



Monitoring visit to IWT funded projects working in China

IWT Challenge Fund Monitoring Visit Project Reference IWT025, IWT019, IWT015

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Acronyms

BNU	Beijing Normal University
CLS	College of Life Science Beijing Normal University
CNMA	CITES Management Agency of China
CWCA	China Wildlife Conservation Association
IWT	Illegal Wildlife Trade
IWT-CF	Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund
MV	Monitoring Visit
PSA	Public Service Announcement
SOE	State Owned Enterprises
TCM	Traditional Chinese Medicine
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society

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1 Introduction

As part of the management of the Darwin Initiative and the Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, LTS undertake Monitoring Visits (MVs) of Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund (IWT-CF) projects. This review documents the activities and findings of a series of MVs conducted in China in March 2017. China plays a key role in the IWT as the main market for many IWT products. The IWT-CF currently has four projects that directly focus on China and demand driven by China is central to several more.

This MV in China offered a valuable opportunity to visit three IWT projects in the region, to establish links between them and to offer support where needed.

This summary report documents this MV, and reviews key areas of progress for each project.

2 Objectives

Monitoring Visits (MVs) are a positive exercise intended to be of benefit for project lead organisations, partners and the IWT Challenge Fund more broadly. They are primarily designed to enable an independent Reviewer to visit DI-IWT projects, whilst in country on other work.

These short, structured visits are shorter and less formal than Darwin-IWT Mid-term Reviews. They are designed to:

- i. Review project progress against its stated objectives (as documented in the application and logframe).
- ii. Identify the contribution the project is making to the programme's objectives.
- iii. Provide M&E and technical advice and support to the project if required.
- iv. Identify any learning points which may be common to other projects working in the same region or on the same issue.

In the case of the China MVs, meetings with project organisations were restricted to half day per project. This meant that they primarily reviewed progress and offered additional M&E advice to projects in response to the 2016 Annual Reviews.

3 IWT025 Saving Pangolins by Reducing Demand in Vietnam and China

3.1 Project Overview

(IWT-CF Grant Value: £195,600. Project dates: 1st April 2016 to 31st March 2018).

The world's pangolin species are at risk of extinction due to Asian demand for their meat and scales. This 2-year project aims to reduce demand for pangolin products amongst Vietnamese and Chinese consumers. It intends to discredit claims of the medicinal value of their scales and make consumption of pangolin meat socially unacceptable, as well as building capacity for more effective enforcement of trade bans.

The intended outcome of the project is: Increased awareness of pangolin crisis and support for conservation, as medicinal value debunked. Focus countries have improved capacity to intercept smuggled pangolin products and effectively enforce poaching and wildlife trafficking laws. This disrupts poaching networks and reduces demand in consuming nations, leading to reduced poaching and increased range state biodiversity.

The project is led by WildAid, in partnership with the Centre for Hands-on Actions and Networking for Growth and Environment.

3.2 Project Update

The IWT programme supports WildAid's work on reducing demand for pangolin in China as well as Vietnam. The team were able to provide a general update, with some more detail of progress in China. This will be reported on in the April 2017 AR, with highlights being:

- The preparation of a report on illegal pangolin trade for CITES CoP17 in October 2016. The CoP17 agreed to list all pangolins as CITES Appendix 1 species.
- Successful implementation of a public service announcement (PSA) campaign using popular Chinese film star Angelababy. The PSA has received high levels of circulation, from billboards to videos on the city metro and print media. WildAid received substantial charitable donations of advertising space, meaning their expenditure was only £70. They have received over 200million views across different media. In 2017 a follow up mini film will be made and distributed featuring popular Hollywood star Jackie Chan; it is planned to be larger scale still in terms of distribution.

- Training for CITES Management Agency and customs. WildAid co-hosted training for the Nanjing forestry police to mark “world wildlife day” to promote pangolin enforcement.

Following the designation of all pangolins as Appendix 1 CITES species at the CoP17 and the banning of all international trade in the species, the focus is evolving to consider internal [to China] consumption. Consumption of pangolin meat is illegal and recent ‘leaking’ of footage of a government official eating pangolin which caused a major media backlash, has helped raise the profile of the issue. But the use of the pangolin scales in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) is not illegal. There are apparently stockpiles, but unclear monitoring or definition. Tackling scale use in TCM is a sensitive subject, especially for an international NGO.

3.3 Summary of Discussions

The project staff provided an update on the project and its progress against objectives; challenges faced and approaches to over-coming challenges were discussed. This is summarised above. Following this, the IWTAG comments on the project’s proposal were reviewed and discussed with members of the project team. The overall project logic was reviewed together with the cause-effect logic of the output to impact results chain. Measurement indicators along the results chain were considered.

