



WORRAWUT KAENCHAN/ USAID WILDLIFE ASIA

MEDIA WORKSHOP ON COMBATING WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING IN ASEAN & CHINA

WORKSHOP REPORT

September 12-15, 2017
Bangkok and Nakorn Nayok, Thailand

DISCLAIMER The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

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USAID WILDLIFE ASIA
MEDIA WORKSHOP REPORT
COMBATING WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING IN ASEAN AND CHINA

SEPTEMBER 12-15, 2017

MIRACLE GRAND CONVENTION HOTEL, BANGKOK
WILDLIFE QUARANTINE CENTER, NAKORN NAYOK
THAILAND

BACKGROUND

USAID Wildlife Asia organized a journalism training workshop for active reporters from Southeast Asia and China during September 12-15, 2017. The workshop was timed to coincide with the 4th Regional Dialogue on Combating Trafficking of Wild Fauna and Fauna, held during September 12-14, 2017 at the same hotel, Miracle Grand Convention Hotel in Bangkok.

Internews' Earth Journalism Network (EJN) was hired to lead the training workshop and help design the curriculum, working closely with Dararat Weerapong, USAID Wildlife Asia's Communications, Outreach and Learning Specialist. Veteran journalism trainers James Fahn and Nantiya Tangwisutijit, both with long experience reporting and training on wildlife issues around Southeast Asia, were brought in by EJN to carry out the training.

Seventeen journalists from Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Laos, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam joined the workshop, many of them recommended by USAID sister projects around the region.

The workshop had the following aims:

1. Empower journalist capacity to do investigative reports and understand wildlife trafficking issues in Southeast Asia
2. Create a media network to combat wildlife trafficking in target countries
3. Journalists from Vietnam, Philippines and Indonesia funded by USAID projects to attend the workshop
4. Raise media awareness on USAID Wildlife Asia

To meet these goals, workshop organizers carefully arranged a suite of activities (see the program in the Annex) that included in-class training sessions, exercise sessions, participation in the 4th Regional Dialogue, and a field trip to Thailand's Wildlife Quarantine Center in Nakhon Nayok¹.

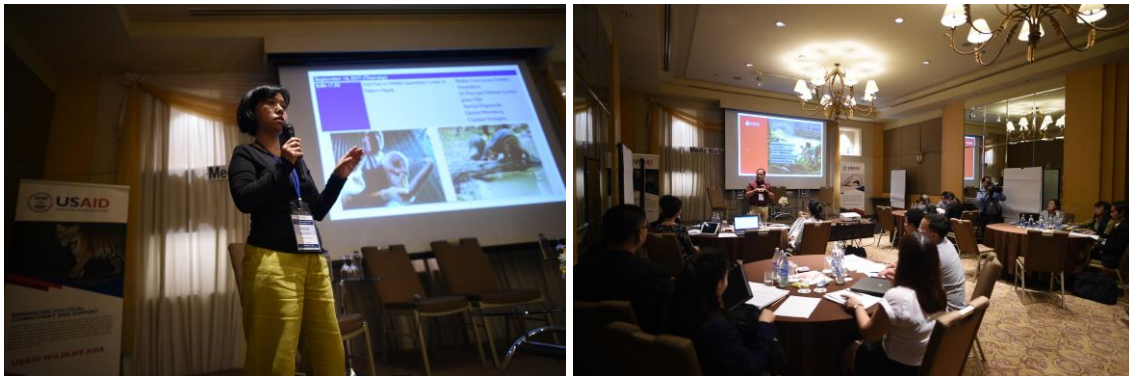
¹ Photo credit: Worrawut Kaenchan/USAID Wildlife Asia (for all photos in this report)

ACTIVITIES

EJN contributed to the pre-workshop activities by making suggestions for journalists from China, Cambodia and Thailand, and by consulting with USAID Wildlife Asia on the workshop program (the final version of which is attached). Most notably, the recommendation provided was that there be a final of in-class training that included story writing exercises and a group review of the draft stories.

DAY 1

Following arrivals on Monday, September 11, the workshop began on September 12 with introductions by Weerapong and Fahn about the goals of the training. The participating journalists then introduced themselves one by one, describing their interest in covering wildlife trafficking and their past efforts at it. Roughly half of those present said they had done at least some reporting on wildlife trafficking in the past, a relatively high percentage compared to most journalists.



Fahn then gave a specially made presentation outlining the importance of covering wildlife trafficking, the role of the media and individual journalists, the specific challenges facing such coverage, and various strategies for pursuing stories. He emphasized the need to come up with different angles in covering the topic -- helping to keep the stories fresh, explaining the impact of trafficking in different ways, and appealing to different editors – roughly separating them into human-based reporting angles:

- Investigating criminal networks and their impact on society
- Legal issues: lack of enforcement, light punishments
- Trafficking both benefits from and causes corruption
- Sources of demand: belief in traditional medicines, virility cures, exotic pets
- Impacts of consumption on human health and endangered species

And nature-based angles:

- Interesting animals and their unique, useful characteristics
- Importance of animals to ecosystems and people
- Interesting people: anti-trafficking conservationists, cops, even poachers
- Interesting places: ecosystems, parks, wilderness
- Trophic cascades: e.g, illegal fishing in Africa leads to increased bushmeat poaching

Workshop presentations are available at

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=0By42mLEjamrzTUpTNnJvSXpUT3M>

Following a break, Petch Manowapitr, the deputy of the Indo-Burman group for IUCN, then addressed the workshop, giving an overview of the Red List and the species that are most heavily trafficked. In particular, he explained the dire situation facing key species such as tigers, rhinos and pangolins, providing lots of information and statistics on their endangered status, while also discussing the demand for other species such as the helmeted hornbill.



After lunch, USAID Regional Development Mission for Asia Senior Regional Communications Advisor Richard Nyberg led a discussion with the group. He had participants interview their colleagues about past stories on wildlife trafficking they have done, their ideas for future stories, and then describe them to the workshop at large.

Dr. Pete Likitkererat, a technology specialist with USAID Wildlife Asia, then went over the Global Databased on Events, Language and Tone (GDELT) and explained how the online system can be used for researching stories on wildlife trafficking.

Fahn was then slated to go over the list of resource materials he had prepared for the workshop. However, with the list already in the hands of the journalists, it was decided the time would be better spent with a skills-based exercise. He therefore led a discussion of the various sources that journalists could engage with – including scientists, government officials, NGOs, local people, businesses, consultants, academics, conferences, online materials and social media – and the importance of using multiple sources when doing stories as a way to check facts and give a fuller picture of the issues. The lively interactive discussion that ensued about the various strategies that can be used for working with each of these sources helped keep participants engaged during a long day of expert presentations.

The highlight of the first day was probably the round table forum of leaders of wildlife trafficking projects sponsored by USAID. This included talks by:

- Dr. Robert Mather, Chief of Party, USAID Wildlife Asia
- David Lawson, Chief of Party, USAID Saving Species in Vietnam
- Rully Prayoga, Component Leader for Conservation Constituencies, BIJAK in Indonesia
- Ernesto Guiang, Chief of Party, USAID Protect Wildlife in the Philippines
- Jeremy Swanson, Law Enforcement Specialist with USAID Protect Wildlife in Tanzania

Jianguo (Jeff) He, Country Director for IFAW in China also contributed quite a few comments during the lively question and answer session that followed.



Each of the forum participants described the work their projects are doing in their various countries or regions, and offered advice on key issues that journalists should try to address. Mather, for instance, discussed the need to “change our approach” by really targeting consumers more directly, understanding what is motivating them, crafting messages and tailoring them appropriately, giving the example of engaging with new mothers who may believe pangolin medicine helps with the production of breast milk. He said there are more seizures of wildlife products and arrests going on than in the past, but they’re not leading to significant convictions and jail sentences. There is coverage of the issues, with news items about busts and seizures, often written up from press releases provided by Customs agencies, but little follow-up and little investigation.

The final session of the first day looked at various aspects of wildlife trafficking. Eleanora de Guzman, a social behavior and change communication specialist with USAID Wildlife Asia, looked at consumer demand and provided the results of surveys about such demand in various countries around the region. Sallie Yang, a legal specialist with Freeland looked at the laws and policies of Southeast Asian countries. And Salvatore Amato, a law enforcement specialist, spoke on the challenges facing enforcement and why it has generally been quite lax.



In comments echoed by many expert speakers and presenters, Amato helped summarize some of the key reasons why wildlife trafficking is flourishing: it is generally seen as being low-risk and high-reward, especially in comparison to other types of illegal trafficking, which are often carried out by the same criminal networks.

