



Darwin Initiative Main/Post/D+ Project Half Year Report (due 31st October 2018)

Project reference	23-001
Project title	Strengthening Cameroon's capacity for implementing CITES
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Cameroon
Lead organisation	Zoological Society of London
Partner(s)	TRAFFIC, Ministry of Forests and Wildlife (MINFOF), Cameroon, University College London, ExCiteS
Project leader	Chris Ransom
Report date and number	October 31, 2018 - HYR3
Project website/blog/social media etc.	http://www.zsl.org/conservation/regions/africa/dja-conservation-complex

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – Sept) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up to end September).

Output 1. Monitoring systems in place and information used to track and characterise the nature of trade and use of species affected by trafficking in Cameroon with focus on pangolins:

Prior to April 2018, TRAFFIC and ZSL evaluated ongoing problems with the reporting of legal trade to the CITES Secretariat and extensively discussed the best way forward (Activity 1.1). In light of the decision to encourage Cameroonian agencies to submit data to AFRICA-TWIX, the resulting database developed is an Excel Database that currently contains the results of the first and second bushmeat market surveys and the first consumer survey (Activity 1.2, Doc 1). In July 2018, ZSL visited the Scientific Authority (EFG) and explained the decision taken by TRAFFIC and ZSL to encourage adherence to Africa-Twix rather than develop another database that would be a duplication. We provided to the EFG the database and data including reports for the first round of ZSL/TRAFFIC market and consumer surveys. The final surveys have been carried out from June to September 2018 and the data sent to TRAFFIC for analyses (Activity 1.4). The results will be added by the last quarter of the project, and an updated version of the database provided to the Cameroon Scientific Authority to complete the activity (Activity 1.2). A one-day national workshop to revitalize the CITES National Inter-ministerial Committee was held in Yaoundé (27th April 2018) in collaboration with the CITES Management Authority of Cameroon, the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife (MINFOF) to support the goal of this project of improving the implementation of CITES in Cameroon (Activity 1.3, Doc 2). The main objective of this workshop was to revive the operation of the CITES National Inter-Ministerial Committee, which has held only two meetings since its creation by Prime Ministerial bill n°067/PM of June 27, 2006. Specifically, this workshop aimed to:

- Review and propose amendments to update the bill establishing the CITES Committee;
- Update the list of members and resource persons able to provide the necessary support to achieve the objective of the CITES Committee;
- Review the current context of poaching and wildlife crime at the national, sub-regional and international levels;
- Clarify the mechanisms for reporting to CITES on ivory seizures and actions combating wildlife crime;
- Communicate the major resolutions of the Johannesburg CoP17;
- Inform participants on CITES related initiatives (National Ivory Action Plan, Elephant Trade Information System); and
- Establish a fundraising mechanism for the effective functioning of the CITES Committee.

A total of 29 participants attended the workshop organised under the supervision of MINFOF. Recommendations on how to move forward in operationalizing the CITES Inter-ministerial Committee were proposed (Activity 1.2, Activity 1.3, Doc 2).

Further efforts are being made to support Cameroon in implementing CITES by renewing the National Anti-poaching Committee which has also been dormant for several years. A preliminary one-day technical meeting of key partners (ZSL, TRAFFIC, MINFOF, IUCN, and WWF) is planned under this project for 12 October 2018 to outline the work to be carried out by an IUCN-funded consultant who will review the National Anti-poaching Strategy (Activity 1.2, Activity 1.3). The meeting will also be an opportunity to plan the Committee meeting to be held in December 2018 (Activity 1.3). This activity will be considered completed upon the close of the National Anti-poaching Committee meeting. Data from a range of sources (e.g., government, NGO, bushmeat market surveys, intelligence) is now being stored in AFRICA-TWIX (Activity 1.4, Doc 3)). Activity 1.5 (initiation of bushmeat market and consumer surveys) was completed prior to April 2018. The data from the second round of market surveys (conducted September to November 2017) were analysed, and the draft full results and analysis are complete (Activity 1.4, Activity 1.6, Doc 4). The final analysis will be provided in late October 2018. The surveys were conducted in five towns and cities. A total of 9,700 whole dead animals, 8,230 pieces of animal, and 622 live animals from 33 different taxa were observed. The combined value of all items observed was 111,000,500 CFA (\$199,801 USD). Pangolins were the most commonly observed live animal in the markets surveyed representing 60% of all live animals sold: 93% were recorded as White-Bellied Pangolins and 7% were Black-Bellied Pangolins. A total of 487 kilograms of pangolin scales were observed. The price of pangolin scales varied greatly depending on the species: Giant Pangolin scales, on average, were 2.9 times more expensive per kilogram than Black-Bellied Pangolin scales and 4.4 times more expensive than White-Bellied Pangolin scales. Regarding bushmeat (whole carcasses or pieces of meat), antelope-type species were the most regularly observed bushmeat taxa entering the markets, accounting for 70% of all pieces and 48% of all whole animals available. A total of 826 whole pangolin carcasses were observed, as well as 152 pieces. Specimens of a whole range of other species were also observed in the markets, including 20 kg elephant ivory, one leopard skin, one gorilla, and one Chimpanzee (Activity 1.4, Activity 1.5). Recommendations were provided for future surveys to help strengthen the potential of the analysis, and also to collect additional data types to help better understand the nature and drivers of the trade. The last round of the bushmeat market and consumer surveys have been carried out between June and November 2018 and the data sent to TRAFFIC for analyses and the production of the last report (Activity 1.2, Activity 1.6).