The reviewer explained to the team how the assumptions within their project logic need to be tested and evidenced. So in this case, the project assumes that large scale PSA changes awareness, opinions and can feed change in behaviour; but what is the basis for this assumption, how does PSA deliver this change (using, for example, evidence of where this has worked elsewhere and how)? Once the project has a logic basis for its change it will know what it needs to measure to demonstrate the effect of this project with respect to pangolins. The discussion centred around three dimensions that need to be measured: general public; the private sector (specifically restaurants/retail, TCM); the State (enforcement). The project team noted these comments, appreciated the discussion and agreed to take this learning back to the project team as a whole to review their logical framework, assumptions and indicators.

In light of the CITES Appendix 1 designation in late 2016, the discussions then turned to the project outputs. A reflective discussion was facilitated around the question of “what needs to happen [in the project and in the external enabling environment] for the outcome to be achieved?” Through the facilitated discussion, several aspects were identified:

- Government action on the use of pangolin scales in TCM – that would be a big win for the campaign.
- Chinese local law adopt CITES Appendix 1 authorisation for pangolins as it is currently Level 2. This will strengthen the laws that protect them.

Therefore, indicator measures that relate to these two aspects will allow monitoring and later assessment of whether the project has contributed its outcome. The project staff agreed to reflect further on their outcome indicators to ensure they were measurable.

4 IWT019 Strengthening enforcement capacity to combat illegal wildlife trafficking in China

4.1 Project Overview

(IWT-CF Grant Value: £300,000. Project dates: 1st February 2015 to 31st January 2018).

This project is working with government and non-governmental organisations to build the capacity of illegal wildlife trade enforcement agencies and support agencies in China, through training. It also plans technical exchange visits between Chinese officials and those from wildlife range countries in order to improve understanding amongst Chinese government agencies of the illegal wildlife trade and its impacts.

The intended outcome of the project is: law enforcement trainings provided to forest police and customs officers results in increased successful seizures of illegal wildlife trafficking, and NGO partners of Save Wildlife in Trade Network mainstreamed into the wildlife law enforcement efforts to combating illegal wildlife trade.

The project is led by Beijing Normal University, in partnership with the CITES management authority of China, WCS China Programme, Wildlife Conservation Association, CITES Scientific Authority of China, and the International Fund for Animal Welfare.

4.2 Project Update

BNU has partnered with CITES Management Agency of China (CNMA - part of State Forestry Administration). The CNMA helped form the management committee and participated in the development of the training materials that are now in the process of being published.

The project carried out 12 law enforcement trainings in its 1st year, 14 will be done in 2016-17, where IWT funding has leveraged matched funding from agencies in terms of providing staff time, venues and training expertise. Since CITES updated their appendices the training documentation will also be updated.

The project has held an international training in Yunnan which combined Lao border police and their Chinese counterparts. With the project partner WCS, it has contributed to the China-Vietnam cooperation on cross boundary wildlife law enforcement dialog with training course inputs.

The project has convened multi-lateral dialogue meetings between NGO partners and Government Agencies. These have been set as annual dialogue events at which the awareness, training and capacity building activities of the different parties are shared, to improve coordination effectiveness.

BNU has been successful in generating good leverage through its position as a research and training institution – a ‘neutral’ party that has strong convening power.

The project’s major challenges have been:

- Combining the various priorities of agencies and the various NGOs.
- Varying geographic priorities of the various CITES offices e.g. northern offices have different species emphases than southern offices due to different animal trafficking routes. So need to identify the right partnerships in the right locations.

In terms of long term sustainability of the outcome of the project, by producing the set of training materials and the training manual, this will provide the materials necessary for SFA CITES MA to do the training of their own staff as in-service training. Meanwhile, the NGOs are looking to fund training for judiciary and inspectors using the same materials.