DAY 2

The entire second day of the workshop was taken up by participating in the 4th Regional Dialogue on Combating Trafficking of Wild Fauna and Flora. The journalists sat in on the morning session, first listening to the keynote speeches and then to the country reports provided by government representatives. The journalists noted that some were more useful than others, and that some of the participating representatives were relatively low level. However, they did find the dialogue very useful in getting to know their countries' official positions and in getting to interview their own government officials, who they often have a hard time meeting back home.



As discussed the previous day during the skills-based training session on working with various sources, journalists often get their best information during such conferences by buttonholing experts during lunch and coffee breaks. For instance, the Vietnamese journalist Pham Hoang Nam from the Vietnam News Agency got a chance to meet with a Customs official who insisted to him that they have been trying to follow up on trafficking investigations, but have been stymied by a lack of cooperation from other countries. Nam said he planned to meet with the official back in Vietnam and follow up in an effort to report on how regional cooperation is breaking down.

Additionally, team of Vietnamese journalists interviewed David Lawson, COP of USAID Saving Species in Vietnam.

Similarly, journalists from Lao also interviewed their country delegate Mr. Chanthone Phothitay, Deputy Director, Protection Forest Management Division, Department of Forest Resource Management, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. In addition, they sought for more information about the wildlife trafficking issue from Robert Mather, COP of USAID Wildlife Asia. They also conducted further interview with the Minister.



Thai journalist from TNN (TV channel in Thailand) interviewed Rully Prayoga, Component Leader for Conservation Constituencies, BIJAK in Indonesia, about the link between wildlife trafficking and trade/business in ASEAN.

Tangwisutijit and Fahn also joined with Indonesian journalist Syaiful Rochman in questioning Thailand's Natural Resources and Environment Minister Surasak Kanchanarat about the government's policies. Among other things, he was asked when Thailand would issue a ban on domestic trading of elephant ivory, now that China has done so. Kanchanarat made various excuses as to why it is difficult to do so, but ultimately predicted that there could be a ban within "three to five years". Of course, he may have just been trying to get the journalists off his back, but the point is, by continually asking top officials about such issues, journalists can make it clear that the public cares deeply about them, and that there needs to be responsible policies for them.



The second half of Day 2 entailed participating in the Species-Based Group Discussions. The journalists were required to all take part in the communications outreach sessions for each of the four species that were discussed: elephant ivory, rhino horn, pangolin and rosewood. Some of these discussions were more useful than others. The journalists learned a lot about the rosewood trade, for instance. But the pangolin “discussion” largely entailed the journalists answering questions from the experts, rather than vice versa.

DAY 3

The third day of the workshop was taken up by a very useful field trip made to Thailand’s Wildlife Quarantine Center in Nakhon Nayok. There we were hosted by Dr. Pattrapol “Lotter” Maneon, wildlife veterinarian from the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation (USAID Wildlife Champion), and Dr. Bencharong Sangarak, Head of the Center, together with local staff, who showed us the animals that were seized from traffickers and being kept in quarantine: including tigers, pangolins, a black bear, a civet, a binturong, turtles and several species of birds.



The field trip was a great opportunity for the journalists to get some good photos, see the sad conditions that animals are kept in, and learn about the challenges of keeping them in captivity. The veterinarians were very helpful in answering questions and generally candid. The journalists got lots of good interviews, and the TV and radio reporters in particular got some good footage.

There was a good deal of discussion about the pangolins, and how, of the 136 that were seized in a recent trafficking bust, only 15 remained alive at the center. The veterinarians explained that these creatures and their needs are not yet well understood, and that they usually come in sick, mal-nourished and having suffered terrible conditions in transport. Still, there was a good deal of discussion and speculation as to what happened to these captive pangolins. Nam, the Vietnamese journalist, said the next day that in talking to Vietnamese officials, at least had reported they had a 90% success rate in keeping pangolins alive in captivity.

One of the most intriguing discussions that took place during the field trip came when participants learned that, according to Thai regulations, animals seized from traffickers need to be kept in captivity for at least five years before being released. The reason given for the rule was so that the authorities could have access to evidence for trials (although critics have noted that trials seem few and far between), but other countries in the region don't seem to require the same rule. They are able to collect and keep evidence through photographs, DNA samples and the like.



Returning seized animals successfully to the wild is always difficult, but requiring them to be kept in captivity for so long makes that almost impossible. Many animals don't survive long in captivity, and those that do are kept in less than optimal conditions due to a lack of funding, facilities and equipment, and manpower. It certainly seems as if this “five-year rule” in Thailand could be modified, if not scrapped entirely, and this would seem to be a worthy subject for further journalistic activity.

DAY 4

The final day began with a very useful de-brief of the preceding two days of activities, as the trainers led the journalists in a discussion about what key insights they learned, and how they could be applied in future story-telling.

We then received country reports from participants in which they described the state of media reporting on wildlife trafficking in each of their countries:

- In **Cambodia**, said Khan Sophirom of the Raksmeay Kampuchea Daily, animals were removed from the official list of traditional medicine in the year 2000, with the list only including herbs, but he noted that bushmeat can still be bought at some restaurants via “secret menus”. Wildlife and trafficking are considered by journalists to be “sexy stories”, but do not regularly appear on the news pages. They can be dangerous assignments for journalists, especially those working in forests far from law enforcement.
- In **China**, said Feng Jie, formerly of Southern Weekly and now an editor at an energy magazine, she estimated that 60% of the reporting on wildlife trafficking is provided as breaking news, with 30% of it containing analysis and commentary, and 10% including some investigator work. She highlighted several ground-breaking reports that appeared in Southern Weekly – on pangolin farms, the illegal timber trade, an animal rescue center, ivory

laundering and “Blood Ivory” -- and in The Paper, on “Namibia’s Secret Ivory Business”, and on how China’s mining industry damaged a “Wildlife Paradise”. She also provided many tips on how to work with Chinese online and social media to get information and data on trafficking.

- In **Indonesia**, said Syaiful of Greeners Magazine, the big challenge is to educate law enforcement. “They know it’s wrong, but they don’t think anything will happen if a few pangolins are gone from Indonesia,” he explained. “It’s a different case with orangutans or ivory, with different species.” He noted that NGOs have their own media, and so do government agencies, so a single story can be reported from different angles. The print media is declining throughout Indonesia, but there are 132.7 million Internet users, and 95% of them are active on social media.
- Souksavanh Keodaboth, a reporter with Lao National TV spoke for many of her colleagues when she said she had never covered wildlife trafficking. All media in **Laos** – including 29 newspapers, 111 magazines, 63 radio stations, and 33 TV stations – fall under the supervision of the Lao government, and have “minimal” reporting on wildlife trafficking. She said there was a recent case where more than 77 kg of seized animal parts were burned in Udomxai province. Access to data, funding for journalists, and coordination with officials is still limited in Laos, where journalists, “need to have more training and exchange with journalists in other countries”.
- The **Philippines** is mostly a transit country, where journalists “need to educate ourselves” about wildlife trafficking, said Karl Anthony Camila of Born To Be Wild, a TV show. Facilities in many rescue centers are inadequate and rescued animals often live their whole lives there. Some centers use journalists and media to raise more money. The Philippines is also the most dangerous country for environmental activists in Asia, second only to Brazil in the world. He highlighted the province of Palawan as the last wild frontier, hosting an endemic species of pangolin.
- **Vietnam** is a big market for wildlife trafficking, said Pham Thi Thanh Ha, a reporter with Vietnam Television. Even in Hanoi, there is a street where you can go and find wildlife products very easily. But the number of articles related to wildlife protection is very small -- only 374 articles produced in all the media in 2015, she said. She once went and pretended to be a customer for wildlife products, with her colleague using a phone to record the incident. The shopkeeper saw he was recording and pushed him out of the shop.
- For **Thailand**, elephant is the most popular species that appears on news at least monthly. Comparing with tigers, rhino and pangolin, elephant is a symbol of Thailand and also its population* is still the highest in the country. Special commemorative day events for other species don’t even diminish the preference for elephant news stories. For example, July 29 is an International Tiger Day, however, elephant still dominated the news coverage. From a news monitor during May-July 2017, wildlife related topics are covered in the news almost every day. The quantity depends on the occasions/situations related to wildlife in the country. There is no specific pattern of frequency – the majority of news is unpredictable in nature. In term of report, it’s found that international news makes it into Thai media at a low frequency, from a range of different sources. Low arrest/seizure report does not imply to the quantity of wildlife cases and seizures during these three periods.