Two new communities in the sector of the DBR were consulted for the establishment of reporting and monitoring through the Extreme Citizen Science (ExCiteS) platform (Activity 1.5). Free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) processes were conducted with each community to ensure understanding and build the village projects in a way that embraces local values and rights. Villages were chosen based on their location with regard to the target protected areas and to suspected illegal wildlife trafficking routes, but communities always had the final say on their involvement. Seven villages are currently engaged in the ExCiteS programme (Activity 1.5). All seven communities have completed FPIC agreements indicating a good understanding of the project and consent to participate (Activity 1.7). Community protocols have been established in each community, providing a platform for community members themselves to decide on the nature of their involvement, their management of risks and issues, and the day-to-day maintenance of the project (Activity 1.7). Community-specific projects using the ExCiteS built smartphone software *Sapelli* have been constructed by each community independently to reflect local issues around wildlife crime and species monitoring. Local conceptions of 'Nature' and Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) have been embraced in software design in a co-design process. Important collaborators were identified and MINFOF chef d'antenne/chef de post, ecoguards, and police officials were briefed and involved in ongoing discussions (Activity 1.8). Successful data transmission is evident in all seven communities proven by reports received both on receiver phones in Yaoundé and the GeoKey online server (Activity 1.9). Since June 2017, 562 reports incorporating 532 media files (photos and audio) have been received through the ExCiteS software (gun cartridges, poacher camps and paths, traps, killed animals, bushmeat, elephant sign, gorilla tracks and nests, and trails encompassing the most actively reported items) (Activity 1.9). Outcomes, whilst hampered by barriers such as corruption (see section 2a), are based on documented local perception and include reduced instance of traffickers along roads north-east of DBR, increase in gorilla encounters, community empowerment (e.g. "What we could not openly speak about we can now report" – Baka community member), and valuable faunal inventory data to inform conservation programmes. Communities such as those involved in the ExCiteS work are among those most actively coerced into wildlife crime activities, thus their empowerment to be incorporated into conservation efforts on their own terms is pivotal for sustainable forest management.

Output 2. Adaptive management for site based protection using the SMART approach being implemented in at least two key sites:

ZSL and MINFOF continue to collaborate in the Dja Biosphere Reserve (DBR) and Deng Deng National Park (DDNP) through support to SMART implementation and evaluations (Activity 2.1). Following ZSL experience in operationalization of SMART in the DBR, an evaluation of patrol deployment effectiveness was also carried out with the DDNP field operation Unit and the results suggested that patrol teams needed (as in Djoum in the DBR) to be based closer to the park for a quick and targeted response to threat (Activity 2.1). For the Dja, the results of the

