extent in some countries. I remember in our meetings early on, the police weren't necessarily in the room and the public security ministries weren't necessarily in the room, because it wasn't considered necessarily a rule of law issue. We still have ways to go on that but the conversation has changed. Who's at the table and who's in the room has changed, and I think the higher realization of the gravity of the situation is also starting to change.

Dr. Theresa Mundita S. Lim: Clearly COVID-19 has presented us with new opportunities to recalibrate our efforts towards harmonizing our CWT agenda with the plans and priorities of various sectors at the regional, national, and community levels. Most of the speakers acknowledged that the impacts of biodiversity loss on human and livestock health and vice versa should be considered in our sustainable development planning. Considering the link between the loss of biodiversity, the increasing human and domestic animal interactions with wildlife, and the emergence of zoonotic diseases, collaboration among sectors becomes a necessary step towards recovery and building resilience.

ACRF serves as the regional blueprint for recovery. It underscores that the biodiversity-human health nexus encourages individuals and communities in ASEAN to become biodiversity literate and to adopt behaviors that address the root cause of zoonotic diseases. That's clearly in the ACRF. The framework actually serves as a guidepost to make sure that the biodiversity concerns, including the drivers of biodiversity loss, such as illegal and unregulated wildlife trade, are taken into account in the medium- to long-term pandemic response.

The scale of the COVID-19 crisis, however, requires a multidisciplinary approach and this was emphasized by a lot of our panelists earlier. Actions that are rooted in science and focused on reducing the risks of future outbreaks are equally important. With the support of some of ASEAN's dialogue and development partners, together with the ASEAN Secretariat, the ACB has been working with the various ASEAN sectoral bodies and working groups to mainstream biodiversity into their programs of work and recovery plans. The ACB is working closely with the ASEAN Working Group on Nature Conservation and Biodiversity, and in the past few years, we have been working with the ASEAN Working Group on Coastal and Marine Environment. Now, we are working with the ASEAN Working Group on CITES and WE as well. This presents an opportunity for us to mainstream biodiversity into the action plans and recovery plans within the working groups in the ASEAN.

The Center also promotes and supports science-based decision-making processes through regional tools, like the ASEAN Clearinghouse Mechanism and the ASEAN Biodiversity Output Reports. The ACB likewise is seeking to enhance biodiversity considerations in existing surveillance mechanisms for zoonotic diseases, and we've had opportunities to work with the ASEAN Senior Officials on health for that purpose.

Aligning collaboration that integrates the complex relationship between human health, animal health, and the environment is the overarching framework of the One Health approach, and it will need a whole-of-community approach which is already a priority in ASEAN through the ACRF. So, it is important to have robust regional cooperation and mechanisms to make sure that the outcomes are effectively applied in addressing national and local priorities with proper incentives and investments channeled towards nature positive actions on the ground.

"Aligning collaboration that integrates the complex relationship between human health, animal health, and the environment is the overarching framework of the ONE Health approach."

Dr. Mundita Lim
Executive Director, ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity



Dr. Noriaki Sakaguchi: We recognize that illegal wildlife trafficking is indeed one of the main issues to address currently. The COVID-19 pandemic has made it clear that the infection process from host animal to human is closely related to global biodiversity issues. The massive scale of deforestation and construction of farmland and road networks, which enable humans to access and enter deep into the natural forest, increase opportunities for direct contact between humans and wild animals that carry pathogens that can infect humans. Infected people, livestock, and wild animals and products, such as bushmeat, cause the spread of infectious disease and pandemics, a process that is linked to increased poaching and wildlife trafficking.

There are various challenges in tackling wildlife poaching and illegal trade. These include lack of human resources and law enforcement, poverty of local communities, and unsustainable use of resources and their habitats. Aware of the expansion of consumer demand for wildlife products, such as traditional medicines and ornaments, JICA has been focusing on addressing IWT through comprehensive institutionalization of nature and biodiversity conservation in our partner countries. We do this through strengthening capacity for protected area management by enhancing patrols and biodiversity monitoring, and improving livelihoods of local communities around or within protected areas by developing sustainable resource use and sustainable agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and tourism. Additionally, we focus on adopting nature-based solutions in ecosystem restoration and also climate change mitigation and adaptation, and addressing social challenges.

JICA aims to develop a sustainable world in which we can enjoy multiple ecosystem services continuously. We believe that our approaches could increase local communities' incentives for wildlife conservation and effectively contribute to reducing poaching and IWT through cooperation with ASEAN member states and also international organizations and NGOs, and are also important in the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and also the One Health approach.

Dr. Prasert Sornsathapornkul: One of our main missions is addressing the illegal wildlife trade problem in Thailand and with different countries. We put a lot of effort and resources to solve this problem, and we need more technical advice and internal financing to do this. We have lots of communication with our neighboring countries, including Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar. We talk about this, but we also have some tension.

If we talk about our government sector, we have some limitations in terms of resources and financing, which is why for many years, we have collaboration with partners. Our department has GEF-7 projects on combating illegal wildlife trade focusing on rhino, ivory, tiger, and pangolin. This is a very good example for Thailand to showcase how to address this problem.

We're very happy to hear from the panelists from GEF, ADB, JICA, and USAID on how they can support ASEAN, because illegal wildlife trade is a problem not only in Thailand but in all of ASEAN. That's why we appreciate that the ASEAN Secretariat helped us with our guidelines for the POA, providing direction for us to work together, and not only as individual countries, on demand reduction and the many aspects of illegal wildlife trade.

This forum is important because I think our department is the only government sector for this forum, and it's nice to hear the different points of view of the different organizations and how they support us. In the ASEAN, Thailand is the lead country for the POA, but unfortunately, during the past year, during the pandemic, we have not progressed actually. We tried to bring it up again but how, and how can the partners support us?

I'd like to confirm again that Thailand as the lead country for the POA welcomes opportunities to work with other partners that can help us. And I believe the partners have their own unique and very specific expertise, and so can guide us to work in this region. We would be very happy to start the implementation of our POA with our partners.

PRESENTATION OF DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS DIALOGUE HIGHLIGHTS

Sallie Yang: To ensure that the forum is not just another conference and forgotten by the participants and development partners, and more importantly, to propel the discussions of the last three days into action, the development partners have been working hard behind the scenes to capture the highlights of the dialogues and proposed action points as next steps for the development partners. I now invite Dr. Francesco Ricciardi to present the highlights of the Development Partners Dialogue Highlights and announce the initiation of a consultation process to develop a CWT Development Partners Coordination Platform for Asia.

See Annex 2 for the full text of the Development Partners Dialogue Highlights.

Francesco Ricciardi (reads):

DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS DIALOGUE HIGHLIGHTS

The Regional Counter Wildlife Trafficking (CWT) Partnership Forum, hosted by the Government of Thailand through the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation and USAID Wildlife Asia, brought together Development Partners (“Partners”) active in combating illegal wildlife trade across Asia and beyond: Bilateral and multilateral donors, government agency representatives, United Nations programs, trust and consolidated program funds, foundations, and international conservation NGOs.

Partners discussed options and opportunities for increased collaboration in the region, proposed innovative solutions to continued and emerging threats to wildlife and human well-being, and identified a clear pathway forward to unite against IWT in Asia.

I. Highlights of the Development Partners Dialogues

Session 8 and 9 focused on how to enhance the CWT efforts and coordinate and align investments to more effectively support ASEAN Regional Priorities. To improve coordination, maximize synergies, and strive for collective impact, action points derived from the Dialogue’s Highlights identified by donors and partners will be presented in the following.

Joint Efforts in Asia: IWT in the regional context

Action Point

1. Partners emphasized that the impact of CWT activities in Asia needs to be amplified by recognizing existing challenges of coordination in the region, taking concrete steps to overcome these, and acting in a more coordinated manner to mirror the networks and clout of organized wildlife trafficking networks and to close identified gaps, such as information and intelligence exchanges among countries in Southeast Asia.

Strengthening Coordination: CWT Initiatives and Country Alignment

Action Point

2. Partners saw the need to build on and complement ongoing and planned initiatives to improve CWT coordination between and among various Partners, leveraging strengths and resources, and expanding CWT networks. There was a broad consensus among Partners to coordinate and align funding with the global and regional priorities for countries in the region that address unsustainable, high-risk, and illegal wildlife trade, taking note of recently passed UN Resolutions, Goals and Milestones of the Convention on Biological Diversity, CITES Resolutions, and national and regional action plans and strategies mentioned above. To that effect, Partners agreed to engage in consultations with global and regional bodies, and national governments, making sure to capture country needs and priorities, close existing gaps, and develop joint solutions.

The IWT Project Map and Database: Sharing Information on CWT Projects

Action Point

3. Partners stressed the importance of the IWT Project Map and Database, and recognized the value of adding to this effort by regularly sharing updated project information, and supporting its institutionalization, ensuring a broad ownership of the tool by development partners. Partners acknowledged that an expansion of the database to include projects at a global scale would enable coordination among CWT projects worldwide. The option of the tool's institutionalization within a platform and the sharing of responsibility for its administration was raised.