This was followed by a presentation on media safety by Kulachada Chaipipat of the Southeast Asian Press Alliance (SEAPA). She acknowledged that there are “no hard and fast rules for media safety”,

especially as the situation changes from case to case. But she emphasized that “no story is worth your life, you all have the right to reject a story if you feel it will endanger you.” There are many online sites and resources offering tips, such as those offered by the International Network for the Safety of Journalists, the Committee to Protect Journalists, or Journalists Without Borders (RSF).

Press freedom is generally in decline in the region, with weak law enforcement to counter violence against media. Perpetrators are often allowed to act with “impunity”. Legal defamation is also a big problem, with reporters sometimes slapped with lawsuits, as recently happened to a reporter at The Nation in Thailand over a mining story. The region lacks the necessary legal support to help fight these spurious cases.

The final afternoon was taken up with a story writing exercise. After lunch, each journalist was asked to draft a print story about an issue they wanted to cover, either arising from the activities of the workshop itself, or they could bring in reporting they’ve done back in their home countries.

All the draft stories were shared with the whole group. Then, each journalist described their piece briefly, with the rest of the participants – led by Fahn and Tangwisutijit -- offering critiques, advice and suggestions. Of course, the exercise was more useful for print journalists who had a good command of English, but it generally proved to be highly useful in determining what stories the journalists were interested in, what skills they had in reporting on wildlife trafficking, and in providing the journalists with some concrete advice as to how write, report on and structure their stories.



Finally, the workshop concluded with a vow by all the participants to work on stories about wildlife trafficking once they returned home. Some of them have already provided stories they have produced. There was a strong interest in building a network, perhaps informal at first, of journalists working on these issues in the region, and connecting them with journalists in other regions, particularly Africa given that it is the source of much illegal wildlife trade.

OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

The workshop was set up to produce the following outputs, with an assessment on achievement provided in italics:

1. Empower journalistic capacity to do investigative reports and understand wildlife trafficking issues in Southeast Asia – *They did indeed come away with a better understanding of wildlife trafficking, as indicated in the survey results, in which the aspects of “Covering Wildlife Trafficking” and learning about “Sources and Resources for Reporting on Wildlife Trafficking” received top scores, of 4.69 (out of 5) and 4.56, respectively*
2. Create a media network to combat wildlife trafficking in target countries – *We laid a good foundation for this, although much will depend on what follow-up takes place. Again, this topic received top scores in the post-workshop survey, with all the participants giving it either a 4 or 5 out of 5 in terms of satisfaction.*
3. Journalists from Vietnam, Philippines and Indonesia funded by USAID projects to attend the workshop -- *Achieved*
4. Journalists learned more about USAID Wildlife Asia and its mission to combat wildlife trafficking in target countries -- *Achieved*

RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Overall, EJN is pleased with the results of this workshop, as we were able to provide effective training for the journalists in how to cover wildlife trafficking, and to deliver on promised outputs. The survey results indicate that the journalists were well satisfied with the workshop, and that they learned a lot from it. They cited the top three things they learned as:



1. In-depth aspects of wildlife trafficking in the region
2. Sources and resources for reporting wildlife trafficking
3. How to report wildlife trafficking situation in the region

Their main suggestion for improvement was that they would like to have had “more time” for presentations from experts and for tutoring by trainers. Of course, this is something we all would have liked, but organizers were obviously

constrained by resources.

In terms of lessons learned and recommendations, here are the main thoughts from Lead Trainer James Fahn:

- There is obviously strong interest in and enthusiasm for covering wildlife trafficking from most of the participants, and based on my past interactions, from many other journalists in

the region, too. They intuitively understand the importance of the topic, and how emotionally it resonates with their audiences. But they do face obstacles, most notably a lack of time and money to research a story properly. In some cases, they lack expertise, or at least experience, and they also could benefit from better international connections with experts and fellow journalists.

- The curriculum for the workshop generally worked well, with the in-class sessions bookending the days at the 4th Regional Dialogue on Combating Trafficking of Wild Fauna and Flora and in the field. On the first day, it probably would have been good to have the USAID presentations earlier in the day, but we realize there are other schedules that need to be juggled. The Regional Dialogue was a bit stultifying at times, but the opportunity it offered for journalists to learn about their government’s policies and meet with and interview important officials was invaluable. It was also probably good for the officials to know that their home press was watching them.

The country reports from the journalists were a bit hit or miss. More from the safety presentation was expected. However, the way the story drafting exercise went on the last day was successful. Most of the participants demonstrated good story ideas, and a few journalists that had been quiet during the workshop – like Indri from Indonesia – showed real skill in writing stories. Obviously, drafting a story in English was more of a challenge for some than others, but what was important was they showed how planned to present and cover the issues, and we were able to give extensive and useful feedback to virtually all the participants.

- Despite current media landscape in Laos, we had Lao journalists participating and paying attention was a real achievement, especially when the topics are on environmental reporting. Continuous capacity building support to Lao journalists are recommended to ensure a concert effort on combating wildlife crime in the region.
- It would have been good to include journalists from Myanmar. Their presence was missed, and we should find a way to include them in the network, although we do realize that may not be able to happen within the confines of this project.
- Logistically and administratively, the workshop went smoothly. The tools required were provided, and although there were the usual problems of sessions running late, in general we completed them within a reasonable time frame. USAID Wildlife Asia did a wonderful job juggling the demands of all the various stakeholders who had a say in the way things were run, not an easy task. And it was great to have co-trainer Nantiya with us as a veteran regional journalist who could provide unique insights. In general, it is very hard to run such an intense and ambitious workshop as a solo trainer.
- We came away from the workshop with many good story ideas to follow up on, some that the individual participants will hopefully look into. A few of the ideas that would be quite intriguing to carry out are:
 - Comparing trial and conviction rates for wildlife trafficking in various countries around the region. Of course, they may not all be directly comparable, but some kind of comparative study would be useful to hopefully help determine where law enforcement is most effective, and where it’s lagging. It could also help push the laggards (or indeed all the countries) to do better. It’s also possible this study could be carried out by regional research institutions, but hopefully still in collaboration with journalists, who could contribute in unique ways.

- The Thai regulation that requires rescued animals to be kept in quarantine for at least five years seems to be a dubious one, and counter-productive in regard to the goal of rescuing animals. In other words, it seems very ripe for an in-depth journalistic story or series, which could look at how other countries handle such situations, and what alternative regulations might be feasible without condemning seized animals to captivity.
- A look at pangolins in captivity, and why the Thai authorities seem to struggle so much in caring for them. Is it true that the Vietnamese have a better survival rate, and if so why? It is possible the Thai authorities just need to learn some better techniques. It's also possible that we don't know the full story about what's happening to the quarantined pangolins in Thailand. We may decide it's not appropriate to publish the full story, especially if it turns out that the quarantine center staff are trying to help them as best they can, but it might be good to confirm that is the case.
- In fact, there seems to be a keen interest for a more general follow-up to the workshop, not just in pursuing the stories described above (or other stories), but also in other activities that would help the media to cover wildlife trafficking. For instance, it would be good to hold similar regional journalism workshops to coincide with Regional Dialogues in future years, particularly if they are held in different countries. EJN has found that such activities are doubly useful in the sense that they provide opportunities both to produce content, and to build the capacity (and contacts) of the journalists.
- To overcome a language barrier is a challenge. While there are more Thai journalists covering wildlife trafficking stories, most of them didn't feel comfortable to attend the workshop conducting in English. There was one journalist from The Nation attended our workshop. However, she could only attend for the first two days and had to get back to her news desk. Suggestion from both Thai journalists and some workshop participants are to conduct training in national level, using local language. This will enhance more participation of the journalist to the workshop. In addition, the workshop design will need to include field visit to see the case more.

Other possible activities include story grants – perhaps in collaboration with the Mekong Eye website and news digest – local workshops and dedicated field trips. Or we can think more ambitiously about ways to employ the Mekong Matters and Earth Journalism Network to enhance media coverage of wildlife trafficking, for instance by helping Southeast Asian journalists to team up with colleagues in the region, in Africa or elsewhere. It was a useful workshop with worthy goals, and could really lay the groundwork for a lot of ground-breaking stories.