evaluation has led to the construction of an ecoguard river post with four roofed, wooden platform and an operation room along the Dja River in the southern sector. This allows ecoguard teams to make more river patrols and be close to the park, rather than remaining a day's trip away at Djoum, allowing a more effective anti-poaching response. In DDNP, following the same spirit, 2 additional posts are under construction in the northern part of the Park (Activity 2.1). For both protected areas, names of new staff, as well as African grey parrot's attributes, were included in data models and taken into account during data collection by patrol teams (Activity 2.1). Following the ZSL-DBR SMART evaluation held in Lomie in September 2018, additional PDA and powerbanks were required and will be delivered to replace the ones that are faulty (not taking GPS, freezing, etc) so that teams continue to collect data effectively (Activity 2.2). SMART-based reports are being used by DBR MINFOF management teams on a regular basis with reports that are reviewed with them (Activity 2.4). During this reporting period, we have continued to provide on the field support to all DBR head of sectors for data collection, data cleaning and transmission (Activity 2.2). An incentive scheme to motivate patrol effectiveness in the DBR is in the validation process and at the moment helps to rewards act of bravery. In DDNP this incentive scheme has been validated and is currently being used (Activity 2.3). Patrols continued in the DBR and for this reporting period 06 firearms, 33 live ammunitions were seized and 14 poachers arrested. The park patrol coverage in DBR was extended to 95.6% (patrol coverage is based on the proportion of 5 km² grid cells through which a patrol passed at least once) with 194 cells out of 203 covered. For DDNP, after the initial SMART system configuration and implementation of the gridded approach to ensure full SMART patrol coverage and repeatability, the park patrol coverage in DDNP was brought to almost 80% (patrol coverage is based on the proportion of 3 km² grid cells through which a patrol passed at least once) with 63 cells out of 79. We have organized one evaluation meetings (September 2018) in DBR to discuss patrol approaches per sector and the plan the finalisation of DBR patrol strategy (Activity 2.3). Furthermore, in order to continue the combat of illegal poaching and effective prosecution of wildlife crime in the Dja landscape, a workshop and a swearing in ceremony was organized on the 4th, 5th, and 6th April 2018 to build capacity of 11 DBR ecoguards and give them the mandate to carry out they duties in respect of the Cameroonian law. After 2 days courses, 11 trained ecoguards were sworn in as Police Officers with special competence to be able to produce standard, valid and comprehensive offence statement, carry out all the investigation activities linked to a suspect and build the case for effective prosecution (Activity 2.2). Monthly visits are organised in all 4 DBR sectors when needed for troubleshooting, technical support, and updates, and to confirm ecoguards are motivated and patrolling in the field. For the DDNP, ZSL SMART focal point visits DDNP on the 6-month basis (Activity 2.3).

Reserve-wide population trends in pangolins have proven to be inordinately challenging to track with confidence (Activity 2.2), though trends for other larger wildlife species show an ongoing decline as assessed through full-reserve distance sampling compared to a similar effort 5 years ago. As discussed above, the ExCiteS reporting and monitoring tool *Sapelli* has been adopted by seven Baka and Bantu communities, resulting in 562 reports to date. These range from illegal wildlife crime information (such as cabins and bushmeat), to animal monitoring (such as gorilla tracks, pangolin burrows, and leopard signs), to vehicle reports (Activity 2.4, Activity 2.5, Activity 2.6).

Output 3. Build capacity of enforcement agents, prosecutors, courthouse staff and customs agents to effectively apply wildlife laws and reporting relating to pangolins and other trafficked species.

ZSL works with and consults MINFOF and other law enforcement agencies in order to create bespoke training input to frontline law enforcement officials, which is subject to pre-training assessment with the relevant agencies or units by ZSL Law Enforcement Advisor (Activity 3.1). Often, this reveals lack of understanding and knowledge in very basic tenets of law enforcement skills. Thus, any support, guidance or training is adapted and made bespoke to address the needs, especially around essential policing and evidence gathering attributes (Activity 3.1). In July 19th -20th 2018, as part of this commitment, we delivered training in Basic Law Enforcement Technics to 13 ecoguards and two police officers at the Judicial police Headquarters in Yaoundé. This two days training took into consideration gender issues as three of the ecoguards were women. They obtained first hand training in the domains of proof of evidence, management of crime scene, Human Rights, building up of a case file and the identification and management of informants and their networks. Additionally, in July 23rd – 24th 2018, we provided the same training to 11 ecoguards in Mouanko in the Littoral Region (Activity 3.1). A complementary training of another 12 ecoguards in Lomie (in the East of Cameroon) was carried out from My 27th – June 7th 2018 (Activity 3.1). This involved Basic Law Enforcement concepts, intelligence management and tactical patrolling skills, supplied by ZSL and 3rd party training provider Retarius (Activity 3.1). All training materials were put in place for effective training. Toolkits developed by the Law Enforcement department made available in power point for accessibility. ZSL maintains the delivery of bespoke training courses for law enforcement officers, based upon the COPS (Conservation Oriented Policing Skills) concept, encompassing Basic Law Enforcement training and Proactive Law Enforcement training (Activity 3.1). All training conducted by ZSL requires students to compile feedback (which is stored centrally for perusal) which is then used to modify or update training processes and materials as necessary (Activity 3.2). So far, over 36 MINFOF officials have been trained in Basic Law Enforcement Technics and tactical patrolling protocols by 3rd party provider RETARIUS. In addition, a further 15 agents have received Proactive Law Enforcement techniques training (Activity 3.2). Knowledge and skills acquired from these trainings have a series of record breaking seizures