The CWT Development Partners Coordination Platform: A New Mechanism

Action Point

4. The Dialogues captured the interest of Partners to pursue the development of a regional CWT Development Partners Coordination Platform for Asia. The creation and utilization of such a coordination platform would allow Partners to: i) better streamline and advance ongoing and future coordination efforts in combating IWT; ii) network and share relevant information and lessons learned to avoid overlap and duplication; iii) inform various levels of project planning, alignment, and implementation (regional, national and local); iv) maximize synergies among partners and benefit for country beneficiaries; and v) develop a more comprehensive picture of the CWT landscape in the region.

The One Health Approach: IWT in a Shifting Landscape

Action Point

5. Going forward, Partners shared the ambition to consider the strong interlinkages between human health, animal health, and ecosystem health, and address IWT holistically by factoring in the implications of unsustainable, high-risk and illegal wildlife trade impacting animal health and welfare, human health, and the balance of ecosystems in project design and implementation. Apart from One Health, Partners agreed on the need for complementary interventions, such as investments in building resilient diversified livelihoods, food security and agriculture, along with enhanced attention on demand reduction and behavior change. Partners agreed to the importance of designing projects in a more comprehensive manner to account for the strong interlinkages of human-wildlife health and acknowledged the opportunity to broaden the discussions around IWT.

Improved Sustainability: Long-term Funding and Domestic Resources

Action Point

6. The Dialogues highlighted concrete intentions of several Partners to continue the funding of CWT activities in the region. Partners called for a more efficient allocation of scarce funds to shift to larger projects, and the strong buy-in from governments investing in national and regional CWT efforts. A suggested "organizing theme" across Partners to drive project design that is open for discussion moving forward may originate from the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework or from the Plan of Action for ASEAN Cooperation on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement (2021-2025).

II. Closing Summary

Sessions 8 and 9 of the CWT Partnership Forum provided an excellent opportunity to take stock of the Development Partner landscape, ongoing and planned initiatives, and upcoming funding rounds. The Dialogues highlighted the importance of strengthening collaboration among Development Partners to account for the continued threat of IWT as well as new and emerging challenges in a post-COVID-19 world. Combating IWT efficiently demands an equally effective response and cooperation as displayed by wildlife trafficking networks.

It is anticipated that, with the Action Points noted above, concrete actions will ensue from these Dialogues to strengthen regional collaboration. One measure will be consultations with donors and other agencies on a CWT Development Partners Coordination Platform, which are anticipated to start soon after the closing of the Forum. To help such a platform be established, ADB has offered to serve as Interim Chair.

A continuation of Dialogues such as this one and the 2019 Chiang Mai Conference are essential to keep each other informed of projects planned, lessons learned, and partnerships initiated. It is hoped that coordination among Development Partners in Asia will become more frequent, structured, and impactful. This Forum was one step of many in the right direction – and to better leverage partner strengths and maximize impact towards improving wildlife conservation and human well-being in the region and worldwide.

NEXT STEPS AND EVENT WRAP-UP

Veronica Pedrosa: I hope you'll join me in thanking our hosts the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation of Thailand, USAID Wildlife Asia, in collaboration with WWF, the ASEAN Secretariat, the Asian Development Bank, World Bank's Global Wildlife Program, the Global Environment Facility, and the United Nations Development Programme. This has been an unbelievably, incredibly amazing partnership forum. A continuation of the dialogues like this one is essential, and I'm sure that the coordination among development partners here in Asia will become more frequent, structured and impactful, and that this forum is just one of many steps in the direction.

Full proceedings from this forum will be available at www.cwtpartnershipforum.org, along with recordings of sessions. In a way, this is not an end but the beginning of the work that's been identified, so we do look forward to the next steps in the development partner platform for Asia that's just been announced.

CLOSING REMARKS

Dr. Rungnapar Pattanavibool – Deputy Director General, DNP Thailand

Let me begin by thanking the USAID Mission to Thailand and USAID Wildlife Asia for co-organizing this timely and important forum. As we are entering the post-pandemic period, we are aware that we have to prepare to move forward to the new normal CWT.

My special appreciation also extends to co-host agencies and all supporters who made this event happen, especially the ASEAN Secretariat. Obviously, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and difficulties in normal life, we are facing new challenges. Therefore, I wholeheartedly appreciate everyone for making yourself part of this CWT forum.

The Southeast Asian region has long been targeted by illegal wildlife traders as a hotspot for global trade for wildlife. For decades, we all have collaborated closely to fight against wildlife trafficking. In response to the need for addressing illegal wildlife, Thailand convened a meeting for ASEAN ministers responsible for CITES in 2019. The *Chiang Mai Statement of ASEAN Ministers Responsible for CITES and Wildlife Enforcement*, as the outcome of the meeting, has confirmed the ASEAN's commitment to increased action-oriented policies, law enforcement, wildlife cybercrime, and demand reduction. The Ministerial Statement was later translated into a range of actions through the Plan of Action on ASEAN Cooperation on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement 2021-2025 in order to help the ASEAN member states in achieving their regional goals.

The regional Plan of Action highlighted the regional priorities and the range of actions needed to strengthen the institutional framework and capacity building, together with enhancing trade facilitation for legal trade of wildlife under CITES provisions. Gathering from the diverse set of speakers and inputs during the partnership forum, there is still much to do to enhance effectiveness of law enforcement and prosecution.

The shortcomings in legal and regulatory frameworks, including weak links in the enforcement of regulations, inadequate fines, or penalties should be addressed. In case of prosecutions, the conviction rates are important. Improving domestic litigation to increase deterrence effects on wildlife offenses should also be one of the ways forward, in addition to enhancing the forensic science capacity of all ASEAN member states to enhance enforcement capacity and increase success rates to deterring wildlife crimes. Enhanced collaboration is crucial to enhance effectiveness of law enforcement, as well as undertaking professional training programs for judges in forestry legislation, particularly those at the level of courts dealing with CITES and wildlife enforcement issues, as well as for customs and border guards.

The continuous capacity building for better wildlife management and enforcement is also important. The POA determines the need to identify existing training facilities and available training programs on CITES and wildlife enforcement in the region, such as species identification, wildlife forensics, wildlife cybercrime investigation, use of latest technology to optimize intelligence and digital forensics sampling, and evidence handling guidelines for court trials.

"We must also acknowledge through our actions that this matter is multi-stakeholder and does not only lie with wildlife government agencies."

Dr. Rungnapar Pattanavibool
Deputy Director General,
Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation



The POA calls on ASEAN to develop strategies for wildlife management that take into account the need to prevent the transmission of zoonotic disease from wildlife to humans. We do need to review the risk of zoonotic diseases being spread through the legal and illegal international trade in wildlife, and establish the policies and mechanisms to minimize that risk. As you may agree, digital transformations have brought a lot of changes. We can observe more online trade for wildlife during

the pandemic. The challenge, therefore, includes the increased use of the Internet and the rapid growth of online marketplaces for wildlife buyers and sellers and the supporting transport infrastructure for delivery of products.

Together with working on supply chain disruption, we are focusing more on demand reduction for the wildlife and its products. Social behavioral change communication, or SBCC, can become an essential strategy to reduce demand for legal, illegal, and inappropriate wildlife consumption in a sustainable manner.

Those are the key points of the ASEAN Plan of Action for CITES and Wildlife Enforcement 2021-2022. I outlined those key points to set the scene for various discussion in this virtual partnership forum. I would like to encourage my colleagues from ASEAN member states to explore collaboration with potential partners to support the implementation of the POA. Thailand in its capacity as the lead country of the ASEAN Working Group on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement would like to encourage ASEAN to convene the regional workshop among ASEAN member states and partners to formulate the implementation plan of the POA. As a set of priorities to meet donors and partner expectations, implementing the POA in a timely manner will eventually lead to the achievement of our common goals of the region.

We must also acknowledge through our actions that this matter is multi-stakeholder, and does not only lie with wildlife government agencies. Various government and private sectors stakeholders, and especially suppliers, throughout the supply chain along the international, regional, and local value chains are important partners on this issue.

In closing, I would like to reaffirm that the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation considers concrete collaboration between ASEAN Member States and partners important in order to increase effectiveness in tracking illegal wildlife trade at the global level.

Dr. Steven G. Olive, Mission Director, USAID Regional Development Mission for Asia (RDMA)

In Asia, the counter wildlife trafficking movement has grown considerably in the last decade, a testament to the power of the cooperation and partnership. Many of you will remember the effort that USAID RDMA was proud to be a part of 15 years ago to establish wildlife law enforcement networks. At the time, the illegal wildlife trade was hardly on the agenda. Today, we all recognize that wildlife trafficking is a serious transnational crime that poses a threat to regional security, economic prosperity, and the integrity of natural systems and human health.