ANNEXES

ANNEX I: WORKSHOP AGENDA

WORKSHOP AGENDA		
DATE/TIME	TOPIC	FACILITATOR
SEPTEMBER 11, 2017 (MONDAY)		
Participants arrive Bangkok at Don Muang Airport and check in at the Miracle Grand Convention Hotel		
SEPTEMBER 12, 2017 (TUESDAY)		
8.00-8.30	Registration	Orraphan Sanonork
8.30-8.45	Introduction to the workshop	Dararat Weerapong
8.45-10:00	Self-introduction of participants (name, post, and organization, and experience relating to reporting about wildlife trafficking, expectation check)	James Fahn, Executive Director, Earth Journalism Network Nantiya Tangwisutijit, Editor-Mentor Dararat Weerapong, Communications, Outreach and Learning Specialist, USAID Wildlife Asia
10.00-10.40	Covering Wildlife Trafficking	James Fahn
10.40-11.00	Coffee break	
11.00-12.00	Red List, Species Overview and CITES	Petch Manopawitr, Deputy, Indo-Burma Group, IUCN
12.00-13.00	Lunch	
13.00-13.15	USAID Remark	Richard Nyberg, Senior Regional Communications Advisor, USAID RDMA
13.15-13.30	Breaking the ice	Richard Nyberg
13.30-14.45	Resources for reporting on wildlife trafficking	James Fahn and Dr. Pete Likitkererat, Technology and Innovation Specialist, USAID Wildlife Asia
14.45-15.00	Coffee break	

15.00-16.00	Pictures of Wildlife Trafficking in ASEAN and China	Moderated by James Fahn
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USAID Wildlife Asia, by Dr. Robert Mather, COP • USAID Saving Species, Vietnam, By David Lawson, COP • BIJAK, Indonesia, by Noelle Veltze, COP • USAID Protect Wildlife, Philippines, By Ernesto Guiang, COP • USAID Protect Wildlife in Tanzania by Jeremy Swanson, Law Enforcement Specialist 	
	Q&A	
16.00-17.00	In-depth Aspects of Wildlife Trafficking	USAID Wildlife Asia:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumer Demand • Law Enforcement • Law and Policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eleanora de Guzman, Social and Behavior Change Specialist • Sal Amato, Law Enforcement Specialist • Sallie Yang, Legal Specialist
	Q&A	
17.00-17.15	Wrap up for day I	James Fahn
18.30	Group dinner	Orraphan Sanonork

SEPTEMBER 13, 2017 (WEDNESDAY)

8.30-18.00	Participating in the 4 th Regional Dialogue on Combating Trafficking of Wild Fauna and Flora	Organized by Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation; USAID Wildlife Asia, and partner organizations
18:30-20:00	Welcome dinner & launch of I am #IvoryFree Online Campaign	By USAID Wildlife Asia and WildAid

SEPTEMBER 14, 2017 (THURSDAY)

8:00-18.00	Field visit to Wildlife Quarantine Center in Nakorn Nayok	Rhishja Cota-Larson, Founder, Annamiticus/ Dr. Patrapol Maneeon (Lotter)/ James Fahn/ Nantiya Tangwisutijit/ Dararat Weerapong
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SEPTEMBER 15, 2017 (FRIDAY)

8.30-9.00	Recap	James Fahn, Nantiya Tangwisutijit
	Q&A/clarification (if any)	Dararat Weerapong
9.00-10.45 (10 minutes/ country)	<p>Panel Discussion II: Current situation of media report (country presentations) & discussion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cambodia 2. China 3. Indonesia 4. Laos 5. Philippines 6. Thailand 7. Vietnam 	James Fahn and journalist representation from each country

Q&A

10.45-11.00 Coffee break

11.00-12.00 Media Safety

Kulachada Chaipipat, Campaigns
Manager, Southeast Asian Press
Alliance

12.00-13.00 Lunch

13.00-14.15 Draft stories and send to the group

James Fahn, Nantiya Tangwisutijit

14.15-16.30 Present stories to the group and discuss

16.30-17.00 Networking and conclusion

James Fahn, Nantiya Tangwisutijit,
Dararat Weerapong

SEPTEMBER 16, 2017 (SATURDAY)

Participants check out and depart to home country safely.

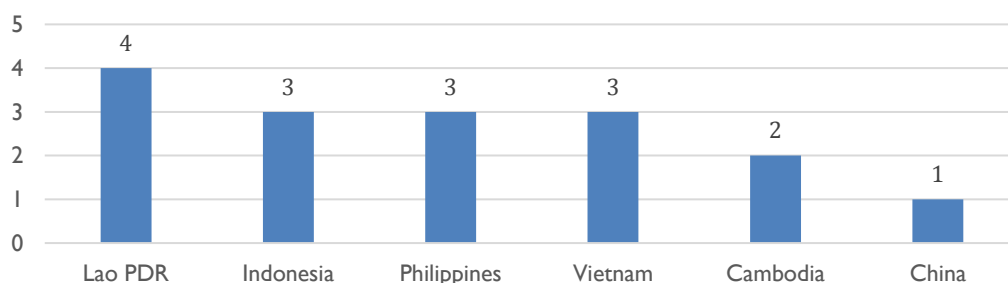
ANNEX II: WORKSHOP EVALUATION REPORT

WORKSHOP EVALUATION REPORT

MEDIA WORKSHOP: COMBATING WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING IN ASEAN & CHINA

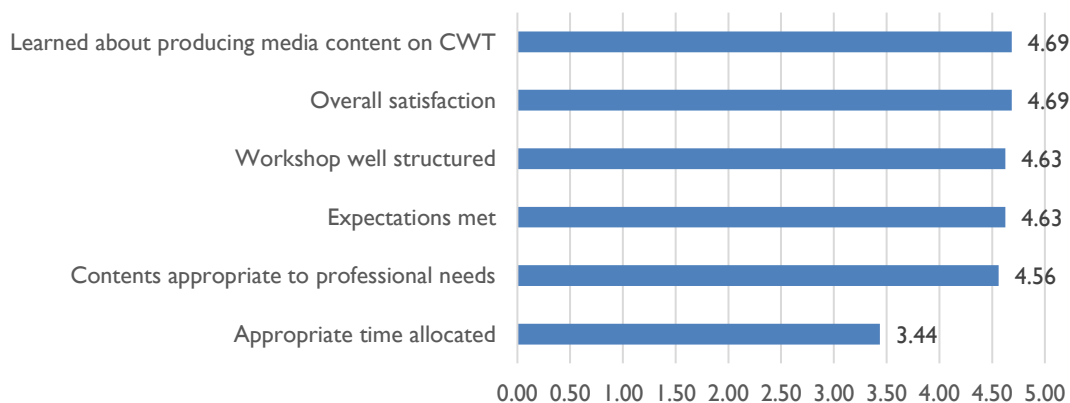
SEPTEMBER 12-15, 2017
 MIRACLE GRAND CONVENTION HOTEL, BANGKOK
 WILDLIFE QUARANTINE CENTER, NAKORN NAYOK, Thailand

Countries in Which Respondents Work (Count, n=16)

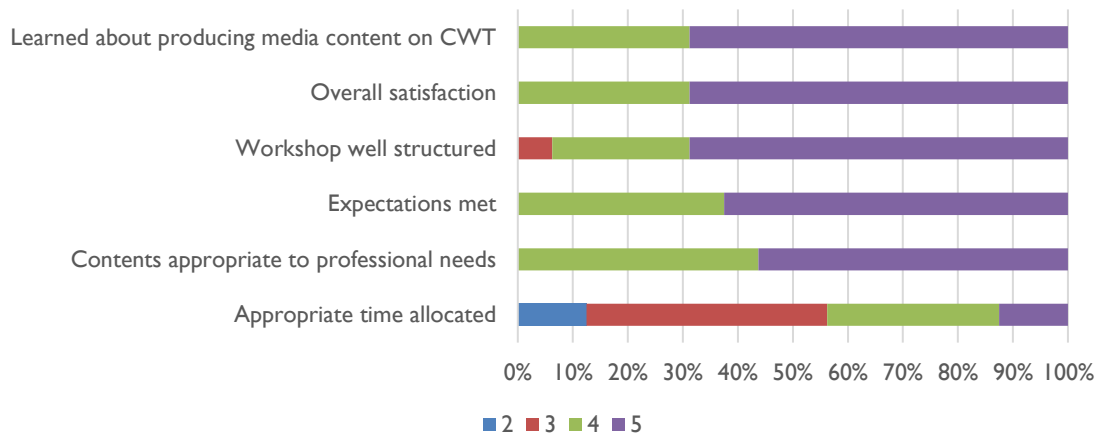


Satisfaction of the Media Training Overall

Average Satisfaction (full score of 5 per item, n=16)