4.3 Summary of Discussions

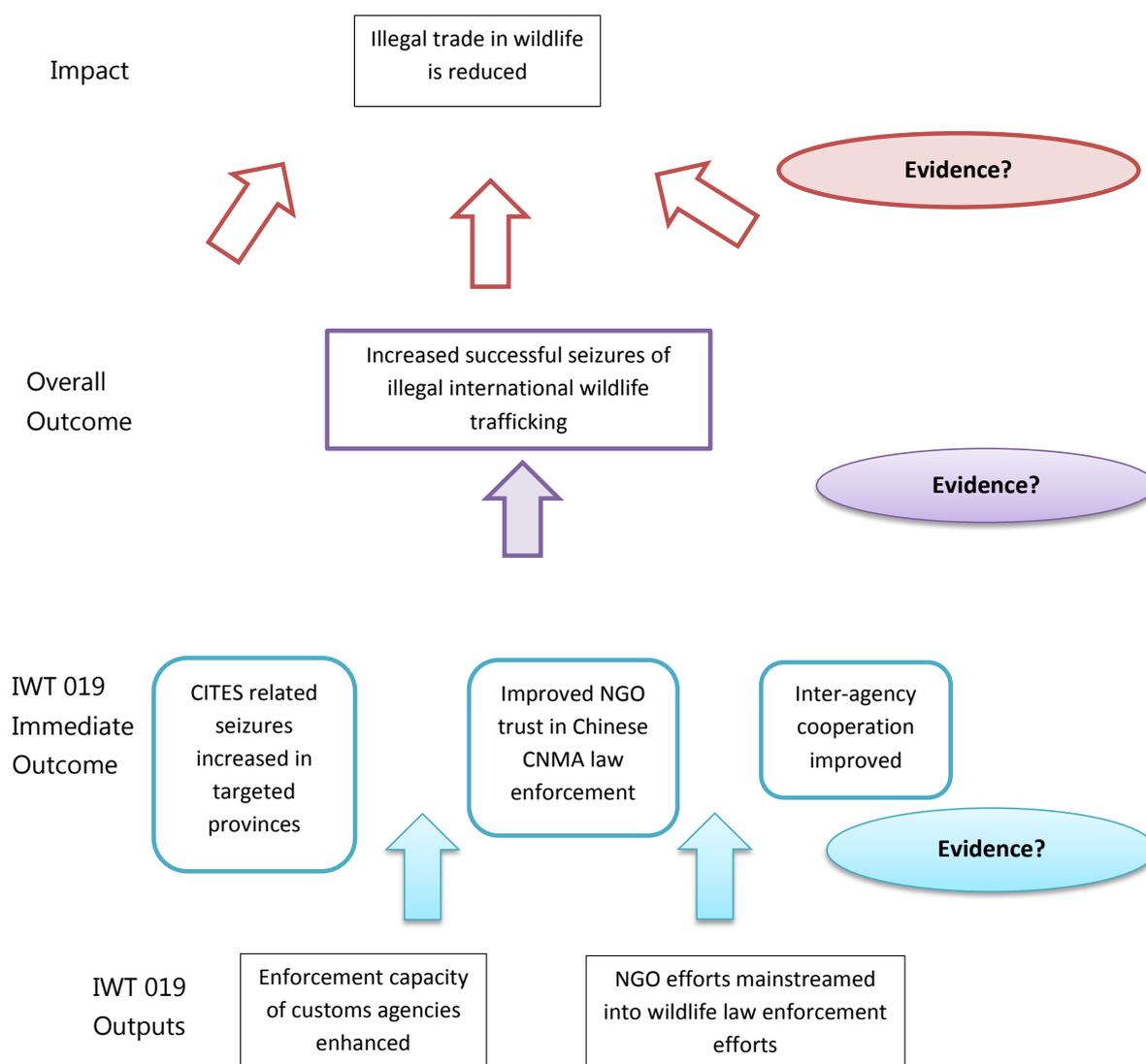
The project staff provided an update on the project and its progress against objectives; challenges faced and approaches to overcoming challenges were discussed. This is summarised above. The project staff and reviewer then discussed the comments on the Annual Report (AR) made in the Annual Report Review (ARR). The ARR comments related to the need for evidence to show project outcome and impact; and suggested reviewing the logical framework for the project. Interpretation of the ARR comments, and ways in which the project could respond were discussed at length. The discussion focused on two aspects of the AR comments:

1. The need for evidencing the results, on unpacking the impact pathways of the assignment through the theory of change.
2. The credibility of the NGO survey given the small sample.

On ARR point 1: It was explained that if the project makes claims of delivering outcomes, it has to provide evidence that its outputs are demonstrably contributing to that outcome. The currently stated project outcome is a high-level outcome and the project will only be one small part of many influencing factors on the achievement of this outcome. In other words, the project will not by itself deliver the outcome of *Increased successful seizures of illegal international wildlife trafficking* as the project is one of a range of interventions that will

contribute to its intended outcome. What this meant for the project and its cause-effect logic was discussed more, and the theory of change was ‘unpacked’ onto flipchart so it could be discussed further. The discussion concluded that the outcome of IWT019 needs to be changed so that a statement that the project more directly contributes to; in a measurable way; reflects the intended outcome.