We have seen the power of partnerships these past few days. Even more stakeholders are pushing together to forward common agendas and make real change towards ending the illegal wildlife trade. In this forum, we have heard inspiring calls, as Justice Wilson's declaration that "the rule of law will change the future." In this forum, we have heard poignant stories, such as Cindy Bishop telling her children that the family will no longer ride the elephants. As Cindy told her children and I quote, "We should not sit above nature, we should walk beside it." Thank you, Cindy, for your longtime support for these critical issues as well as being one of our spokespersons for our Beautiful Without Ivory campaign.

Through these partnerships, we have seen breakthroughs in demand reduction. Our campaigns have convinced people that wildlife products are not socially acceptable. We have heard from private sector leaders, religious community members, and respected social influencers that behaviors can change. Through the example of USAID Wildlife Asia and its partners' efforts, we are achieving the

desired change in consumer attitudes in a short amount of time. Together, we can continue to build on this success.

The law enforcement community shared how targeted tools and training can make a difference in dismantling illegal wildlife networks. The web of illegal wildlife trafficking crosses borders and exploits gaps in laws and communications between countries. By strengthening the relationship between law enforcement agencies within and between countries, we are making it much harder for illegal wildlife traffickers to operate with impunity. Strong laws and policies serve as a good foundation for counter wildlife trafficking interventions. Harmonizing laws between countries ensures that criminals cannot use loopholes to evade prosecution. Ensuring that punishment and fines fit the crimes create strong disincentives for wildlife traffickers.

"The impacts of global warming and the Covid pandemic have upended our lives. Our planet is under catastrophic stress from human exploitation and neglect. It is easy to forget that while we are fighting for the survival of our wildlife, our forests, our oceans, we are fighting for our own survival as well. We all are all interconnected in the web of life."

Dr. Steven G. Olive
Mission Director
USAID/Regional Development Mission for Asia



In recent years, we have seen a number of high-profile prosecutions. This proves that countries are taking wildlife trafficking seriously and sends an important message to traffickers everywhere.

Political will is also growing stronger. The number of countries represented in this meeting, from the ASEAN community and beyond, as well as the number of donors we have here, demonstrates how important the stakes are for us in protecting the environment, our economies, and our own health.

The rapid legislative and policy changes to curb illegal wildlife trade across the region during the pandemic have been encouraging, but we must do better. The impacts of global warming and the COVID-19 pandemic have upended our lives. Our planet is under catastrophic stress from human exploitation and neglect. It is easy to forget that while we are fighting for the survival of our wildlife, our forests, our oceans, we are fighting for our own survival as well. We are all interconnected in the web of life.

I am encouraged and grateful for all the partners who have participated in this counter wildlife trafficking partnership forum. It is a perfect way to mark the completion of USAID Wildlife Asia, and to mark the start of our new USAID Reducing Demand for Wildlife Project, which will build upon this activity's successes.

I deeply appreciate the strong commitment shown by the stakeholders here today. I know the community we see here today, and many others, will continue to grow and strengthen the conservation movement for years to come. This community, and these conservation efforts have grown on a firm foundation of partnership. The United States government, including USAID and the many United States counterpart agencies in the region, are committed to this partnership, and the

ASEAN regional and national leadership to deter wildlife crime, conserve ecosystems, and uphold the rule of law and regional stability that underpins a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

We are honored to have co-organized the partnership forum with our partners, the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, the World Wildlife Fund, the Asian Development Bank, the ASEAN Secretariat, the United Nations Development Programme, the Global Environment Facility, the World Bank's Global Wildlife Program, and many others. Thank you very much.

As we enter a new era of regional partnership, we look forward to finding new ways to collaborate and expand on countering wildlife trafficking movement, as we work for a healthier and greener Southeast Asia.

ANNEXES

ANNEX I. AGENDA



AGENDA

COUNTER WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING PARTNERSHIP FORUM

– ENTERING A NEW ERA OF REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP –

September 21-23, 2021, Bangkok, Thailand – Virtual

Version as of September 17, 2021

The Regional Counter Wildlife Trafficking Partnership Forum is a virtual event co-hosted by the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, Thailand, and USAID Wildlife Asia in collaboration with WWF, the ASEAN Secretariat, Asian Development Bank, World Bank Global Wildlife Program, Global Environment Facility, and United Nations Development Program. The forum will bring together key Counter Wildlife Trafficking (CWT) partners and stakeholders in Asia and beyond to strengthen collaboration, planning and cooperation towards protecting biodiversity and ending the trade in illegal wildlife as we enter a post-pandemic landscape.

Format: Three online virtual webinars – Approximately 3-4 hours each (September 21-23), scheduled on three successive mornings.

- **Day 1:** Focus on the importance of a partnership approach in furthering the CWT Movement and the resulting legacy impacts and initiatives.
- **Day 2:** Focus on sustaining and strengthening the CWT movement by working at the regional, national and local levels, and the importance and role of regional and national institutions, leaders, and champions.
- **Day 3:** Partner Dialogue with focus on the current CWT landscape, the impacts of COVID, priorities in a post-COVID world, partner plans, and opportunities to strengthen coordination mechanisms moving forward, including a presentation highlighting the outcomes of the Development Partner discussions.

Objectives

1. Showcase the growth and potential of the CWT movement and advance sustainability of partnerships, achievements, and legacy impacts and initiatives.
2. Support and advance partner country and ASEAN CWT leadership including coordinated partner support for the implementation of regional priorities and the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action.

3. Provide a forum for partners to present ongoing and forthcoming CWT programs/funding, discuss Counter Wildlife Trafficking issues and advance coordinated action.
4. Facilitate discussion among development partners to identify new areas of investments in policy, behavior change, law enforcement and the emerging responses to Illegal Wildlife Trafficking through a One Health approach.
5. Announce the initiation of a consultation process to develop a Counter Wildlife Trafficking Development Partners Coordination Platform for Asia.

TIME	SESSION DESCRIPTION AND SPEAKERS
DAY 1 TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21	
8.15-8:30am	Participants join; Participation briefing Event MC Ms. Veronica Pedrosa and Event Organizer InsightPact
Opening Session	
8:30-9:00am (30 min)	Welcome remarks Michael Heath U.S. Charge d’Affaire, U.S. Embassy, Thailand (5 min) State of wildlife trafficking and a regional approach H.E. Dato Lim Jock Hoi, Secretary-General of ASEAN (5 min) Elevating Counter Wildlife Tracking efforts in South East Asia – Forging a New Era in Regional Partnership Minister Varawut Silpa-archa, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (10 min) Forum overview Peter Collier, Chief of Party, USAID Wildlife Asia (3 min) Group photo (3min)
SESSION 1: SUSTAINING A COUNTER WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING MOVEMENT	
9:00-9:35am (35 min)	<i>CWT - Past, Present and Future</i> : How the CWT movement has evolved and grown over the last 15-20 years Presentation by Grace Gabriel, Asia Regional Director, International Fund for Animal Welfare and Steve Galster, Freeland Chairman (14 min) <i>The Case for a Regional Approach: It Takes More than a Village</i> : How initiatives connect and reinforce each other at the local, national, regional, and international level Presentation by ASEAN Secretariat (6 min) <i>A Call to Global Action</i> Associate Justice Michael D. Wilson, Hawaii Supreme Court, USA (6 min) Q&A (10 min)
SESSION 2: TIPPING THE SCALES - LEGACY IMPACTS AND PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVES	
9:35-10:30am (55 min)	<i>Topline Initiatives, Achievements and Impacts</i> : How strong partnership initiatives have advanced approaches at national, regional and international levels; how these approaches are being tailored, integrated and institutionalized; and what’s next. - Panel discussion moderated by Natalie Phaholyothin, CEO, WWF Thailand Partnership Legacies