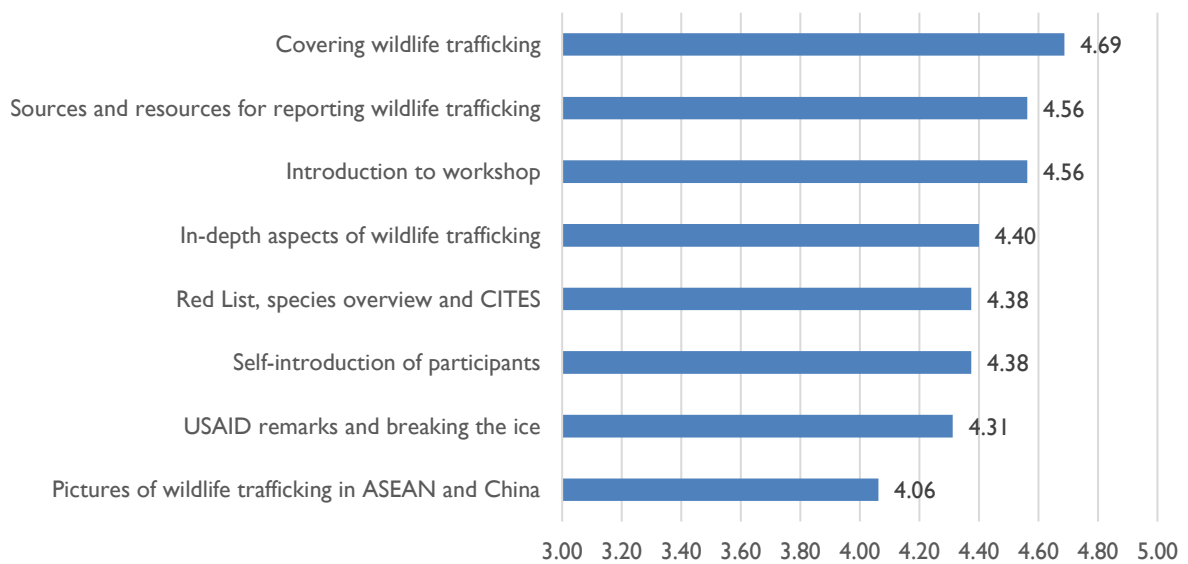
Percentage of Satisfaction Score of 1-5 by Question (n=16) (1= not at all, to 5=definitely)



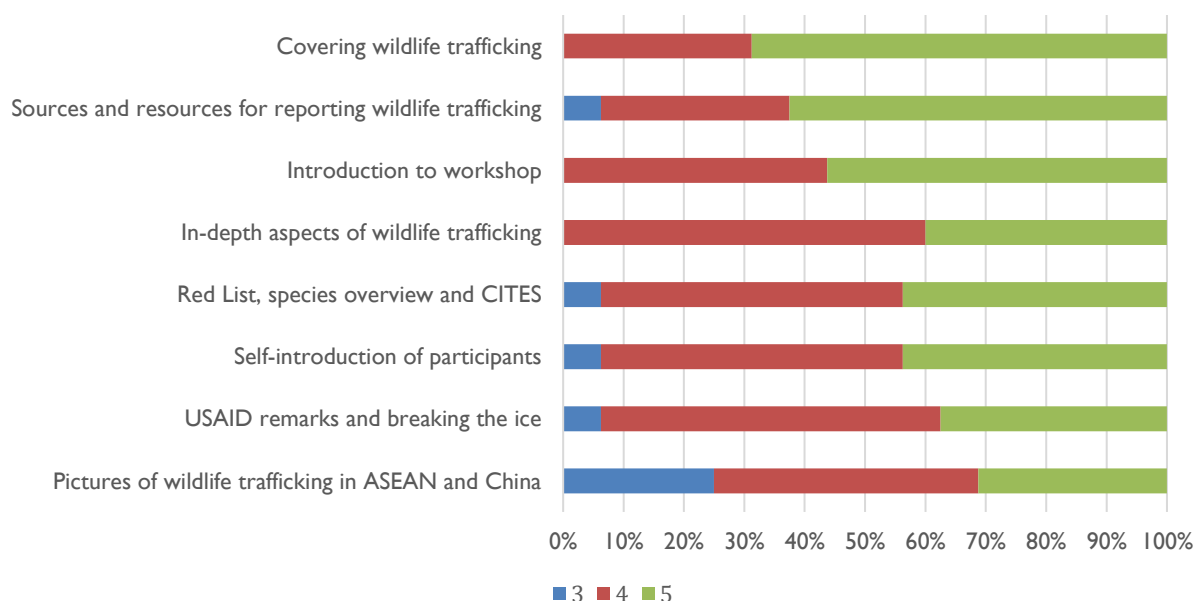
Main Sessions of September 12-15, 2017

Sessions of Day 1, September 12, 2017

Average Satisfaction (full score of 5)



Percentage of Satisfaction Score of 1-5 by Session (1= not at all, to 5=definitely)



Comments and Suggestions for Day I Sessions (Chronological Order)

Session	Comments and Suggestions
<i>Introduction to the Workshop</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply creativity to generate participants' interest • The session was useful, giving the whole program in the beginning, so participants can be prepared. • Should have short bios and send to all participants before the workshop
<i>Self-Introduction of Participants</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fellow participants are very nice, giving me good experience. • I enjoyed this session. It would be nicer with games. • More time for each person
<i>Covering Wildlife Trafficking</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CWT is new to me and I'd like to learn more. • Should invite people/source who have been involved in carrying out wildlife trafficking.
<i>Red List, Species Overview and CITES</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This can be briefing/materials distributed prior to the workshop. • The data are complex. The source need to focus on one topic.
<i>USAID remarks and Breaking the Ice</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should use a game for ice breaking.
<i>Sources and Resources for Reporting Wildlife Trafficking</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of us are already aware of this. Should be cut shorter. • Need to practice with real sources e.g. ex-smugglers/poachers.

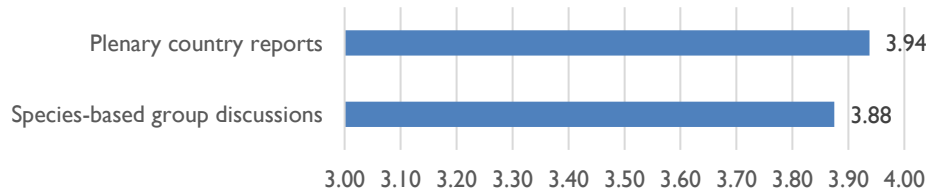
Pictures of wildlife trafficking in ASEAN and China

- More time
- Would like to learn more about the market in each country.

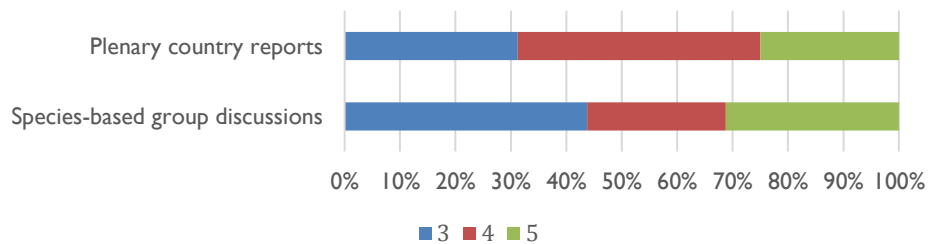
Sessions of Day 2, September 13, 2017

(4th Regional Dialogue on Combating Illegal Trafficking of Wild Fauna and Flora)

Average Satisfaction (full score of 5)



Percentage of Satisfaction Score of 1-5 by Session (1= not at all, to 5=definitely)



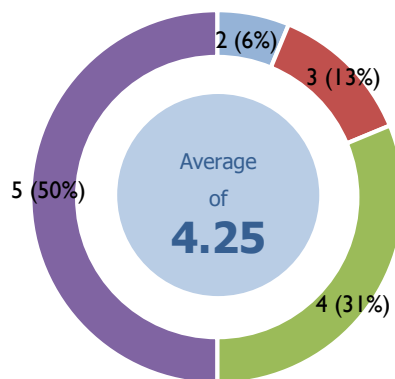
Comments and Suggestions for Day 2 Sessions (Chronological Order)

Session	Comments and Suggestions
<i>Plenary country reports</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More time (2 responses) • Should provide a chance for country delegates to discuss among their group e.g. customs with customs, so they can learn from one another. • All reports provide good visuals on wildlife trafficking in each country.
<i>Species-based group discussions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More time • Species experts should provide a briefing for each session. • Need more time to elaborate ideas.

