Beyond Enforcement:
Communities, governance, incentives and sustainable use in combating wildlife crime

A symposium organised by IUCN CEESP/SSC Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialist Group (SULi)/International Institute of Environment and Development (IIED)/Austrian Ministry of Environment/ARC Centre of Excellence for Environmental Decisions (CEED), University of Queensland/TRAFFIC - the wildlife trade monitoring network.

Dates: 27th Feb - 1st March 2015 (2 1/2 days)

Venue: (TBC, 1.5 hours from Johannesburg airport), South Africa.

MEETING OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of the meeting is to evaluate whether and under what circumstances community-based interventions[1] are likely to achieve success in combating current patterns of illegal use and trade of wildlife (plants and animals). The meeting aims to inform and support implementation of relevant commitments laid out in the London Declaration on Illegal Wildlife Trade and elsewhere.

BACKGROUND

Poaching and associated illegal wildlife trade (IWT) is devastating populations of iconic wildlife species such as rhinos and elephants, as well as a host of lesser known ones such as pangolins, some birds, reptiles, primates, medicinal plants and timber species. IWT is a major focus of current conservation concern and policy development, including through the African Elephant Summit (Botswana, November 2013), the EU Parliament Resolution on Wildlife Crime (January 2014) and the high-level London Conference on Illegal Wildlife Trade (February 2014). Forthcoming is a further high-level Conference on Illegal Wildlife Trade in Botswana, March 2015 to assess what has been achieved since adoption of the London Declaration.

The London Declaration notes that: "We recognise the importance of engaging communities living with wildlife as active partners in conservation, by reducing human-wildlife conflict and supporting community efforts to advance their rights and capacity to manage and benefit from wildlife and their habitats" (para 12).

However, despite this recognition, within international discussions the emphasis to date has been strongly on strengthening (government-led) law enforcement and reducing consumer demand for illicitly sourced wildlife commodities. Considerably less emphasis has been placed on the role of the local communities who live with wildlife. IWT has an enormous impact on local communities, who are affected by insecurity and the depletion of important livelihood and economic assets, while often being excluded from the benefits of conservation. They can also be very negatively affected by heavy-handed, militarised responses to wildlife crime, that frequently make little distinction between the illegal activities driven by large scale profits (crimes of greed) versus those driven by poverty (crimes of need). Most fundamentally, however, the longterm survival of wildlife populations, and in particular the success of interventions to combat IWT, will depend to a large extent on engagement of the local communities who live with wildlife populations. Where the economic and social value of wildlife populations for local people is positive, they will be more motivated to support and engage in efforts to combat and manage poaching and illicit trade. But where local people do not play a role in wildlife management and where it generates no benefits, strong incentives for illegal use are likely to exist. Even the most focused and well-resourced enforcement efforts

[1] The term *communities* is used here to comprise '*indigenous peoples and local communities*' as per agreement at CBD CoP12.

(which few countries can afford or have the political will to implement) will struggle to effectively control wildlife crime in the face of strong incentives for complicity by local people.

There are examples from Africa and from other regions (including Central and South Asia, Oceania, North America and South America) of governance models that empower local communities to manage wildlife sustainably and generate social and economic benefits. In a number of cases, these approaches have been successful in reducing illegal wildlife use - sometimes dramatically - and incentivising strong community engagement in enforcement efforts. Community game guard programs are some of the most well-known of these, and there are many others. However, there is a clear need to raise awareness of these examples, distil lessons learnt, and ensure this experience influences the ongoing international IWT policy debate. Crucially, the potential of community-based approaches needs to be analysed in the context of contemporary challenges of rising profits from illicit trade, increased access to firearms by community members, worsening poverty in many areas, erosion of traditional governance systems, rapid urbanisation and changing community value systems, and large-scale threats from climate change combined with progressive habitat erosion affecting subsistence agriculture.

PROGRAMME RATIONALE

The programme for this symposium directly responds to international commitments made with regards to the interaction between communities and Illegal wildlife trade (see Table below). Specifically, the London Declaration - which in turn recognises The African Elephant Action Plan and the urgent measures endorsed at the African Elephant Summit in Gaborone, the EU Parliament Resolution on Wildlife Crime, The St Petersburg Tiger Declaration on Tiger Conservation, the Global Tiger Recovery Programme and the Thimpu Nine Point Action Agenda, and The Bishkek Declaration on the Conservation of the Snow Leopard – includes some explicit commitments on community support and engagement. Other international forums – such as United For Wildlife (UfW) – have made similar commitments. The Clinton Foundation's Partnership to Save Africa's Elephants does not explicitly mention the role of communities in its 3 pronged strategy (stop the killing, stop the trafficking, stop the demand) although in practice community-level factors should necessarily underlie the first two.

To date, however, there has been little movement forward on implementing these commitments and little clarity has emerged regarding how they can be operationalised. This symposium aims to highlight successful examples of community-based approaches to combating wildlife crime that conservation agencies, institutions, donors and organisations could support in order to implement these commitments, as well as probe the limitations and challenges facing such approaches.

These commitments on communities and illegal wildlife trade must be understood and interpreted in the context of an enormous body of calls over the past 40 years to include communities in conservation initiatives and ensure that conservation respects their rights and needs. These include the CBD Decisions on *Article 8(j) and related provisions* (Dec. XI/14), *Sustainable use of biodiversity: bushmeat and sustainable wildlife management* (Dec. XI/25), and recent CoP12 decisions on these topics[2]; CITES Resolution on *CITES and Livelihoods* (Res. Conf. 16.6); and many IUCN Resolutions including *Promoting and supporting community resource management and conservation as a foundation for sustainable development* (WCC-2012-Res-092). Furthermore, during the European Commission's Consultation on the EU Approach against Wildlife Trafficking and the EU's *Wildlife Conservation Strategy for Africa*, multiple organisations have asked for a stronger reflection of the important role of indigenous peoples and local communities, of positive incentives, and of approaches including sustainable use.