TIME	SESSION DESCRIPTION AND SPEAKERS
	<p>Dr. Craig Kirkpatrick, Regional Wildlife Conservation Advisor, USAID Regional Development Mission for Asia on lessons learned implementing USAID Wildlife Asia (6 min)</p> <p>Reducing Demand for Wildlife</p> <p>Rabia Mushtaq, Communications Specialist, WildAid Thailand, (6 min)</p> <p>Chenyue Ma, Program Manager, International Fund for Animal Welfare, China (6 min)</p> <p>Institutionalizing Law Enforcement Capacity</p> <p>Steve Galster, Chairman, Freeland (6 min)</p> <p>Aligning and Strengthening Prosecutorial and Judicial Responses</p> <p>Jedsada Taweekan, Regional Illegal Wildlife Trade Program Manager, WWF (6 min)</p> <p>Strengthening Judicial Institutions in Environmental Law</p> <p>Dr. Georgina Lloyd, Regional Coordinator Asia and the Pacific of Environmental Law and Governance, UNEP (6 min)</p> <p>Q&A (10 min)</p> <p>Break with onscreen timer (5 min)</p>
SESSION 3: LESSONS LEARNED – ADAPTING IN A SHIFTING LANDSCAPE	
<p>10:30-11:25am (55 min)</p>	<p>Lessons Learned in CWT Programming: How they can be applied to strengthen the CWT Movement, consolidate platforms, and amplify impact.</p> <p>- Moderated by Mark Romley, U.S. Department of Justice</p> <p>Presentation</p> <p>Peter Collier, Chief of Party, USAID Wildlife Asia (10 min)</p> <p>Panel Discussion (5 min each)</p> <p>Lishu Li, Program Manager, Counter Wildlife Trafficking, Wildlife Conservation Society China</p> <p>Dr. Giovanni Broussard, Asia Regional Coordinator, UNODC Wildlife and Forest Crime Programme</p> <p>Kanitha Krishnasamy, Director for Southeast Asia, TRAFFIC</p> <p>Eleanora De Guzman, Team Lead, SBCC/ Demand Reduction, USAID Wildlife Asia</p> <p>Q&A (10 min)</p> <p>Day 1 wrap-up and closing remarks (5 min)</p>
DAY 2 WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22	
SESSION 4: COUNTER WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING LEADERS, CHAMPIONS, AND INFLUENCERS	
<p>8:30-9:35am (65 min)</p>	<p>Showcasing Change Agents: What can one person really do in terms of maximizing reach, mobilizing support, and sustaining movements and platforms? Influencers and champions speak in their own words.</p> <p>- Moderated by Veronica Pedrosa</p> <p>“Heart Talk” Panel Discussion</p> <p>Venerable Maha Sompong Talaputto, Buddhist Dharma Teacher</p> <p>Cindy Sirinya Bishop, Supermodel and Actress</p>

TIME	SESSION DESCRIPTION AND SPEAKERS
	<p>John Roberts, Conservation Director, Minor Hotel Group Associate Justice Michael D. Wilson, Hawaii Supreme Court, USA Le Thi Thu Thuy, Deputy Director of Enterprise Development Foundation, Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry</p> <p>Q&A (10 min)</p>
SESSION 5: ASEAN REGIONAL PRIORITIES FOR COUNTERING WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING	
<p>9:35-10:40am (65 min)</p>	<p>Advancing Regional Frameworks: How to influence and catalyze action at both the regional and national level - Moderated by Steve Galster, Chairman, Freeland</p> <p>Chiang Mai Statement, Special ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Illegal Wildlife Trade Presentation by DNP, Thailand (8 min)</p> <p>The ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement Presentation by ASEAN Secretariat (12 min)</p> <p>Discussants Dhannan Sunoto, Deputy Chief of Party, USAID PROSPECT Dr. Dindo Campilan, Regional Director for Asia and Hub Director for Oceania, IUCN Peter Collier, Chief of Party, USAID Wildlife Asia Ben Janse van Rensburg, Chief, Enforcement Support, CITES Secretariat</p> <p>Q&A (10 min) Break with onscreen timer (5 min)</p>
SESSION 6: AMPLIFYING ACTION IN COUNTER WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING - LEVERAGING REGIONAL AND NATIONAL EFFORTS THROUGH ASEAN INITIATIVES	
<p>10:40-11:25am (45 min)</p>	<p>Amplifying Action in Counter Wildlife Trafficking: How to leverage regional and national efforts through Partnership - Moderated by Steve Galster, Chairman, Freeland</p> <p>Presentations (6 min each) DAC Jim Wee, Executive Director, ASEANAPOL Secretariat Nguyen Tuong Van, Secretary General, ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly Dr. Theresa Mundita S. Lim, Executive Director, ASEAN Center for Biodiversity Briony Eales, Asian Development Bank – Introduction to Asian Judges Network on Environment (AJNE) and CWT</p> <p>Moderated responses from each presenter to questions/comments (5 min) Q&A (10 min) Day 2 wrap-up and closing remarks (2 min)</p>

TIME	SESSION DESCRIPTION AND SPEAKERS
DAY 3 THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23	
SESSION 7: TOWARDS A POST COVID WORLD – PIVOTS AND ACTIONS	
8:30-9:10am (40 min)	<p><i>Accelerating Change to End Illegal Wildlife Trafficking:</i> What still needs to be done? What are the priorities? How do we leverage the moment and maintain momentum?</p> <p><i>Part I - Regional and National Perspectives</i></p> <p>- Moderated by Dian Sukmajaya, Senior Officer, ASEAN Secretariat</p> <p>Regional Perspective (ASEAN Framing): ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework</p> <p>Presentation by Dian Sukmajaya, Senior Officer, ASEAN Secretariat (5 min)</p> <p>Pandemic prevention through a structured approach to One Health Frameworks: The interdependence of environment, wildlife, human health</p> <p>Presentation by Dr Betsy Miranda, One Health Consultant, WWF Asia Pacific Counter-IWT Hub (5 min)</p> <p>Country Perspectives: What changes related to CWT have countries made in response to COVID?</p> <p>Presentations by Indonesia; Malaysia; Philippines, Thailand; Vietnam (5 min each)</p>
9:10-9:55am (45 min)	<p><i>Part II - “Hard Talk” Discussion:</i> Showcasing the diverse perspectives on what’s needed to move forward</p> <p>- Moderated by Dararat Weerapong, Senior Project Manager, TRAFFIC</p> <p>Panel Discussion (5 min each)</p> <p>Dr. Amanda Fine, Health Program Associate Director – Asia, Wildlife Conservation Society</p> <p>Dr. Daniel Schar, Senior Regional Emerging Infectious Diseases Advisor</p> <p>Steve Galster, Chairman, Freeland</p> <p>Natalie Phaholyothin, CEO, WWF Thailand</p> <p>James Compton, USAID Wildlife TRAPS Project Leader, TRAFFIC</p> <p>Q&A (10 min)</p> <p>Break with onscreen timer (5 min)</p>
SESSION 8: ENTERING A NEW ERA OF REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP: DEVELOPMENT PARTNER PLANS AND PROGRAMS	
9:55-11:05am (80 min)	<p><i>Fireside Chat on Enhancing CWT Investments and Support in Asia through Donor Collaboration:</i> While significant measures to combat IWT have been taken, much needs to be done, including policy, new sustainable approaches to wildlife law enforcement cooperation, encouraging strategic behavior change campaigns, and a new emerging interest in One Health. This session will provide a broad overview of donor priorities in Asia Pacific and an opportunity to stock take and celebrate successes of recent or ongoing CWT projects.</p> <p>- Moderated by Alistair Monument, Acting Regional Director for Asia Pacific, WWF</p> <p>Introduction to the IWT Project Map and Database: Overview, Analysis, and Challenges</p> <p>Cecilia Fischer, Asian Development Bank and World Bank Consultant (20 min)</p> <p>Panel Discussion (30 min)</p> <p>Lisa Farroway, Senior Environmental Specialist and Program Manager Global Wildlife Program, World Bank</p>

TIME	SESSION DESCRIPTION AND SPEAKERS
	<p>Saroj Srisai, Program Officer, EU Delegation to Thailand</p> <p>Roopa Karia, Deputy Director, Regional Environment Office, USAID Regional Development Mission for Asia</p> <p>Dr. Francesco Ricciardi, Senior Environment Specialist, Asian Development Bank</p> <p>Discussants (10-15 min)</p> <p>Stefanie Lang, Executive Director, Legacy Landscapes Fund</p> <p>Dr. Hoang Thi Thanh Nhan, Deputy Director, Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Agency, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Viet Nam</p> <p>Sara Öberg Høper, First Secretary, Programme Specialist Environment & Climate Change, Development Cooperation - Regional Asia, Embassy of Sweden Bangkok, Thailand</p> <p>Marie Delattre, Deputy Customs Attaché, Embassy of France, Bangkok, Thailand</p> <p>Andrew Beirne, Economic & Prosperity Counsellor and UK Permanent Representative to UNESCAP, British Embassy, Bangkok, Thailand</p> <p>Q&A (10 min)</p> <p>Break with onscreen timer (5 min)</p>
<p>SESSION 9: ASEAN COUNTRY – DEVELOPMENT PARTNER DIALOGUE: CONVERGING COUNTRY AND DONOR PRIORITIES AND COORDINATED ACTION</p>	
<p>11:05-12:30 pm (85 min)</p>	<p><i>Fireside Chat on Aligning Donor Investments with ASEAN Regional Priorities:</i> Focusing on the “Broad Strategy 5: Advancing Towards a More Sustainable and Resilient Future” of the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework”. Regionally, ASEAN continues to innovate and adapt to new threats to wildlife, such as upgrading illegal trade of wildlife and timber as a priority agenda of the Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Organized Crimes (SOMTC), ASEAN’s national security pillar, and adoption of IWT as a leading agenda of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly and the ASEANAPOL. As governments design programs, enhance legislations or invest in counter wildlife trafficking measures of One Health approaches, there is opportunity to new areas of support or co-financing opportunities through new CWT funding opportunities.</p> <p>- Moderated by Sallie Yang, Policy Lead USAID Wildlife Asia</p> <p>Panel Discussion (40 min)</p> <p>Dr. Ronello Abila, Sub-regional Representative for Southeast Asia, World Organization for Animal Health</p> <p>Hannah Fairbank, Senior Biodiversity Specialist and Asia Regional Coordinator, GEF Secretariat</p> <p>Dr. Francesco Ricciardi, Senior Environment Specialist, Asian Development Bank</p> <p>Dr. Wolfram Morgenroth-Klein, Head of Division Pandemic Prevention, One Health, Animal Health and Biodiversity, German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development</p> <p>Discussants (15 min)</p> <p>Dian Sukmajaya, Senior Officer, ASEAN Secretariat</p> <p>Dr. Steven G. Olive, Mission Director, USAID Regional Development Mission for Asia</p> <p>Dr. Theresa Mundita S. Lim, Executive Director, ASEAN Center for Biodiversity</p> <p>Dr. Prasert Sornsathapornkul, Director of Wild Fauna and Flora Protection Division, Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation</p>

