

CEPF SMALL GRANT FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

Organization Legal Name:	Wildlife Conservation Society WCS
Project Title:	Addressing the illegal trade and consumption of rhino horn in Vietnam
Date of Report:	1 st Nov 2012 – 31 st Oct 2013
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CEPF Region: Indo- Burma

Strategic Direction: Strategic Direction 1: Safeguard priority globally threatened species in Indochina by mitigating major threats

Grant Amount: 19,916 USD

Project Dates: 1st Nov 2012 – 31st Oct 2013

Implementation Partners for this Project (please explain the level of involvement for each partner):

- CITES Vietnam Management Authority: Cooperate in organizing a procuracy training workshop and two media workshops in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City; in developing survey outline, and carrying out initial data collection on importers of rhino horn to Viet Nam.
- Supreme People's Procuracy (SPP): A representative from the agency participated in all procuracy training workshops and two media workshops in Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City and Cat Tien, summarizing criminal cases of rhino horn trade over the period 2008-2013, outlining the status, challenges in dealing with criminal procedures, proposals for improving criminal procedures and conclusions of all cases;
- Other NGOs working on the rhino horn trade (e.g. TRAFFIC, ENV): Hosting and participating in meetings for the sharing of information and collating previous knowledge

Conservation Impacts

Please explain/describe how your project has contributed to the implementation of the CEPF ecosystem profile.

Our project outputs closely support the CEPF Investment Priority 1.2: Implement public awareness campaigns that reinforce existing wildlife trade policies and contribute to the reduction of consumer demand for 67 globally threatened species and their products.

Our two prosecution workshops with nearly 90 participants from the provincial judiciary, courts and prosecutors from Ho Chi Minh City, Hanoi and Nghe An province increased these stakeholders' understanding of national wildlife protection laws and international treaties, illegal rhino horn trade dynamics, and the impact these crimes had on the development of society and the reputation of Vietnam internationally. The close link between wildlife trade, wildlife survival threats, law enforcement and prosecution were shown and proven to prosecutors, providing a realistic and comprehensive view of impact of illegal wildlife trade in the region and in the country. We believe such trainings to be very effective by creating a cadre of government officials who are sensitized, informed and supportive to wildlife conservation. Furthermore, this engagement creates opportunities for WCS to build close relationships with prosecutors so that we are able to encourage wildlife crime cases to be prosecuted.

In addition to the prosecution workshop, WCS also held two journalist trainings attended by 22 government officials and 38 journalists in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. Participants demonstrated a high degree of

enthusiasm in the training and initiated many discussions with speakers. After the training, participants also published journal articles in print or online on the subject. In return, WCS regularly compiles local and international media reports and articles on the illegal wildlife trade with a focus on rhino horns, and shares these updates among our database of 180 journalists.

Please summarize the overall results/impact of your project against the expected results detailed in the approved proposal.

- ***Increase understanding on illegal rhino trade dynamics in Vietnam***

For this activity, WCS surveyors conducted investigations on Vietnam's rhino horn trade to obtain information on specific trading hubs, market prices and trends, and retail and wholesale trader *modus operandi*. Details of activities are as follow:

- 1) Online survey: Identifying online forums and websites with users who claimed to trade in rhino horn products within or from Vietnam. This supplemented our background knowledge on the rhino horn trade and provided information on the trade trends of rhino horn products, as well as some initial investigation location and individual targets.
- 2) Field surveys: Undercover investigations were conducted in Ho Chi Minh City and Ha Noi, two of Vietnam's major wildlife trade hubs, to identify both retailers and wholesalers who traded in rhino horn products. From this investigation WCS surveyors were able to collect information on the *modus operandi* of rhino horn trading criminals. This information is currently stored in a WCS database, and will be summarized as intelligence for law enforcement use in the near future.
- 3) Law enforcement participation: As part of the investigation as well as an opportunity for on-the-job training, WCS leveraged the participation of the Ha Noi Environmental Police in investigating retailers and wholesalers of rhino horn products. At the time of report, these investigations are still ongoing.

This research has improved understanding of end-users and trade dynamics. WCS has generated intelligence and understanding on wholesale traders/middlemen of the rhino horn trade network. WCS found that rhino horns are not only imported to satisfy the demand from the traditional medicine industry; the trade has diversified and expanded into the luxury accessories markets (e.g. bead bracelets), and as rare material investments. We found that selling and transaction of illegal rhino horn has also grown in sophistication with online forums and auction sites advertising rhino horn under cryptonyms whilst openly posting photographs of rhino horn products. We have confirmed that in addition to being a consumer country, Vietnam is one of the most frequently reported transit countries for illegal rhino horns into China, and we have also documented evidence of Chinese users and traders buying horns and horn products in Vietnam. These surveys have identified a number of trade networks and individuals operating within those, the next step is to gain further understanding and intelligence on the specific *modus operandi* of those specific wholesale traders involved to enable law enforcement responses from our government partners.

