



STOP WILDLIFE CRIME
IT'S DEAD SERIOUS



THE LAO PDR GOVERNMENT

is committed to Protecting and Enhancing its natural forests and their associated wildlife. However, the Government of Lao PDR (GoL) has historically had a relatively inconsistent and fragmented approach to forest and wildlife crime, particularly those involving domestic timber, and wildlife products originating from outside Lao.

This has facilitated the emergence of Laos as a transit country for the illegal trade of wildlife products coming from Africa and ultimately destined for China and Vietnam. The high level of regional tourism, and the ban on the sale of illegal wildlife in China, has also result in Laos becoming a consuming country for items such as ivory, rhinoceros horns and tiger products, predominantly purchased by tourists.

Encouragingly, under the Prime Minister, Mr Thongloun Sisoulith, the GoL has increased its efforts to improve the regulatory environment for protecting and enhancing its natural forests and their associated wildlife resources, and meeting its international wildlife and trade law enforcement obligations (including CITES, the UN Convention Against Organized Crime, and the UN Convention Against Corruption).

Key achievements include:

- 1). Issuing clear instructions to all levels of government to enforce regulations on timber management, timber exploitation, timber movement and timber business, through the issuing of Prime Minister Order on *Enhancing Strictness on the Management and Inspection of Timber Exploitation, Timber Movement and Timber Business No. 15/PM, dated 13 May 2016.*
- 2). Broadening and clarifying Authority to Act for law enforcement agencies specified under the Criminal Procedure Law (Amended 2017).
- 3). Issuing of clear authority and directives under Prime Minister Order No. 05 (PMO 05, issued on 8 May 2018) *On Strengthening Strictness of the Management and Inspection of Prohibited Wild Fauna and Flora.*

- 4). Broadening and enhancing wildlife related penalties as specified under the new Penal Code (2017, with proclamation on 17 October 2018), which includes provisions targeting transnational and organised criminal networks and the individuals who support them.

The new Penal Code has expanded and strengthened penalties and removed inconsistencies and gaps under current laws, including international agreements such as CITES.

Following the issuing of PMO 05, there has been a dramatic reduction in open trading of illegal wildlife products (including ivory, pangolin and rhino products), with complex investigations supporting prosecutions, and the value of products seized exceeding US\$750,000 (2018).

However, despite the significant progress made, there is still room for improvement, and WWF is pleased to be supporting efforts to strengthen capacity of officials to enforce laws; and to broaden efforts that involve coordinated, multi-agency responses at a Provincial, National and International levels.

WWF's main role is to provide support for GoL agencies, through the Department of Forest Inspection (DoFI). One of DoFI's mandate is to lead the Lao-Wildlife Enforcement Network, which is chaired by the Director General of DoFI and whose partners include Customs, the Department of Combatting Environmental Crime (Environment Police), Anti-Corruption Authority, Ministry of Public Security, and the Office of the Public Prosecutor.





PROJECT NAME

PROJECT NAME Support to strengthen wildlife law enforcement in Laos and cross-border cooperation with neighbouring countries.

PROJECT OBJECTIVE

PROJECT OBJECTIVE The overall objective of this project is to reduce illegal wildlife trade in key markets and retail hubs in Laos by expanding capacity to detect, discourage, and disrupt organised criminal networks, and prosecute those members involved in illegal wildlife crime.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

MAIN ACTIVITIES Activities to achieve this include targeted skills development, awareness campaigns, information-sharing, and enhancing regional cooperation between law enforcement agencies in Thailand, Myanmar and Laos.

The project will facilitate the establishment of trust and working relationships across national and border agencies.

Support is being provided for advanced investigation trainings, and bilateral meetings to increase law enforcement response capacity and trans-boundary cooperation in addressing illegal wildlife trade in central and northern Lao PDR.

WWF is providing technical advice and mentoring, and assists in identifying wildlife trafficking routes and markets in Lao PDR. Currently, these include the Lao, Myanmar and Thailand borders intersect area.

This project is also designed to support law enforcement actions that reflect the severity of wildlife crimes, and to create a penalty environment which discourages participation as the consequences are severe for poachers, traders and buyers.

IMPLEMENTATION

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In order to manage all activities, the Central Implementation Management Committee (IMC) will ensure support is targeted, relevant and sufficient to develop functional capacity and deliver operational successes. Members are:

Department of Forest Inspection , Ministry of
Agriculture and Forestry.

Lao Wildlife Enforcement Network composed of Customs, Police, Army, Public prosecution, State Inspection etc.) of Vientiane Capital, Oudomxay, Luang Namtha and Bokeo Provinces.

Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office of Oudomxay,
Luang Namtha, Bokeo, and Vientiane Capital.

Department of International Organizations, Ministry
of Foreign Affairs.

World Wide Fund for Nature in Laos (WWF-Laos).



WWF

WWF is pleased to support the Government of Lao PDR in implementing actions that reduce the sale and availability of illegal wildlife and wildlife products. WWF's anti-wildlife crime programme for the Greater Mekong Region is also empowering local officials and communities to report and disrupt wildlife poaching and illegal wildlife trading in markets which are contributing to a loss of biodiversity and local populations of endangered species.

TARGET PROVINCES

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There are four priority provinces supported under this project: Vientiane Capital, Oudomxay, Luang Namtha and Bokeo. However, other provinces can be supported to enable rapid responses to active wildlife crime or emerging criminal activities.

The WWF and GoL Memorandum of Understanding was signed on 15 Mar 2019 and concludes on 30 June 2020.

Vientiane Capital

Oudomxay Province

Luang Namtha Province

Bokeo
Province

Supported by:

World Wide Fund for Nature in Laos (WWF-Laos)



Why we are here

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

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ຫ້າມສູງກຳລັງໃດ ນຳເຂົ້າ, ສົ່ງອອກ, ສົ່ງກັບຄືນ
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任何人违反老挝人民民主共和国法律，非法进口、出口、再出口、转运或中转陆生或水生野生动物，包括这些野生动物的部分和制品，将被处以三个月至五年的有期徒刑和最高一千万老树基普的罚款。