such as in Djoum where in May 2018, three traffickers were arrested in possession of 106 elephant tusks (representing 53 elephants killed) (Activity 3.2). Already, the capacity to swiftly assess training needs has led to the planning of the training of a further 12 MINFOF staff in Cameroon wildlife law by the end of the year 2018 (Activity 3.3). There will also be another training in pangolin conservation (ecology, legal status, trade, trends, etc) by January 2019 (Activity 3.3). Court cases and processes in Cameroon are beset with incompetence, interminable bureaucracy and overt corruption, which makes ongoing support and follow up extremely difficult (Activity 3.4). In addition, there is no centralised database of court records or proceedings; though the Law Enforcement Officer has collected some data of tried cases in courts harbouring the Dja Reserve that are being analysed (Activity 3.4). The Law Enforcement Officer provides support to ongoing cases in various courts around the Dja-which include: the courts of First Instance in Djoum, Bengbis, Ebolowa, Messamena and Abong Mbang. The total cost of displacing ecoguards who have been transferred from their duty post to provide evidence in courts is borne by ZSL (Activity 3.5). Due to this, we have had successful sentences in Djoum where three ivory traffickers were on November 23rd 2018 slammed a five month jail term and to pay the sum of over 53,945,000FCFA To MINFOF as damages. Law Enforcement support was very instrumental in the sentencing of three ivory traffickers in May 2018 to six months imprisonment and 66,455,500 FCFA as damages to MINFOF. Other similar sentences took place in the courts in Bengbis as over 7 traffickers got varied sentences in August and October 2018 (Activity 3.5). The civil society is increasingly aware of the fact that illegal wildlife trade is a crime punishable by the 1994 wildlife law in Cameroon. Though such programmes are widely broadcast over the media, some headstrong individuals still go about fuelling it as it yields a lot of profit. This is seen in the continuous arrest of some of these traffickers and their recurrent appearances in courts (Activity 3.5). Though media coverage is very vital for sensitization, it is forbidden by the law of Cameroon to cover court proceedings; and obtaining permission for that is a complicated procedure.

2a. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

Community Engagement: Corruption, complicity, and lack of capacity continues to result in inaction from MINFOF or other relevant authorities on information obtained from communities. Whilst reports may be numerous and detailed, action on the ground from law enforcement can be minimal or non-existent. This not only results in inaction against wildlife traffickers, but drains community motivation to report incidents. As such, the mechanism of the data transfer process is under alteration. Feeding incoming reports on IWT into SMART patrols may provide a route around such issues, when considering that regular patrols are carried out thereby avoiding the need for specific MINFOF response for community reports.

Law Enforcement: From the perspective of supporting law enforcement activities, efforts have been stymied by (anticipated) obstacles in the form of bureaucracy, inefficiency and organisation incompetence on the part of MINFOF and the state representations in relevant arenas. In addition, a distinct lack of both physical resources, and hierarchical support to law enforcement agents on the ground means that, despite ZSLs bespoke 'resource-appropriate' training, it remains very difficult to implement some protocols (crime scene management, suspect interviewing) on a daily basis, despite the efforts and enthusiasm of officers on the ground. Rampant corruption and the evident involvement of governmental and military officials in the illegal wildlife trade also means that frontline officers are often unwilling to make substantial investigative or enforcement efforts, as they fear for the safety of them and their families.

Despite these issues we are seeing progress as demonstrated by the arrests and seizures that have taken place.

2b. Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with LTS:	Yes/No NO
Formal change request submitted:	Yes/No NO
Received confirmation of change acceptance	Yes/No NO

3a. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g., more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Estimated underspend: £
<p>3b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully. Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.</p> <p>If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project, please submit a rebudget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a rebudget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes if necessary.</p>		

<p>4. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?</p>
<p>none</p>

If you were asked to provide a response to this year's annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document. Additionally, if you were funded under R24 and asked to provide further information by your first half year report, please attach your response as a separate document.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also** be raised with LTS International through a Change Request.

Please send your **completed report by email** to Eilidh Young at Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk . The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message e.g. Subject: 22-035 Darwin Half Year Report**