Session of Day 3, September 14, 2017

(Field trip to Wildlife Quarantine Center in Nakorn Nayok)

Percentage of Satisfaction Score of 1-5 (1= not at all, to 5=definitely)

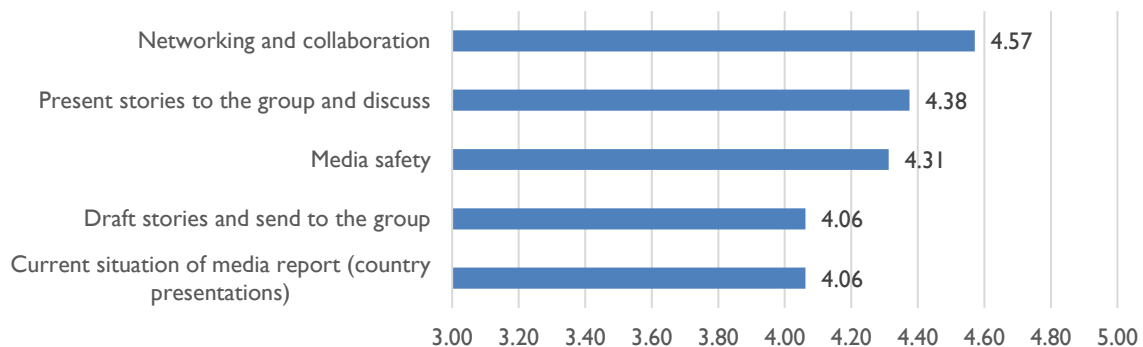


Comments and Suggestions for Day 3 Session (Field Trip)

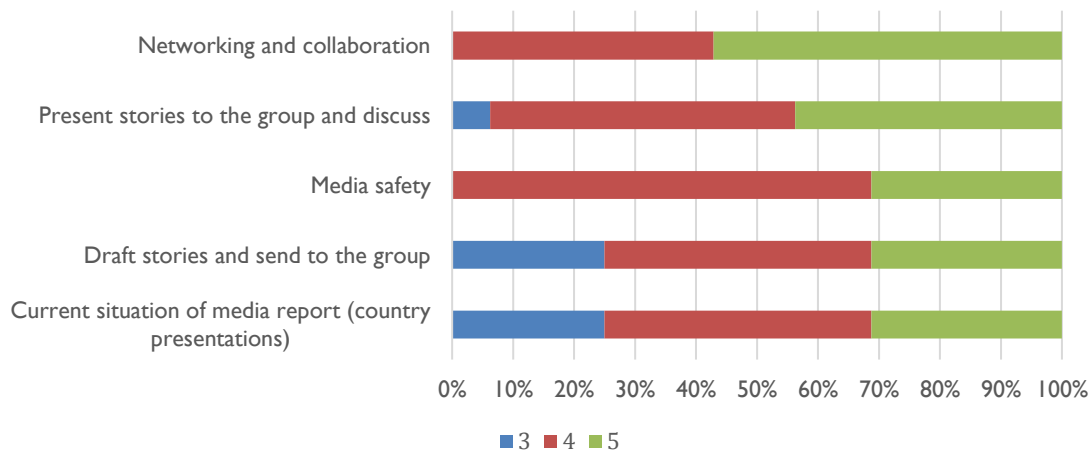
- Provide water in the van (**2 responses**)
- Provide more time to interview more people (**2 responses**)
- Work with officials beforehand so it is more prepared and more information is shared
- I gained new knowledge about pangolins and tigers and other species during the visit.
- The visit should have been arranged on another day to avoid missing the sessions of the last day of the 4th Regional Dialogue.
- Need to visit another place as a comparison
- Should also visit local people who live around the center
- Should see more animals

Sessions of Day 4, September 15, 2017

Average Satisfaction (full score of 5)



Percentage of Satisfaction Score of 1-5 by Session (1= not at all, to 5=definitely)



Comments and Suggestions for Day 4 Sessions (Chronological Order)

Session	Comments and Suggestions
<i>Current situation of media report (country presentations)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide guidelines to organize presentations prior to working in country team (2 responses) • There are not many wild animals left in my country, so there are not many stories about this. • Should be shorter
<i>Media safety</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Useful and helpful with media • Need sources e.g. someone involved in or experiencing safety problems • More introduction on how to manage safety for international journalists
<i>Draft stories and send to group</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More time for working and discussion (2 response)
<i>Present and discuss stories</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More time
<i>Networking and collaboration</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More pictures

Top Aspects Participants Learned from the Workshop

What are the top three things you have learned from the Workshop?	Number of Responses
- In-depth aspects of wildlife trafficking in the region	8 responses
- Sources and resources for reporting wildlife trafficking	7 responses
- How to report wildlife trafficking situation in the region	5 responses
- Networking and contacts with other journalists and experts - Wildlife quarantine center in Thailand and challenges they face	4 responses
- Differences of environmental laws and enforcement between countries - Media safety	3 responses
- Interconnectivity/similarities/differences by country on the issue - Importance of global and regional collaboration on the issue - Rosewood trafficking information - Knowledge on how to conduct news reporting in general	2 responses
- Importance of media's role in raising public awareness of wildlife trafficking - Illegal markets	1 response

Suggestions for Future Media Training

Suggestions for Future Media Training	Number of Responses
- More time for presentations from experts and for spending with tutors	6 responses
- Provide background information beforehand - More opportunities for field trip - Should invite more participants and journalists from other countries e.g. Singapore, Africa (journalists and rangers), etc.	2 responses
- Provide more sessions for group work and interaction with others	1 response
- More open in providing information to media	1 response
- Next session should not be running at the same time with the important Dialogue.	1 response
- Arrange a visit a media office in Thailand and interview them about how they write/report wildlife trafficking.	1 response
- Some journalists need to prepare stories and send to their office on the same day every day. It would be better if we have the data/presentations on the same day.	1 response
- Add component of psychosocial support to journalists	1 response
- Have more visuals for story detail	1 response

ANNEX III: STORIES PRODUCED BY MEDIA WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

I. FRESH BID TO TACKLE ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE

national September 17, 2017 01:00

By PIYAPORN WONGRUANG

The Sunday Nation

2,790 Viewed - <http://www.nationmultimedia.com/detail/national/30326877>

MEETING HEARS THAT OFFICIALS ARE LOSING THE BATTLE AGAINST ORGANISED CRIMINALS

AS TRANSNATIONAL wildlife trafficking continues unabated in Southeast Asia, wildlife authorities and advocates are stepping up their efforts to understand the trends in this activity and stem the illegal trade.



With nations in this region being both transit and destination points, officials are looking at ways to reduce the demand for wild animal products on the ground and to improve political and judicial measures to prosecute traffickers.

According to USAID Wildlife Asia, which jointly organized the 4th Regional Dialogue on Combating Trafficking of Wild Fauna and Flora along with several other conservation agencies in Bangkok last week, wildlife trafficking is a sophisticated enterprise organized by crime syndicates.

As such, it needs to be tackled through innovations in law enforcement and better government policy.

Sal Amato, the agency's law enforcement specialist with more than three decades of experience, said the traffickers were often one step ahead of the officials.

“There is one overriding principle that drives the business — it's of huge value with low risk. And that's

why we are losing the battle, rapidly.”

According to the agency, four key species are its focus in this region. Elephant ivory, rhino horns, tiger parts and pangolin products are among the top items in the illegal wildlife trade worldwide. And the trade in these products is particularly rampant in Southeast Asia and China, which are both major sources of demand and transit points.

On average, the worldwide trade is worth around \$20 billion (Bt662 billion) annually, with several cases being underreported. Because it involves criminal syndicates, the activity is viewed as undermining the rule of law and encouraging corruption and money laundering. It is therefore cited as a critical security issue.

Dr Robert Mather, chief of party at USAID Wildlife Asia, and other wildlife specialists at the event pointed to the unabated trend of wildlife trafficking, especially from Africa to this region.

First to arrive here were parts of two prime African species – rhinos and elephants.

Jeremy Swanson, a law enforcement specialist from USAID in Tanzania, said the population of African elephants had been declining rapidly due to poaching since 2009 or so, with Tanzania seeing more than 60 per cent of its population lost exclusively for ivory. The killings reached a peak in 2012 or 2013, and the rate has dropped slightly, partly due to more stringent law enforcement, he said.

His statistics are in line with those from the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), which shows that more than 41 tonnes of ivory was seized in 2013, the highest so far, this decade. Of an estimated 500,000 animals in the wild in 2012, around 20,000 were poached, and the IUCN noted that the poaching and trade in ivory could wipe out up to one-fifth of the population within 10 years if it is allowed to continue.

The sadder story is of the region's black rhinos. About 96 per cent of the population dropped during the years 1970-1992, with the number dipping to as low as 2,400. The good news is that the population has now risen to around 4,800, partly due to renewed stringent protection measures and relocation programs, the agency noted.

Mather, who has been working on wildlife conservation in this region for decades, has observed the latest trend of trafficking of wild animals from Africa to this region involves pangolins. He said pangolins are among the most-traded species worldwide. As many as 1.1 million were found being trafficked between 2006 and 2015 globally.