TIME	SESSION DESCRIPTION AND SPEAKERS
	<p>Dr. Noriaki Sakaguchi, Senior Advisor, Department of Global Environment, Japan International Cooperation Agency</p> <p>Presentation of Development Partner Dialogue Highlights (10 min)</p> <p>Next steps and event wrap-up (10 min)</p> <p>Closing remarks</p> <p>Dr. Steven G. Olive, Mission Director, USAID Regional Development Mission for Asia</p> <p>Thanya Netithammakun, Director General, Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation</p>

Development Partner Dialogue Highlights

Counter Wildlife Trafficking Partnership Forum
Sessions 8 and 9

September 21-23, 2021



The Regional Counter Wildlife Trafficking (CWT) Partnership Forum, hosted by the Government of Thailand through the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation and USAID Wildlife Asia, brought together Development Partners (“Partners”), active in combating Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) across Asia and beyond: Bilateral and multilateral donors; government agencies; United Nations programs, funds, and agencies; international conservation NGOs; foundations; and trusts and consolidated program funds. Representatives from these organizations participated as moderators, speakers, or observers to discuss opportunities for increased collaboration, propose solutions to continued and emerging threats to wildlife and human well-being, and identify a clear pathway forward to unite against IWT in Asia.

I. Setting the scene

According to the 2019 Global Assessment Report by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, around one million species face extinction. The report also emphasized that the largest direct drivers of the global decline in nature are land- and sea-use change and direct exploitation. IWT, which is part of the overexploitation of natural resources, is here defined as the trade in wildlife or wildlife parts, derivatives, or by-products that violates either international legal frameworks or the national legislation of affected countries. Even though commendable efforts have been made to combat wildlife crime, including through a considerable expansion of stakeholders involved, the prioritization of CWT by legislators, policymakers, and law enforcement, and growing political will, these illicit activities continue, and with them the threats they pose. These became even more pronounced with the COVID-19 pandemic, caused by a virus of zoonotic origin.

With implications for all three pillars of sustainable development – environment, society, and economy – it has become ever clearer that there is a need to address IWT more holistically and to halt unsustainable, high-risk and illegal wildlife trade, while embracing the One Health approach. This requires involvement from donors, implementing agencies, government partners, academia and other stakeholders alike to succeed and restore the balance of ecosystems and build resilience against external shocks. Recognizing what is at stake helped bring development partners active in combating IWT in Asia together in this Forum to share lessons learned, announce new programming, and investments, and to ensure that different efforts build on and complement each other.

II. Highlights of the Development Partner Dialogues

Session 8 - *Entering a New Era of Regional Partnership: Development Partner Plans and Programs*, and Session 9 - *ASEAN Country-Development Partner Dialogue: Converging Country and Donor Priorities and Coordinated Action* focused on how to enhance CWT efforts, strengthen coordination, and align investments to support ASEAN Regional Priorities geared towards ending IWT more effectively. The Highlights of these Partner Dialogues are presented below, according to the main themes that emerged from the discussions. To maximize synergies and strive for collective impact, identified action points are presented at the end of each theme.

❖ Joint Efforts in Asia: IWT in the regional Context

1. The Partner Dialogues highlighted that all relevant stakeholders across the region, whether engaged at local-, national- or regional-level activities, are united by the common goals of ending IWT and helping to restore the balance and health of the planet. Partners emphasized the severe implications of IWT for all three pillars of sustainable development, and ultimately human well-being, and called for an end to the large-scale extinction of wild species and the degradation of ecosystems. At the same time, Partners recognized this as a unique opportunity to convey the threats of IWT and of unsustainable and poorly regulated legal wildlife trade to a wider audience, convincing more people to protect wildlife, decrease high-risk human-wildlife interactions, and thus to reduce the potential for zoonotic spillovers.
2. Partners acknowledged the important role of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and of other Multilateral Environmental Agreements, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention on Migratory Species, welcomed Resolution A/RES/75/311 (Tackling Illicit Trafficking in Wildlife) adopted by the UN General Assembly during its 75th session, and supported the Goals and Milestones of the draft Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.



3. The relevance of SDG 14 (Life below Water), SDG 15 (Life on Land), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) to CWT efforts were noted, along with interlinkages to the goals of poverty alleviation, health, and gender equality. Partners discussed the importance of embedding gender analysis and a human rights-based approach in IWT work, to improve the likelihood of success and to act as a catalyst for challenging social inequalities. Respecting and protecting human rights, especially the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, was noted as an obligation under international law and an effective, equitable and cost-efficient conservation strategy that should be applied to all efforts to safeguard nature.
4. Asia was confirmed by Partners as a major hotspot for IWT, comprising source, transit, and destination countries. Partners, including the European Union and the French Embassy in Thailand, emphasized the importance of a regional approach, engaging Asian countries in efforts to combat IWT and conserve biodiversity, and assisting countries in this endeavor. Focus areas mentioned were strengthening existing coordination frameworks, building the capacity of wildlife law enforcement and criminal justice systems, and reducing consumer demand for illicitly-traded wildlife products. Another example for the importance of regional cooperation was given by USAID, mentioning that strengthening the relationships between law enforcement agencies within and between countries makes it much harder for illegal wildlife traffickers to operate with impunity. Several Partners voiced their concern that demand reduction is among the least-funded intervention types, whereas measures to curtail consumer demand, such as Social and Behavioral Change Communication, were considered essential to reduce both the overexploitation of wildlife and high-risk human-wildlife points of contact, from which future zoonotic diseases may originate.
5. Partners confirmed the relevance of nature and healthy ecosystems that underpin humanity's existence. The role of biodiversity conservation framing the IWT discourse was recognized, and with it the necessary focus on addressing threats to ecosystem degradation, acting in a more holistic manner. At the same time, the disconnect between biodiversity conservation, wildlife health, and human health was noted.

Action Point

Partners emphasized that the impact of CWT activities in Asia needs to be amplified, to act in a more coordinated manner to mirror the networks and clout of organized wildlife trafficking networks, and to close identified gaps, such as information and intelligence exchanges among countries in Southeast Asia. In this regard, several Partners called for “breaking down silos” to build a regional network and enhance regional partnerships. The need to acknowledge the strong dependence of human

health on planetary health was voiced by several Partners, and to include these considerations in sustainable development planning.

❖ **Strengthening Coordination: CWT Initiatives and Country Alignment**

6. The Dialogues recognized existing efforts to improve CWT coordination among Development Partners, among countries in the region, from government-to-government, and among national-level agencies.
 - a. Examples of initiatives aiming to improve Partner coordination were the 2016 and 2018 Global Environment Facility (GEF)-financed and World Bank-led Global Wildlife Program (GWP) Analyses of International Funding to Tackle IWT, and associated global IWT donor coordination platform; the IWT Project Map and Database by the Asian Development Bank (ADB); the 2018 London Conference on Illegal Wildlife Trade, United for Wildlife, and the commitments made by partners during the Special ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Illegal Wildlife Trade in Chiang Mai, Thailand, in 2019.
 - b. Efforts aiming to strengthen coordination among countries in Asia were harmonized by the ASEAN coordinating bodies, such as the ASEAN Working Group on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement, ASEAN Ministerial Meetings, and ASEAN Senior Officials' Meetings; supported by the recently signed MOU between ASEAN and the World Organization for Animal Health; the related strategies of the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework and its implementation by the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity; and the GEF-financed and World Bank-led, 32-country GWP, which includes 10 participating countries in Asia.
 - c. Advancing government-to-government support was showcased by the ASEAN-EU Strategic Partnership; the exploration of a new regional development cooperation strategy for Asia and the Pacific for the years 2022-2026 by the Swedish Government; the USAID Reducing Demand for Wildlife Project and the USAID Wildlife Asia program; and the Partnership against Poaching and Illegal Wildlife Trade (in Africa and Asia) implemented by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.
 - d. Existing national-level coordination platforms were equally recognized, such as National Wildlife Enforcement Networks (National WENs).