Figure 1: Pathway to impact for IWT 019



Therefore further facilitated discussion led to the development of a slightly revised impact pathway for IWT019 (Figure 1). This was developed on the ‘flipchart’ during the discussions. In this figure the objective hierarchy was adjusted by “stretching” the outcome to draw this back more closely to the project; by presenting an immediate change – where contribution of the project may be evidenced – and a broader or higher-level change that may be assumed based on evidence and assumptions of cause and effect.

The discussions with project staff then moved onto an analysis of the revised impact pathway (Fig.1) to explore what change would the training of customs officers and mainstreaming of NGO enforcement efforts directly lead to? Three measurable changes (or immediate outcomes) were identified during that discussion:

1. CITES related seizures increased in targeted provinces
2. Improved NGO trust in CNMA law enforcement
3. Inter-agency cooperation improved

In each of these possible immediate changes, evidence would be necessary to:

- measure and demonstrate that the project is contributing to these observed changes;
- provide evidence that these immediate changes lead to and are linked to the achievement of the higher-level outcome changes (as indicated in the diagram).

In other words, just recording increases in CITES seizures for example, is insufficient unless there is any proof that this has anything to do with the project. It could have nothing to do with the project, but rather be due to for example; changes in policy, funding, staffing levels etc.

Equally, if improved inter-agency trust is observed; it is important that the project can show that this observed change is, at least in part, *a result of* the training and network-building of the project. The project staff appreciated the discussions and agreed to consider how the project logframe could be revised, taking into consideration the discussions held during this monitoring visit.

On ARR Point 2: The NGO perception survey was discussed. The ARR noted concern about the small sample survey and the resultant lack of any validity of making statistical inferences from the findings (e.g. X% of respondents stated X or Y, when sample size is only 8). The project staff explained that; as the number of NGOs is small; the sample size is necessarily small. The reviewer asked the project to consider means for reducing bias and error: for example, as the sample size is small, the use of key informant interviews that can follow up the survey with more in-depth answers from the respondents, together with independent evidence sources would be helpful. The project staff noted this advice and agreed to consider the options when next reviewing its logframe and indicators.

5 IWT015 A recipe for reducing ivory consumption in China

5.1 Project Overview

(IWT-CF Grant Value: £238,891. Project dates: 15th January 2015 to 15th September 2017).

This project targets China as a major consumer and demand driver for illegal trade in ivory. The intervention logic is that demand for ivory is driving the illegal trade in ivory and that through a targeted campaign to change perceptions on the use and ownership of ivory in China, levels of consumption, and therefore illegal trade, will reduce. A critical assumption underpinning this logic is that increased awareness of the impact of the illegal ivory trade will reduce demand.

The intended outcome of the project is to activate the Chinese public to engage in anti-ivory campaigns, including calling on the Chinese government to take action to significantly undermine the current demand for ivory. As a result, this project will interrupt a key driver of elephant poaching in Africa, reduce the number of elephants killed, and mitigate the negative impacts of poaching on low income source countries.

The project is led by WCS, in partnership with China Wildlife Conservation Association (CWCA), and the College of Life Science (CLS) Beijing Normal University.

5.2 Project Update

WCS works across the supply chain and is trying to tackle illegal wildlife trade from a global perspective – so their programmes work not only in China (on law enforcement and demand reduction) but simultaneously on the other parts of the supply chain. In the context of the Ivory ban announced in December 2016 by the Chinese Government, this represents a ‘game changer’ for WCS in how they can combat illegal trade for ivory between Africa/Asia and China.

The team presented a detailed account of the project outputs, their rationale and progress thus far (which will also be presented in their upcoming April 2017 Annual Report.) The WCS works across three areas: changing public attitudes towards ivory consumption; targeting key influencing companies to reduce ivory consumption; supporting the case (with research and evidence) for government agencies to reduce the illegal ivory trade. Detailed analysis of the stakeholders, stratification of the groups and approaches to maximise influence underlies their campaign work. WCS play to their strengths and complement activities / roles of others, including State authorities. They have provided content to inform Government

thinking on policy, to support scientific and journalistic analysis, sought to undermine the legitimacy of the trade and the prestige or value of ivory products.