However, fewer than 10 per cent of the smugglers ended up being prosecuted and sentenced, prompting Mather to point to flaws in the processes that need to be fixed.

According to studies by his agency, the demand is a result of growing consumption of these species' parts for purposes ranging from medications to expensive trophies.

Mather said consumption-reduction activities needed to shift from just awareness-raising to encouraging behavior change among those who consume in wildlife. Law enforcement and policy changes are equally critical, he said.

Mather said there is a relatively low number of prosecutions and sentencing of wrongdoers in wildlife trafficking cases in this region, and concerned parties have to do more to make law enforcement more effective.

"We see a lot of arrests but these hardly ever lead to successful prosecutions. We really need to move forward to the sentencing," pointed Mather.

Amato said factors preventing more prosecutions included inadequate financial and human resources, lack of adequate laws, inadequate equipment and training, low awareness among the judiciary, lack of political will and, last but not least, corruption.

"It's a question whether it's inept or corrupt," he said.

In an attempt to address the issue, wildlife specialists agreed on more cooperation and timely information sharing via new technology, as well as work at the judicial and political levels. Thailand, the experts said, is progressing with work at the Supreme Court on the judicial processes, while the Asean Interparliamentary Assembly has started to look at the issue of enforcement against trafficking.

"The big question remains: why these cases often disappear, and do not continue to the end in sentencing," Mather said.

END

2. WHAT TO DO WITH CAPTURED WILDLIFE

Viet Nam News

by Phạm Hoàng Nam

Update: September, 24/2017 - 09:00

<http://vietnamnews.vn/sunday/features/393901/what-to-do-with-captured-wildlife.html#LqK4pttlv0b20Dk8.97>

A normal day for Kai, a young female staff member at the Wildlife Quarantine Centre in Nakorn Nayok, Thailand, just two hours from Bangkok, starts by preparing 144 chickens or pork for 12 rescued tigers.

At 2pm everyday, Kai brings chicken for tigers, serving first Wind, Fire, Water and Soil, the four oldest tigers who have lived at the centre for five years since they were two months old.

“They are so gentle and they let me play or touch them like pets, but the problem is that under Thai law, centres are allowed to keep rescued animals for only five years.

“We don’t know what will happen to them because we aren’t allowed to feed them anymore and can’t release into the wild either because they don’t know how to hunt to survive,” said Bencharong Sangarak, head of the centre.

Each week, food for the 12 tigers costs around US\$650.

“We don’t have enough money to build bigger cages for them and more are coming as more tigers are rescued,” Kai said.

Besides tigers, the Wildlife Quarantine Centre – the first one in Thailand, along with 26 other rescue centres around the country – also takes care of many different species after they are illegally caught and transported by traders.

“Two weeks ago, more than 100 pangolins were rescued and transported to us,” the head said.

All 20 staff members of the centre had to focus on taking care of the pangolins because at that time they were very weak.

“We have to feed them like babies because they are not familiar with having food in front of them,” Kai said.

However, currently only 15 of them are alive.

Transnational crime

The situation is similar in Việt Nam, which is considered as the second biggest market in the world for wildlife consumption, especially for ivory, rhino horn, pangolin and tiger.

In a recent survey by National Geographic with 15 in-depth interviews and 1,000 people surveyed in Hà Nội, HCM City, Đà Nẵng and Cần Thơ, 14 per cent would like to buy ivory for home decor, gifts and jewelry.

“Buyers believe African elephants were declining and some governments intentionally destroy poached ivory. So they rush to purchase ivory before it becomes unavailable,” the report said.

About 88 per cent of those surveyed believed rhino horn provides medicinal benefits.

“The rhino horn buyer is often a middle-aged or older woman, a wealthy business owner, or well-educated person with health problems. They also buy it for their parents,” the report revealed.

Regarding pangolin, four per cent have bought it, 10 per cent have eaten it and 7 per cent are thinking to buy it. Many pangolins are showing up in rescue centres like those in Thailand.

“People think pangolin is rare, wild meat, has medicinal value, is expensive and shows prestige,” the report added.

“Tiger bones are believed to cure pain and arthritic disease, improve general health and male sexual ability in Việt Nam,” the report said.

“To stop this situation, we need to understand what motivates people to use rhino horn, ivory, pangolin and tiger bone. Only when you understand why people want to buy rhino horns can you think of ways to change that,” Dr David Lawson from the USAID Saving Species told *Việt Nam News*.

“Wildlife trafficking is transnational organised crime because of its high value and low risk,” said Sal Amato, a law enforcement specialist.

Inadequate financial and human resources, corruption, lack of adequate laws and political will, inadequate equipment/training, transnational crime groups, Internet trade, low judiciary awareness, law enforcement agencies showcasing seizures without follow-up investigations or arrests are reasons why enforcement has been ineffective against wildlife crimes.

“Việt Nam has approved stiffer penalties for illegally possessing rhino horn and ivory. That rule will come into affect in early 2018,” Vương Tiến Mạnh, deputy director of the Việt Nam Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development’s CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) Management Authority, said.

Under the new law, a wildlife trafficker might be fined up to US\$60,000 and put in jail for seven years.

“Strict fines are one of the solutions to slash wildlife trafficking and trade,” Mạnh added. **VNS**

3. STRONG COOPERATION AMONG ASEAN COUNTRIES TO COMBAT TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME ON WILDLIFE

<http://www.greeners.co/berita/strong-cooperation-among-asean-countries-to-combat-transnational-organized-crime-on-wildlife/>



Bangkok (Greeners) – The regional discussion on illegal animals and plants trading in Asia officially opened on Wednesday (13/09), at Miracle Grand Convention Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand.

The event was opened by Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, General Surasak Kanchanarat and attended by representatives from Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam and Indonesia.

On his speech, General Surasak Kanchanarat underlined the importance to increase cooperation between nations in Asia region in tackling illegal wildlife trade which has been categorized as Transnational Organized Crime (TOC).

“Thailand has consistently increase our efforts and serious actions for this crime however it would not be sufficient without the spirit of strong cooperation among ASEAN nations. Despite of declining case of illegal wildlife trade, domestically, the international distribution shows high number. Only through the spirit of strong cooperation between ASEAN countries that we can effectively broke down this crime’s chain of distribution,” he said.

The fourth event is aiming on reporting the latest condition and strengthening the joint efforts in combating illegal animals and plants trade in Asia.

The result of the discussion is designed to support ASEAN countries action plan for Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora or CITES, an international agreement among countries based on World Conservation Union (IUCN) resolution.

Indonesian delegation was representatives from East Nusa Tenggara Natural Conservation Agency, Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Tamen Sitorus.

On his report, Tamen stated Indonesia's achievements and challenges in combating illegal wildlife trade.

Based on its country report, Indonesia under Ministry of Environment and Forestry has seriously taken actions through Multidoor Approach Law Enforcement. The approach is considered as tremendous breakthrough as suspects of illegal wildlife trade are liable for other criminal charges, including money laundering, corruption and tax.

“On challenges, that's normal, there will be obstacles, it's only a matter of seeing these criminals' maneuver. For example, social media use and specific codes in their mode of operation,” he said.

The regional discussion is facilitated by Thai's Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment with the support from USAID WILDLIFE ASIA, and IUCN. Other issues will be brought up at the discussions are current development on illegal trade cases on pangolin, tiger, rhinoceros, elephant, and Siameese Rosewood.

Written by Syaiful Rochman

4. REGIONAL NATIONS HOLD DIALOGUE ON COMBATING WILDLIFE SMUGGLING, POACHING

Viet Nam News, September 14, 2017

<http://vietnamnews.vn/environment/393719/regional-nations-hold-dialogue-on-combating-wildlife-smuggling-poaching.html#5W0ZRjv5W0P54kVm.97>

BANGKOK — More efforts are needed to strengthen and support collaboration among ASEAN countries and China to combat the increasing wildlife smuggling and poaching of endangered wildlife, the 4th Regional Dialogue on Combating Trafficking of Wild Fauna and Flora heard in Bangkok on Wednesday.

Thailand's Minister of Natural Resources and Environment General Surasak Kanjanarat said: "Despite a domestic decline in illegal cases, the illegal international trades still exist. No matter how much we can do by ourselves at the national level, it is never enough. Only through the spirit of collaboration among ASEAN member states, China and concerned partners in an action-oriented effort can this problem be effectively addressed throughout the entire supply chain."