7. Partners broadly acknowledged aligning their CWT efforts to global, regional and country priorities that address unsustainable, high-risk and illegal wildlife trade. Relevant regional frameworks were presented by the ASEAN Secretariat, the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity, and the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation of the Government of Thailand, and included: the 2019 Chiang Mai Statement of ASEAN Ministers on IWT, the recently passed Plan of Action for ASEAN Cooperation on CITES and Wildlife Law Enforcement (2021-2025), the 2020 ASEAN



Comprehensive Recovery Framework, the Strategic Plan of Action for ASEAN Cooperation on Forestry (2016-2025), the Work Plan for Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) Implementation (2016-2025), the ASEAN Guidelines for Detecting and Preventing Wildlife Trafficking (2019), and the ASEAN Handbook on Legal Cooperation to Combat IWT. Timely support for countries, respecting cultural identity, and supporting South-South collaboration were considered equally important aspects of CWT coordination.

Action Point

Partners saw the need to build on and complement on-going and planned initiatives to establish, improve, and expand a robust CWT coordination network among various Partners, leveraging strengths and resources. There was a broad consensus among Partners to align funding with the global and regional priorities for Asian countries that address unsustainable, high-risk and illegal wildlife trade, taking note of CITES Resolutions, recently passed UN Resolutions, Goals and Milestones of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and national and regional action plans and strategies. To that effect, Partners agreed to engage in consultations with global and regional bodies, and national governments, making sure to capture countries' needs, close existing gaps, and develop joint solutions.

❖ The IWT Project Map and Database: Sharing Information on CWT Projects

8. Partners welcomed the development of the IWT Project Map and Database, a recent initiative by ADB to facilitate the sharing of project information, thereby uncovering potential synergies not previously known to project donors and implementers. The presentation of the tool also included analyses of the data recorded, which showcased the potential of this data for future uses regarding project design and implementation. To date, 326 unique² CWT projects were recorded in the database, equaling a total funding of \$627.8M for projects whose implementation was completed in 2015 or after. For sensitive information, it was noted that the level of detail recorded can be adjusted and that, in these cases, data can be published in a more aggregated form.

Action Point

Partners stressed the importance of the IWT Project Map and Database and recognized the value of adding to this effort by regularly sharing updated project

² Meaning without duplications, seeing that many projects were implemented – and thus recorded – in several project sites (national-level projects) and countries (regional- and international-level projects).

information, and supporting its institutionalization, ensuring a broad ownership of the tool by Development Partners. Moreover, Partners acknowledged that an expansion of the database to include projects at a global scale would improve coordination among CWT projects worldwide, and enable a prioritization of key geographical areas, species, or types of interventions. The option of the tool's institutionalization within a platform and the sharing of responsibility for its administration was raised.



❖ Entering a new Era of regional Partnership: The CWT Development Partner Coordination Platform

9. As Partners expressed their continued interest in advancing collaboration, they welcomed the initiation of consultations on the development of a CWT Development Partner Coordination Platform for Asia, and noted the need to have well-defined goals to shape the form of this mechanism. This initiative, led by ADB, the GEF-financed and World Bank-led GWP and WWF, in partnership with USAID and others, seeks to determine the guiding principles, objectives, and administrative and operational workings of the platform, and how it can align with existing coordination bodies and regional strategies. This would follow through on the commitments made in Chiang Mai in 2019, with a heightened sense of importance, seeing the impacts of COVID-19 on investments and the emergence of new funding priorities.

Action Point

The Dialogues captured the interest of Partners to pursue the development of a regional CWT Development Partner Coordination Platform for Asia. The creation and utilization of such a coordination platform would allow Partners to i) better streamline and advance on-going and future coordination efforts in combating IWT, ii) network and share relevant information and lessons learned, e.g. by identifying success stories as well as mistakes, iii) inform various levels of project planning, alignment, and implementation (regional, national, and local); iv) maximize synergies among partners and benefits for country beneficiaries; and v) to develop a more comprehensive picture of the CWT landscape in the region.

❖ One Health, Livelihoods, and Food Security: IWT in a shifting Landscape

10. The Partner Dialogues highlighted that the COVID-19 pandemic has not only had a profound impact on the funding of projects and challenged the impact of investments, it also sparked a broader adoption of the One Health approach, exemplified by the Wildlife Health Framework of the World Organization for Animal Health. It also provides opportunities for a broader recognition of CWT activities, given impacts on health, human well-being, and the economy, thus raising the awareness of IWT on

national and international agendas. The future cost of inaction was estimated to be much higher than funding the right solutions today, and it was called for a change in perspective as investments in nature are investments in development. Some Partners even called for an economic paradigm shift, with economic costs linked to environmental losses.

11. Partners confirmed the importance of more comprehensive project designs and discussed a range of examples of IWT in a shifting landscape, such as the emergence of recovery funds and changed investment priorities. These include the management of Protected Areas, affected by the collapse of tourism in many countries, the development of diversified and resilient livelihoods, food security and agriculture, and demand reduction campaigns to continue behavior change interventions. Partners, such as the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and USAID, stressed the need to continue demand and supply side interventions in parallel. The crucial role of investments in Protected Areas was reiterated, to address IWT at its geographical point of origin and to counter the threat of weak management being exploited by traffickers. Equal importance was assigned to livelihood development, including of communities that live in and around protected areas. This comprehensive approach was also reflected by the GEF, sharing information on the proposed GEF-8 strategy, which, in its draft form, aims to secure wildlife populations and landscapes for the benefit of people and the planet. This includes work to halt wildlife trafficking throughout the poaching-trafficking-demand supply chain, with explicit efforts to reduce demand for high-risk and illegal wildlife trade, reduce zoonotic spillover risks, and support stronger linkages between wildlife and human health. Several Partners, among them the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity, acknowledged that the scale of the COVID-19 crisis requires actions that take a multidisciplinary and cross-sectoral approach that is anchored in science and is focused on reducing the risk of future outbreaks. Other examples of new initiatives included the European Green Deal, considered the lifeline out of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the recently-launched International Alliance against Health Risks in Wildlife Trade, initiated by the German Government. Halting the degradation of ecosystems to promote the sustainable use of biodiversity for human well-being and the economy was repeatedly emphasized, including by the CITES Management Authority of Viet Nam.

Action Point

Going forward, Partners realized the opportunity to broaden the discussions around IWT, and shared the ambition to consider the strong interlinkages between human, animal, and ecosystem health. They saw the need to address IWT holistically, by factoring in the implications of unsustainable, high-risk and illegal wildlife trade in a more comprehensive form of project design and implementation. Apart from One Health, Partners agreed on the importance of complementary interventions, such as

investments in building resilient, diversified livelihoods, food security, and agriculture, along with enhanced attention on demand reduction and behavior change.

❖ Improved Sustainability: Long-term Funding and Domestic Resources

12. Partners welcomed new financing mechanisms and upcoming funding rounds, such as GEF-8, the upcoming United Kingdom (UK) IWT Challenge Fund, and a possible 2022 funding round by the Legacy Landscapes Fund. The Dialogues also touched upon the modes of funding: Partners stressed the need to develop larger and sequenced projects over longer timeframes, promote nature-based investments, and include environmental costs in countries' financial planning. The need to mobilize greater domestic resources by encouraging governments in the region to allocate budgets for addressing IWT and by involving the private sector, e.g. investing in innovative technologies or reviewing and monitoring supply chains, were emphasized. The UK's IWT Challenge Fund was raised as one example supporting the development of innovative and unconventional solutions to IWT that are responsive and relevant to local contexts and support global efforts.

Action Point

The Dialogues highlighted concrete intentions of Partners to continue the funding of CWT activities in the region. Partners called for a more efficient allocation of scarce funds to shift to larger projects, and for a strong buy-in from governments investing in national and regional CWT efforts. A suggested “organizing frame” across Partners to drive project design forward may originate from the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework or from the Plan of Action for ASEAN Cooperation on CITES and Wildlife Law Enforcement (2021-2025).

III. Closing Summary

Sessions 8 and 9 of the CWT Partnership Forum provided an excellent opportunity to take stock of the Development Partner landscape, on-going and planned initiatives, and upcoming funding rounds. The Dialogues highlighted the importance of strengthening collaboration among Development Partners to account for the continued threat of IWT in the region, as well as for new and emerging challenges in a post-COVID19 world. Combating IWT demands an equally effective cooperation as displayed by wildlife trafficking networks, ensuring that the response to wildlife crime matches its threat.