The programme addresses community approaches in the context both of high value animal species (rhinos, elephants, tigers) and of lower value plants and animals. The current intensive global focus on IWT is largely

[2] To date CoP 12 outcomes are only available as in-session documents. See item 19 and 27 in http://www.cbd.int/cop12/insession.

driven by record levels of poaching and trafficking of high-value species, and policy responses are being framed accordingly. However, the problem is not limited to such species, and while effective interventions may differ between high and low value species, important insights may be gained by drawing on experiences involving the latter.

London Declaration Commitment	Other related international commitments
Recognise the negative impact of illegal wildlife trade on sustainable livelihoods and economic development. This impact needs to be better understood and quantified …	UfW: support local communities, **whose livelihoods are directly affected by the illegal wildlife trade**
Increase capacity of local communities to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities and eradicate poverty by (inter alia) promoting innovative partnerships for conserving wildlife through shared management responsibilities such as community conservancies, public-private partnerships, sustainable tourism, revenue-sharing agreements and other income sources such as sustainable agriculture	Elephant Summit: **engage communities living with elephants as active partners in their conservation** by supporting community efforts to advance their rights and capacity to manage and benefit from wildlife and wilderness UfW: Develop a new United for Wildlife standard for sites with high-value species threatened by wildlife crime, including the identification of **successful models for ensuring incentives for local communities to engage with and derive livelihood benefits** from conservation European Parliament Res: Is of the opinion that repressive measures alone are not sufficient to combat wildlife crime and encourages the Commission to **make sure to have the support of local communities closest to the wildlife concerned and to develop programmes that would offer an alternative source of income**; Global Tiger Recovery Plan: Engaging with indigenous and local communities to gain their **participation in biodiversity conservation**, minimize negative impacts on tigers, their prey, and habitats, and reduce the incidence of human-tiger conflict by providing sustainable and alternative livelihood options through financial support, technical guidance, and other measures.
Initiate or strengthen collaborative partnerships among local, regional, national and international development and conservation agencies to enhance support for community led wildlife conservation	
Work with, and include local communities in, establishing monitoring and law enforcement networks in areas surrounding wildlife.	

DRAFT PROGRAMME

1. SETTING THE SCENE: INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES TO WILDLIFE CRIME

- High level introductory address/es (Helen Clark (UNDP), Minister Edna Molewa, representative of SADC Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources)
- Overview of current global policy responses to the wildlife crime crisis
- Regional responses (e.g. the SADC Wildlife Protocol, COMIFAC's PAPECALF, EAC's efforts).
- *We may accept a small number of relevant contributed papers in this section.*

2. WILDLIFE CRIME AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES – WHY BOTHER?

a) The limits of enforcement

- Assess the drawbacks of national and international trade bans/enforcement as a *primary/sole* response to illegal use and trade
    - Examples on the ground: financial and social impacts, including financial costs of combating poaching, how this affects other conservation investment, how this impacts on protected areas, trajectories in local communities, and how this impacts on the culture of conservation agencies/organisations.
- *We may accept a small number of relevant contributed papers in this section*

b) The impacts of enforcement on indigenous and local communities

- How are current enforcement strategies (the rise of "green militarism") impacting on indigenous and local communities?
- *We are seeking a small number of contributed papers involving case studies in this section.*

c) Effective enforcement - what do we know?

- Perspectives from criminology
- Lessons from enforcement in the context of the drugs trade: what approaches have worked?
- Practical experiences from Africa and elsewhere
- *We are seeking a small number of contributed papers in this section.*

d) Communities and wildlife crime: what are the linkages?

- Overview highlighting
    - not just how wildlife crime impacts on indigenous and local communities (see later in programme), but how communities affect wildlife crime: the extent to which communities are engaged in crime - at what levels and for what sort of taxa/commodities; and the extent to which they are engaged in combating crime
- Typologies of community engagement and typologies of poaching
- Where wildlife commodities are very high value, what are the implications for incentives, governance, community-based responses and enforcement?
- Commitments within current international responses
- *We may accept a small number of contributed papers in this section*

3. RESPONDING TO THE COMMITMENTS

a) Understanding and quantifying the negative impact of wildlife crime on sustainable livelihoods and economic development

- How does wildlife crime impact on indigenous and local communities?
- *We would welcome contributed papers in this section*

b) Engaging indigenous and local communities in conservation

- Case studies: where/how has strengthening community rights to manage and use or benefit from wild resources successfully reduced wildlife crime?
- Challenges for community-based approaches to combating wildlife crime
    - Understanding where community involvement will and will not make any difference: e.g. war zones, high levels of poverty, where there are armed poaching rings that overpower local governance, where incentives for crime are so high due to high prices, etc.
- *We would welcome contributed papers in this section, and envisage including 5-10 case studies*

c) Involving indigenous and local communities in law enforcement efforts

- Understanding risks and rewards to communities of engaging in enforcement
- Case studies of community involvement in enforcement efforts, including analysis of factors underpinning success.
- *We would welcome contributed papers in this section, and envisage including 5-10 case studies*

4. PANEL REFLECTIONS

- Panel discussion among high level representatives of key donors and policy-related institutions (UNDP, USAID, CITES, CBD, GIZ, World Bank, European Commission, European Parliament, Royal Foundation, SADC, United For Wildlife, etc) reflecting on the implications of the findings of the symposium for practice and policy.

5. DRAFTING OF SYMPOSIUM STATEMENT