Successful collaboration with Chinese government includes their “Don’t Bring Ivory Home” work with China Customs, that was implemented by volunteer officials informing international travellers exiting the country. It is estimated this reached 28.4 million travellers. Some of their most successful work has been opportunistic, which is difficult to measure by way of a conventional ‘before-after’ survey. Their work on key influencing companies (e.g. Artron the auction house) has included engagement with state owned enterprises (SoEs) working in Africa: with WCS working in Africa and China it allows for joined-up engagement of these SoEs. They seek to gain pledges from the companies not to use ivory, transport it or receive it. They plan to build on this by establishing staff policies regarding disciplinary actions on those found to be involved in ivory trade or trafficking. This will close off one route for ivory.

5.3 Summary of Discussions

The project staff provided a detailed update on the project and its progress against objectives; challenges faced and approaches to over-coming challenges were discussed. This is summarised above. In the context of the previous Annual Report and Review, the project logic was discussed, together with the importance of identifying the ‘impact pathways’ and the steps along that pathway, such that one can identify and measure those interim changes or outcomes to which the IWT Project contributes substantively.

The issue of project attribution was discussed – how the project can prove that an observed change has resulted from (directly or in part) its results. In the case of this project, this would be observed changes such as a change in policy, or consumer behaviours. It was emphasised that the IWT Challenge Fund requires reporting on specifically how its funding is used (rather than progress reporting on the WCS wildlife trafficking program in China generally). It was explained to WCS that they have to consider how they indicate progress related to IWT funding within a pooled funding/matched-funding/programmatic situation. Options discussed at the review meeting included:

- Proportional (%) attribution between agencies in relation to scale of funding (this is a commonly used option in HMG).
- Additionality or incremental value of IWT funding (e.g. what additional activities occurred as a result of the IWT funding that would not otherwise have happened; or if IWT may provide the funding necessary to reach a ‘tipping point’ of funding to deliver an activity at the level needed).
- Leveraging funding potential (demonstrating how, for example, other funders came on board and funded other parts or more of the programme due to the grant made by IWT.)

The need for strong evidencing of findings was emphasised by the reviewer (examples in terms of annual reporting were given, in other words backing up claims in the AR with data, figures and numbers in annexes for example).

5.3.1 The role of IWT funding in the WCS work programme

The WCS project team explained that the WCS does not have lots of small projects, each funded by different donors: this is bitty and has significant sustainability risks. They have a programme of work that is integrated and funded by a range of sources. Some funders specifically support parts of their programme related to specific donor interests. This maintains the sustainability of their work and increases the potential for leveraging off other funds. It was explained that, for example the IWT support is too small on its own to have the necessary impact, so it is matched with funding from other sources to create a larger and more impactful programme of work that the IWT contributes to.

The discussion was then returned to the point of IWT contribution to observed and reported changes by WCS, and that the WCS still needs to be able to demonstrate what (through relevant indicators) the IWT funded activities have achieved.

5.3.2 Adaptive management of the IWT Challenge Fund project

The WCS team then went on to explain how the organisation is evolving its ivory trade programme following the December 2016 Ivory Ban. The WCS team explained how the WCS want to use the remaining IWT funding to focus more on the State Owned Enterprises operating in Africa (with a pilot in Uganda), as research has shown that a large illicit trade route for ivory is through returning migrant workers. As a result, WCS have proposed to revise their theory of change: they still intend to focus on the same outcome and impact, but to focus on changing knowledge, attitudes and practices of SOEs operating in Africa and their migrant workers. They plan to increase the perceived risk of ivory trafficking amongst migrant workers to that of drugs smuggling. They would like to focus on Uganda in the first instance, with a scope to expand the action in the future based on their initial experience. The WCS team requested the opinion of the reviewer and further discussion of the proposed change in focus was held between the participants. Following the discussion, the reviewer suggested that a change request should be submitted with a clear rationale for the change, showing how the log frame would be updated, and any changes in expected expenditure patterns so that the funder could consider this change.

6 Next Steps

The idea of bringing the projects together for a joint experience sharing exercise was not possible during this visit but is planned for later in the year. All projects considered this a positive development and one project (IWT019) has offered to co-host the get-together.

The 2016-17 Annual Reports are due in April and will provide a detailed description of project progress at the output level. Where necessary, projects will be encouraged to submit change requests to reflect the advice provided during this MV.

Annex: People consulted

Name	Role	Organisation
Steve Blake	Country Manager	WildAid
Karen Xue	Program Director	WildAid
Professor Li Zhang	Project Leader	BNU
Lishu Li	Programme Manager wildlife trafficking programme	WCS
Qijing [Maggy] He	Project Officer	WCS
Yonglin Wang	Communications Strategist	WCS