It is anticipated that, with the Action Points noted above, concrete actions will ensue from these Dialogues to strengthen regional collaboration. One measure will be consultations with donors and other partners on a CWT Development Partner Coordination Platform, which are anticipated to start after the closing of the Forum. To help such a platform be established, ADB has offered to serve as Interim Chair.

A continuation of dialogues like the CWT Partnership Forum and the 2019 Chiang Mai Conference are essential to keep each other informed of projects planned, share lessons learned, and initiate new partnerships. It is hoped that coordination among Development Partners in Asia will become more frequent, structured, and impactful. This Forum was one step of many in the right direction – to better leverage the strengths of Partners and maximize the impact of CWT efforts towards improving wildlife conservation and human well-being in the region and worldwide.



IV. Recent Commitments and new Funding Opportunities presented by Development Partners

Speaker	Position and Affiliation	Initiatives presented
Session 8		
Ms. Cecilia Fischer	Illegal Wildlife Trade Coordinator and Consultant, Asian Development Bank and World Bank	IWT Project Map and Database: The IWT Project Map and Database presents detailed information CWT projects in a map and synchronized database, such as information on project activities, project sites, implementation period, donor and implementing agencies, and donor funding and co-financing. With the objective to institutionalize this tool, expand it to cover countries worldwide, and to regularly receive updated project information from project partners, it is hoped that the tool can strengthen donor coordination, guide future CWT investments, and inform project design.
Ms. Lisa Farroway	Senior Environmental Specialist and Program Manager Global Wildlife Program, World Bank	Global Wildlife Program (GWP): The GWP is a GEF-financed, World Bank-led, 32-country partnership aiming to combat IWT and build wildlife-based economies, with an investment of \$230M in GEF financing and \$1.3 billion in co-financing from governments, multilateral and bilateral donors, GEF agencies, the private sector, foundations, and civil society for CWT projects in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Participating countries in Asia are Afghanistan, Bhutan, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam, supported by Asian Development Bank, IUCN, UNDP, World Bank and WWF as GEF Agencies. The following 12 projects are implemented in Asia, with the GEF Agencies in brackets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Afghanistan: Conservation of Snow Leopards and Their Critical Ecosystem in Afghanistan (UNDP) ● Bhutan: Mainstreaming Biodiversity Conservation into the Tourism Sector in Bhutan (UNDP) ● Cambodia: Sustainable Landscape and Ecotourism Project (World Bank)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● India: 1) Securing Livelihoods, Conservation, Sustainable Use and Restoration of High Range Himalayan Ecosystems (SECURE) Himalayas (UNDP); 2) Strengthening Conservation and Resilience of Globally Significant Wild Cat Landscapes Through a Focus on Small Cat and Leopard Conservation (UNDP/WWF) ● Indonesia: 1) Combating Illegal and Unsustainable Trade in Endangered Species in Indonesia (UNDP); 2) Catalyzing Optimum Management of Natural Heritage for Sustainability of Ecosystem, Resources and Viability of Endangered Wildlife Species (CONSERVE) (UNDP) ● Malaysia: Building institutional and local capacities to reduce wildlife crime and enhance protection of iconic wildlife in Malaysia (UNDP) ● Pakistan: Strengthening Governance and Capacity for Combating Illegal Wildlife Trade in Pakistan (IUCN) ● Philippines: Combating Environmental Organized Crime in the Philippines (ADB) ● Thailand: Combating Illegal Wildlife Trade, Focusing on Ivory, Rhino Horn, Tiger and Pangolins in Thailand (UNDP) ● Viet Nam: Strengthening Partnerships to Protect Endangered Wildlife in Viet Nam (World Bank) <p>For more information, visit: https://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/global-wildlife-program</p>
Mr. Saroj Srisai	Program Officer, EU Delegation to Thailand	<p>ASEAN-EU Strategic Partnership: IVT will remain one of the EU’s concerns for Southeast Asia. Under the new elevated ASEAN-EU Strategic Partnership adopted in late 2020, the EU will continue to cooperate with ASEAN Member States to solve this problem.</p>

		<p>European Green Deal: With the launch of the external dimension of the European Green Deal, the EU is committed to work with all its Partners throughout the world, including its ASEAN allies, in conserving the biodiversity for our planet, and for our next generation.</p>
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		<p>Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF): The next MFF will cover the period from 2021-2027, and shall be clearer on its direction in either late 2021 or in 2022. Biodiversity will most probably be among the priorities, seeing also the recent announcement by the President of the EU Commission to double its external funding for biodiversity at UNGA76.</p>
Ms. Roopa Karia	Deputy Director, Regional Environment Office, USAID Regional Development Mission for Asia	<p>USAID Wildlife Asia: This is a five-year (2016-2021), US\$24.5 million, regional CWT initiative, addressing the illegal trade in pangolins, tigers, elephants, and rhinos in Southeast Asia including Cambodia, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Thailand, Viet Nam, and the People’s Republic of 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.</p> <p>USAID Reducing Demand for Wildlife: This is an 18-month (2021-2023), US\$4.3 million, regional CWT initiative addressing the IWT in pangolins, tigers, elephants, and rhinos in Southeast Asia. The activity aims to: continue to deliver on key activities begun under USAID Wildlife Asia that proved successful; and deepen the learnings of USAID Wildlife Asia and identify existing gaps in CWT in the region for adaptive and sustainable solutions moving forward.</p>

Dr. Francesco Ricciardi	Senior Environment Specialist, Asian Development Bank	<p>Combating Environmental Organized Crime in the Philippines: A GEF-financed GWP Child Project with a funding of \$1.8M, investing into policy strengthening, capacity building, and demand reduction in the Philippines.</p> <p>CWT Development Partner Coordination Platform: ADB offered to act as Interim Chair for a potential coordination platform to be created.</p>
Ms. Stefanie Lang	Executive Director, Legacy Landscapes Fund	<p>Legacy Landscapes Fund: An innovative financing mechanism created in 2020 for long-term funding of Protected Areas, with a funding of \$1M each year for 15 years for every landscape selected. The next funding cycle is envisioned to take place in 2022.</p>

<p>Dr. Hoang Thi Thanh Nhan</p>	<p>Deputy Director, Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Agency, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Viet Nam</p>	<p>National Strategy on Biodiversity: The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment is developing the new National Strategy on Biodiversity, in line with the Global Biodiversity Framework.</p> <p>Action Plan for Wildlife Protection: The Ministry is initiating a new Action Plan for Wildlife Protection until 2030 and wishes to cooperate with regional and global partners to strengthen its efforts and ensure the achievement of the regional and global goals for the conservation of biodiversity.</p> <p>Viet Nam Wildlife Protection Partnership Forum: The Forum led by the Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Agency, in place since 2013, brings together over 600 members willing to connect within a regional network.</p> <p>Strengthening Partnerships to Protect Endangered Wildlife in Viet Nam: A GEF-financed project under the GWP, aiming to set up partnerships with different stakeholders for biodiversity conservation, such as NGOs, civil society organizations, and government partners.</p>
<p>Ms. Sara Öberg Høper</p>	<p>First Secretary, Programme Specialist Environment & Climate Change, Development Cooperation - Regional Asia, Embassy of Sweden Bangkok, Thailand</p>	<p>National Level Consultations: The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) is currently working on a government assignment to analyze how it can strengthen biodiversity in all our supporting activities from 2020-2023. Moreover, a decision by the Swedish government is awaited later this year on a new regional development cooperation strategy for Asia and the Pacific for the time period 2022-2026. With such a decision, biodiversity is most likely to become one of the focus areas.</p> <p>Global Activities: On the global level, Sida supports WWF's program "Voices for Diversity – Safeguarding Ecosystems for Nature and People", partially implemented in Viet Nam with a focus on IWT. National partners are the National Assembly of Vietnam, the Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment, and local CSOs.</p>

<p>Ms. Marie Delattre</p>	<p>Deputy Customs Attaché, Embassy of France, Bangkok, Thailand</p>	<p>AMBITUS – European program fighting against environmental crime: The two-year project AMBITUS, led by the French Ministry of the Interior, aims at supporting States in strengthening their long-term actions in the fight against environmental crime. Activities supported under the €1.5M project funded by the European Commission comprise the organization of an international seminar and the creation of a network of experts, and reflect the desire to set up more informal communication channels and build personal relationships between officers from different backgrounds (justice, police, customs, etc.) working in the field. Ambitus believes that international cooperation with Asia is essential to fight wildlife trafficking.</p> <p>UNITE: A new project, called UNITE, will soon be launched and build on this momentum.</p>
<p>Mr. Andrew Beirne</p>	<p>Economic & Prosperity Counsellor and UK Permanent Representative to UNESCAP, British Embassy, Bangkok, Thailand</p>	<p>Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund (IWTCF): The IWTCF provides flexible funding to innovative and scalable solutions to drive transformational change. The Fund has committed over £27M to 91 projects around the world, in over 50 countries, since 2014 to tackle IWT and, in doing so, to contribute to poverty reduction in developing countries. Applications for the next funding round of the IWTCF will launch shortly, and the UK looks forward to inviting innovative proposals from a diverse range of organizations. Please visit https://iwt.challengefund.org.uk/ for more information.</p> <p>UK Biodiverse Landscapes Fund: This fund is still under development and is envisioned to address biodiversity protection and conservation. One of the areas of focus will be the lower Mekong area (Lao PDR, Cambodia, Viet Nam). The protection and restoration of landscapes, climate change, providing sustainable livelihoods, and nature-based solutions may be some of the focal areas for funding.</p>