- ***Strengthen the media as a tool support prevention and suppression of rhino horn crimes in Vietnam***

Two training workshops were held for journalists from Hanoi, Nghe An and Ho Chi Minh City. The aims of these workshops were to increase participants' knowledge on the international rhino horn trade, and provide guidance on the messaging and covering of key rhino horn trade-related issues, in addition to brainstorming narrative ideas for future features.

- 1) We have continued our daily media tracking of rhino horn articles/cases in Vietnam, and in this report period there were 36 reports.
- 2) On the weeks leading up to the World Rhino Day (22/9), two media workshops on rhino horn trade were organised to update the journalists with the latest information on the trade, and to share the experience in doing investigative journalism into this illegal trade in Hanoi (on 10/9) and in Ho Chi Minh City (on 12/9). In total 38 journalists attended the trainings alongside with 22 government officials from the CITES MA, Forest Protection Department, Customs, Police, the Supreme People's Court and the Institute of Tropical Biology.

The journalists showed their high engagement level through questions to the speakers after each presentation, lively discussion in the exercises and interviews with the speakers after the workshops. They were especially interested in the health risk aspect of consuming rhino horns and the findings of the investigation into trans-national rhino horn trade by Julian Rademeyer, the author of "Killing for Profit", a book on South Africa's rhino horn trade that is shortlisted for the 2013 Alan Paton Award.

After the media workshops, 26 articles were published online and in print, including the news page of the Communist Party, covering different aspects of the rhino horn trade. After the media training, our network of journalists signed up to receive regular conservation news from WCS Vietnam has increased by 12%.

- ***Build pro-conservation support within the judiciary and procuracy by increasing engagement and understanding on illegal rhino horn trade, relevant laws and treaties***

In cooperation with the Vietnam CITES Management Authority and the People's of Ho Chi Minh City, the two training workshops were held for nearly 90 prosecutors, judges and other state officials from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, National Forest Protection Department, General Department of Vietnam Customs and Environmental Police from Hanoi, Nghe An and Ho Chi Minh City.

A total of ten external speakers participated in the workshops. Attendees were provided with talks and exercises on a range of topics, from investigative studies on the illegal rhino horn trade to wildlife crime prosecution clinics. Participants showed a high level of engagement in the plenary discussion, where they listed down a series of problems relating to investigation, placement, criminal proceedings, prosecution and adjudication of wildlife crimes, especially for cases of rhino horns and elephant ivory, and asked for advice from their counterparts and the expert panel. The success of this workshop led prosecutors from Ho Chi Minh City to suggest a follow-up workshop or inter-agency meeting to further their discussions in detail and draft solutions to current and emerging issues relating to wildlife crimes. We have started to generate greater discussion and momentum on this issue within local procuracies in Hanoi and HCMC, and it is important that we continue this to transform that interest and discussion into closing the open cases on rhino horns at present.

WCS carried out analysis finding that since 2008, of the 19 rhino horn smuggling and trading cases, only one violator was penalized with a jail sentence in 2010 (though the local prosecutors will not confirm if the offender served his full three-year sentence); enforcement actions on the rest of those prosecuted are unclear and limited. This analysis and our additional work to inform and build support within the procuracy to tackle wildlife crimes has in part led to the drafting of a Supreme People Procuracy Ordinance on dealing with African Elephant and Rhino crimes, that provides guidance to local prosecutors in how to deal with these cases and defines seriousness of the crimes for sentencing decisions, we are supporting a final consultation meeting on this Ordinance in December with a view to it being signed in early 2014.

- ***Provide technical assistance and support to the CITES MA and other relevant national agencies on management of their rhino horn and elephant ivory stockpile***

1) WCS were invited to join the Vietnamese delegation at the recent CITES Conference of the Parties (Bangkok, Thailand, March 2013) to provide technical inputs and guidance to interventions on a range of issues including supporting the MA with their participation on the CITES Rhino working group. This gave us a unique insight and influence to the Government's position and policy and we were able to negotiate some significant decisions including the agreement of the GoV to develop legislation on the domestic management of imported hunting trophies that will address the issue of alteration and transfer of hunting trophies between individuals; and also to establish a secure registration database to track legal rhino horn trophies. We also assisted the GoV delegation in drafting and finalizing an information document they submitted to the CoP detailing recent efforts and stating for the first time clearly that *"Viet Nam is aware that in order to address this crisis, our country must strengthen enforcement and raise awareness of its people, both domestically and also of those living overseas"*.

Please provide the following information where relevant:

Hectares Protected: N/A

Species Conserved: rhinos, elephants and some other commonly traded species such as tigers, turtles, pangolins, etc.

Corridors Created: N/A

Describe the success or challenges of the project toward achieving its short-term and long-term impact objectives.