Thanya Netithammakun, director general of the Thai Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, said in his opening speech: "[The dialogue] focuses on exchange of information, including best practices and challenges to strengthen regional collaboration in the context of illegal trafficking of CITES-listed species of wild fauna and flora and their products, especially tiger, pangolin, ivory and rhino horn."

The two-day event will see country updates, presentations, and group and panel discussions by 40 delegates from ASEAN countries and China and some 80 representatives from various local and international agencies.

Recently Việt Nam has emerged as a destination for many illegal wildlife products.

David Lawson, USAID Saving Species Project's Chief of Party told *Việt Nam News*: "It's probably related to the fact that Việt Nam is becoming a wealthier country, so now people can afford things they can't before. And one of the things culturally people want to get are things like rhino horns and ivory, and because of the limited population of rhinos and elephants, that's where the problem is.

"Việt Nam in July has approved a penal code, and that is a really good illustration because the penalty for illegally possessing rhino horn and ivory now is much greater.

"That penal code will come into action in early 2018. But part of that process then is to assist in producing the guidelines and things for prosecutors and judges to do training programmes for police and customs.

"I think that the dialogues are important to raise awareness at a high level. I mean you got some senior people here in all 10 countries, and these sorts of dialogues do help keep the picture alive."

Vương Tiến Mạnh, deputy director of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development's CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) Management Authority and head of the Vietnamese delegation, said: "Việt Nam greatly welcomes the dialogue because efforts from one nation cannot stop the cross-border crime. We came to the dialogue, learnt and shared our experience in making and enforcing laws, increasing awareness and reducing demand for wildlife products."

Phạm Tiến Trinh, a customs official, said: “The most important thing is that through dialogue Việt Nam can set up a network to exchange information with other nations to deal with illegal wildlife trafficking in the fastest and most effective way.” — VNS

5. HOSTED TO COMBAT WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING

VientianeMai, September 25, 2017



A published an article from media workshop/4th RD, when Souliyo SENGNGAM journalist participant interviewed his country delegate, Mr. Chanthone Phothitay, Deputy Director, Protection Forest Management Division, Department of Forest Resource Management, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry; and Dr. Robert Mather, COP of USAID Wildlife Asia.

Mr. Phothitay described about ASEAN-WEN. Dr. Mather described wildlife trafficking route (Africa - → Southeast Asia → China). He also highlighted the concerted efforts (within the region and between Asia-Africa) to combat wildlife trafficking, underlined the importance of law enforcement, and capacity buildings provided to enforcers (e.g. custom, police, relevant agencies); as well as effective laws and policies.

6. P160 M WORTH OF WILDLIFE CONFISCATED IN PAST 7 YEARS

By [Rhodina Villanueva](#) (The Philippine Star) | Updated September 21, 2017

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said that P160 million worth of wildlife specimens were confiscated by concerned agencies from July 2010 to August 2017.

A report by the DENR's Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) said that the confiscation of the 21,000 wildlife specimens was the result of 212 enforcement operations conducted by the DENR Regional/Field Offices, wildlife enforcement officers, wildlife traffic monitoring units and Philippine Operations Group on Ivory and Illegal Wildlife Trade or POGI.

The operations were made in collaboration with other agencies such as the Philippine National Police, National Bureau of Investigation, Philippine Coast Guard and Palawan Council for Sustainable Development.

“At least 122 criminal complaints/cases have been filed in various courts. So far, 10 of the criminal cases filed have been resolved with the conviction of 19 crime perpetrators,” the BMB noted.

The report said commonly traded species are birds specifically hill myna or Palawan talking myna, raptors (kites, serpent eagles), hornbills, parrots and cockatoos. For reptiles, these are marine turtles, Philippine forest turtles, snakes, geckos and monitor lizards. For mammals, the most traded are pangolins and monkeys; and among arthropods, scorpions and tarantulas.

It also pointed out that Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan or Mimaropa region has the highest number of wildlife crime with 69 incidents recorded, 60 of which occurred in Palawan alone. The National Capital Region followed with 56, Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon) with 14, Region 3 with 13, and Regions 5 and 10 with nine.

“Five enforcement operations were registered for both Regions 11 and 13; four each in Regions 7 and 9; three each in Regions 6, 8, 12, and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao; and one each in Region 2, Cordillera Administrative Region and the Negros Island Region. Meanwhile, no wildlife apprehension was recorded in Region 1.”

A regional dialogue on wildlife trafficking between ASEAN member countries was recently held in Bangkok, Thailand. It aimed to strengthen regional collaboration and partnership among ASEAN member states including the Philippines in line with curbing trafficking of wild flora and fauna.

Dr. Wijarn Simachaya, permanent secretary of Thailand's Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, said the dialogue provides a regional platform that will focus on exchange of information, including best practices and challenges in order to strengthen the partnership to effectively combat illegal trade of tigers, pangolins, ivory and rhinoceros horn as well as Siamese rosewood.

Delegates from Brunei, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines, and representatives of international organizations and non-government organizations

discussed the challenges, best practices on inter-agency cooperation, lessons learned, support needed and expertise they can offer on the issue of wildlife trafficking.

Earlier, an official said the Philippine government is working to eradicate the country's image of being a transit point for illegal wildlife trade.

Ernesto Guiang, chief of party of USAID Protect Wildlife Philippines, said there are concrete moves to remove this negative label attached to the country.

"There are efforts to strengthen monitoring of the country as a transshipment point of illegal wildlife trafficking," Guiang, who was part of the delegation to the Bangkok dialogue, said.

(source: <http://www.philstar.com/science-and-environment/2017/09/21/1740998/p160-m-worth-wildlife-confiscated-past-7-years>)

7. PANGOLIN LISTED AMONG MOST TRAFFICKED WILDLIFE

By [Rhodina Villanueva](#) (The Philippine Star) | Updated September 21, 2017

BANGKOK – The pangolin is one of the most trafficked wildlife species, a concerned official has said.

USAID Wildlife Asia chief of party Robert Mather noted that the pangolin is now tagged as the "world's most poached animal" mainly due to the high demand for traditional medicine.

"Another is the fact that they haven't received the same level of legal protection given other species. So that one of the issues being talked about in countries like China for example, is how to elevate the level of protection being given to pangolins," Mather explained during a workshop on "Combating Wildlife Trafficking" held here recently at the Miracle Grand Convention Hotel.

He said the aim is to give pangolins the same level of protection being extended to elephants and rhinoceros. "I think in the past, they have not been so well protected by the law, plus a lot of people are collecting them also."

Because there is now a dwindling supply of pangolins in Southeast Asia and China, he said supplies are now coming from Africa.

"China estimated that between 2008 and 2016, the total demand for pangolin consumption was about 1.6 million. Meanwhile, confiscated pangolins were around 87,000 during that period. So pangolins, and pangolin scales when calculated to make one pangolin – would total 87,000 pangolins seized by law enforcement agencies," Mather noted during the conference held in mid-September.

"This is now the trend. Next to pangolins being the most poached wildlife are the freshwater turtles and marine turtles, followed by reptiles," he said.

Meanwhile, data from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) in Manila said that pangolins are among the mammals classified as commonly traded species in the Philippines together with monkeys.

Based on the estimate of the BMB, almost a thousand Palawan pangolins were illegally traded from 2000 to 2013.

Last October, pangolins were included under Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora or CITES.

Adopted by over 180 countries, CITES is an international agreement that aims to ensure that the survival of wild animals and plants is not threatened by their trade. Appendix I lists plants and animals threatened with extinction, thus trading them internationally for commercial purposes is strictly prohibited.

Of the eight pangolin-species worldwide, only one can be found in the Philippines. Locally known as balintang, the Manis culionensis is endemic to Palawan province and is considered critically endangered, with its numbers highly threatened by low fecundity or number of offspring produced per year, loss of habitat, and illegal trade of scales and meat.

(Source: <http://www.philstar.com/science-and-environment/2017/09/21/1741001/pangolin-listed-among-most-trafficked-wildlife>)

8. 4TH REGIONAL DIALOGUE REPORTED BY RAKMEI KAMBUCHEA DAILY



This article is about 4th Regional Dialogue on Combating Trafficking in Wild Fauna and Flora from 11-15 September 2017 in Bangkok, where 10 ASEAN country expert came together to discuss illegal wildlife trade in many species as well as legal action against those wildlife trafficking. The article also stated that all experts focused on four wildlife species and one plant species which are believed to be iconic species in ASEAN region such as Pangolin, Tiger, Rhino and Asian Elephant and rosewood tree. (Rasmey Kampuchea Daily Newspaper, September 25, 2017)

ANNEX IV: PRESENTATIONS

All presentations can be downloaded from

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=0By42mLEjamrzTUpTNnJvSXpUT3M>