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<p>Dr. Ronello Abila</p>	<p>Sub-regional Representative for Southeast Asia, World Organization for Animal Health (OIE)</p>	<p>OIE Wildlife Health Framework: In response to global trends in disease emergence and biodiversity loss, the OIE launched the Wildlife Health Framework to reinforce One Health strategies to manage the risk of disease emergence & protect wildlife health. During its General Assembly in May 2021, a resolution was passed for “The OIE should continue to work with partners, including CITES, INTERPOL and FAO and other key actors, to reduce disease risks from agro-crime and illegal and legal trade in wildlife”. Along this line, the OIE will work with its members through the OIE Delegates and Focal Points for Wildlife to implement this resolution. It will closely collaborate with the various ASEAN bodies on this aspect. The signing of the new MOU between ASEAN and OIE in May 2021 will enhance for stronger collaboration.</p>
<p>Ms. Hannah Fairbank</p>	<p>Senior Biodiversity Specialist and Asia Regional Coordinator, GEF Secretariat</p>	<p>GEF-8 Programming Directions: At core of the overall GEF-8 architecture is the Healthy Planet, Healthy People framework. The proposed Wildlife Conservation for Development Integrated Program, envisioned to be part of the GEF-8 Strategy, would have three components for national projects supported by a global program: 1) Wildlife for prosperity (economic incentives for conservation, livelihood diversification, recovery of Nature Based Tourism); 2) Illegal wildlife trade (supply chain approach working across ‘supply-trafficking-demand’); and 3) Human Wildlife Co-existence (preventing/mitigating human-wildlife conflict, wildlife landscape conservation, reducing zoonotic spillover risk). The GEF-8 investment period will run from July 2022 to June 2026.</p>
<p>Dr. Francesco Ricciardi</p>	<p>Senior Environment Specialist, Asian Development Bank</p>	<p>Future Technical Assistance: ADB explores the potential development of a future Technical Assistance, possibly with a regional focus, on combating IWT within a One Health context. Investing in new technologies is considered fundamental, as much as the involvement of the Private Sector.</p>
<p>Dr. Wolfram Morgenroth-Klein</p>	<p>Head of Division Pandemic Prevention, One Health, Animal</p>	<p>Partnership against Poaching and Illegal Wildlife Trade (in Africa and Asia): The project objective is to improve the inter-sectoral, cross-border and trans-</p>

	<p>Health and Biodiversity, German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development</p>	<p>continental fight against poaching and illegal trade in ivory and rhino-horn by operating along the entire illegal trade chain.</p> <p>International Alliance against Health Risks in Wildlife Trade: Launched at the 2021 IUCN World Conservation Congress, the Alliance is a multi-stakeholder platform of like-minded actors and experts, such as international organizations, national governments, scientific institutions, NGOs and civil society. Its aim is to pool members' resources in an inclusive space for exchange and knowledge sharing, a diverse and transparent partnership on equal terms. The Alliance is driven by science-based activities of its interdisciplinary partners, to collaborate and expand their individual radius in various ways in order to negative impacts to health and wellbeing that may arise from contact and handling of wildlife.</p>
<p>Dian Sukmajaya</p>	<p>Senior Officer, Forestry, ASEAN Secretariat</p>	<p>Plan of Action for ASEAN Cooperation on CITES and Wildlife Law Enforcement (2021-2025): The Plan of Action is a framework that will guide ASEAN's next steps in CWT for the coming years. With four Strategic Thrusts and numerous Action Programs, such as <i>Enhancement of Co-operation in Trade of endangered species</i>, and <i>Activities</i>, such as <i>Strengthen regional and sub-regional collaboration in the implementation of agreed outcomes of forest and forest-related international agreements and fora</i>, the Plan also forms the basis for collaboration within ASEAN and with international partners.</p> <p>ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF): The ACRF, which the ASEAN leaders adopted in November 2020 as the regional blueprint for recovery, underscores the biodiversity and health nexus as it encourages individuals and communities in ASEAN to become 'bio(diversity)- literate' and to adopt behaviors that address the root cause of future pandemic and zoonosis.</p>
<p>Dr. Steven G. Olive</p>	<p>Mission Director, USAID Regional Development Mission for Asia</p>	<p>USAID Wildlife Asia: This is a five-year (2016-2021), US\$24.5 million, regional CWT initiative, addressing the illegal trade in pangolins, tigers, elephants, and rhinos in Southeast Asia including Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Thailand, Viet</p>

		<p>Nam, and the People’s Republic of 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.</p> <p>USAID Reducing Demand for Wildlife: This is an 18-month (2021-2023), US\$4.3 million, regional CWT initiative addressing the IWT in pangolins, tigers, elephants, and rhinos in Southeast Asia. The activity aims to: continue to deliver on key activities begun under USAID Wildlife Asia that proved successful; and deepen the learnings of USAID Wildlife Asia and identify existing gaps in CWT in the region for adaptive and sustainable solutions moving forward.</p>
Dr. Theresa Mundita S. Lim	Executive Director, ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity	<p>ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework: The ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF), which the ASEAN leaders adopted in November 2020 as the regional blueprint for recovery, underscores the biodiversity and health nexus as it encourages individuals and communities in ASEAN to become ‘bio(diversity)- literate’ and to adopt behaviors that address the root cause of future pandemic and zoonosis. The ACB is working with ASEAN governments in ensuring that biodiversity is taken into account in medium to long-term pandemic response, and that the ACRF is effectively implemented.</p>
Dr. Prasert Sornsathapornkul	Director of Wild Fauna and Flora Protection Division, Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation	<p>Combating Illegal Wildlife Trade, Focusing on Ivory, Rhino Horn, Tiger and Pangolins in Thailand: A GEF-financed project under the GWP, aiming to reduce the trafficking of wildlife in Thailand through enhanced enforcement capacity, collaboration, and targeted behavior change campaigns.</p>
Dr. Noriaki Sakaguchi	Senior Advisor for Nature Conservation, Japan International Cooperation Agency	<p>Comprehensive nature/biodiversity conservation: JICA supports partner countries with an integrated and comprehensive approach, enhancing capacities for protected area management such as patrols and biodiversity monitoring, and improving livelihood and awareness on conservation of local communities in the surrounding areas</p>

		<p>of protected areas through developing sustainable resource use, agriculture, forestry, fisheries and tourism.</p> <p>Nature-based Solutions: JICA adopts a nature-based solutions approach in ecosystem restoration, climate change mitigation and adaptation and other social challenges, aiming to develop a sustainable world in which people can enjoy multiple ecosystem services continuously.</p>
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ANNEX 3. SUMMARY OF PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Almost 600 people based in 15 countries registered to attend the forum, with 388 people participating at its peak. In addition, thousands of people watched the event on several Thai government Facebook channels or on participants' livestreams. For example, No Ivory No Tiger campaign influencer Venerable Sompong livestreamed Session 4 on Facebook, receiving 163,000 views, 26,000 likes, and 3,700 comments. DNP's livestreams reached a total of over 4,000 views and over 200 likes. Many participants also posted about the event on social media, notably Beautiful Without Ivory campaign influencer and supermodel Cindy Sirinya Bishop (who also re-posted the Beautiful Without Ivory video after participating in the forum session on demand reduction on September 22. Several other participants and organizations also posted on their social media channels, including DNP's Klairoong Poonpon, MC Veronica Pedrosa, ASEANAPOL, and the non-profit organization Institute of Buddhist Management for Happiness and Peace.

Total Registrations

581 total unique participants registered in advance of the forum.

Top Organizational Registration

1. WWF - 36
2. WCS - 30
3. Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation - 22
4. ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity - 11
5. TRAFFIC - 11
6. ASEANAPOL Sec - 11
7. USAID - 10
8. RTI International - 8
9. Philippine National Police - 6
10. Maritime Group - 6

Top Country Registration

1. Thailand - 145
2. Philippines - 58
3. USA - 43
4. Vietnam - 42
5. Malaysia - 34
6. Indonesia - 27
7. Laos - 20
8. Cambodia - 18
9. Sri Lanka - 17
10. Japan - 11

Total Unique Attendees

Day 1 - 388

Day 2 - 387

Day 3 - 365