The initial implementation of investigation was difficult due to the limited available and accurate information on rhino horn traders, but by exploiting a range of media, information resources, and connections, WCS surveyors were able to identify numerous targets in our target locations. However the illegality of the trade meant many traders refused to provide detailed information on their modus operandi thus there still remains important information that we have yet to collect. WCS will continue investigations with a second phase of in-depth research, where we will strengthen our connections with existing targets and explore for additional ones.

For the four training workshops, we received great support from our partners and participants: the provincial prosecutors, judges and other state officials from Hanoi, Nghe An and Ho Chi Minh City. Target topics were delivered and discussed with trainees, and trainees also provided and constructive feedback and useful suggestions for coming workshops.

Through the process of project implementation, our relationship with key state organizations such as CITES Vietnam Management Authority, National Forest Protection Department, Supreme People's Procuracy and some provincial counterparts, General Department of Customs, Environmental Police, etc were strengthened. Their involvement and support remain crucial for us to achieve our longer-term goals towards protecting wildlife.

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

None

Lessons Learned

Describe any lessons learned during the design and implementation of the project, as well as any related to organizational development and capacity building. Consider lessons that would inform projects designed or implemented by your organization or others, as well as lessons that might be considered by the global conservation community.

Project Design Process: (aspects of the project design that contributed to its success/shortcomings)

Support from our partners such as CITES MA and Supreme People's Procuracy is crucial to the success of our trainings and other events.

Project Implementation: (aspects of the project execution that contributed to its success/shortcomings)

WCS Vietnam has only held a handful of workshops for local prosecutors, however the success produced under this grant proves that reaching out to different key players in law enforcement forces and engaging them in wildlife conservation issues can bring about proactivity. A major factor that we believe became the key to leverage law enforcement agencies' awareness is increasing their exposure to nature and wildlife, and providing experiences that will highlight the benefits of wildlife protection.

Other lessons learned relevant to conservation community:

Our media workshop coincided with the launch of the rhino horn demand reduction campaign by Humane Society International. This was told by some absentees in the media workshop to be the reason for absence. Although the two programs differ in approach and focus on the topic of illegal rhino horn trade, this demonstrates the limitation of journalists as a medium, and the risk of over exposure in the media. In the future we will improve communications, consult and coordinate with other organizations to avoid repeating on similar topics, and maximize the effectiveness of activities.

ADDITIONAL FUNDING

Provide details of any additional donors who supported this project and any funding secured for the project as a result of the CEPF grant or success of the project.

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Notes
US Fish and Wildlife Service	C	\$34,138	

**Additional funding should be reported using the following categories:*

- A Project co-financing (Other donors contribute to the direct costs of this CEPF project)*
- B Grantee and Partner leveraging (Other donors contribute to your organization or a partner organization as a direct result of successes with this CEPF project.)*
- C Regional/Portfolio leveraging (Other donors make large investments in a region because of CEPF investment or successes related to this project.)*

Sustainability/Replicability

Summarize the success or challenge in achieving planned sustainability or replicability of project components or results.

The activities carried out under this project help WCS to develop government/media interest and understanding to fighting illegal trade in rhinoceros, and the information we generate through the studies will be of long-term value to intervention design and monitoring

Summarize any unplanned sustainability or replicability achieved.

Safeguard Policy Assessment

Provide a summary of the implementation of any required action toward the environmental and social safeguard policies within the project.

N/A

Performance Tracking Report Addendum

CEPF Global Targets

(Enter Grant Term)

Provide a numerical amount and brief description of the results achieved by your grant.
Please respond to only those questions that are relevant to your project.

Project Results	Is this question relevant?	If yes, provide your numerical response for results achieved during the annual period.	Provide your numerical response for project from inception of CEPF support to date.	Describe the principal results achieved from July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014. (Attach annexes if necessary)
1. Did your project strengthen management of a protected area guided by a sustainable management plan? Please indicate number of hectares improved.	No			Please also include name of the protected area(s). If more than one, please include the number of hectares strengthened for each one.
2. How many hectares of new and/or expanded protected areas did your project help establish through a legal declaration or community agreement?	N/A			Please also include name of the protected area. If more than one, please include the number of hectares strengthened for each one.
3. Did your project strengthen biodiversity conservation and/or natural resources management inside a key biodiversity area identified in the CEPF ecosystem profile? If so, please indicate how many hectares.	N/A			
4. Did your project effectively introduce or strengthen biodiversity conservation in management practices outside protected areas? If so, please indicate how many hectares.	N/A			
5. If your project promotes the sustainable use of natural resources, how many local communities accrued tangible socioeconomic benefits? Please complete Table 1 below.	No			

If you answered yes to question 5, please complete the following table.

Additional Comments/Recommendations

Information Sharing and CEPF Policy

CEPF is committed to transparent operations and to helping civil society groups share experiences, lessons learned, and results. Final project completion reports are made available on our Web site, www.ceph.net, and publicized in our newsletter and other communications.

Please include your full contact details below:

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