

BEYOND ENFORCEMENT: Involving Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities in Combating Illegal Wildlife Trade

Regional workshop for West and Central Africa

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Workshop Communique

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The workshop and its co-organisers and convenors

The IUCN CEESP/SSC Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialist Group (IUCN SULi) and Regional Programme for West and Central Africa (IUCN PACO), International Institute of Environment and Development (IIED), TRAFFIC, and the Network for Environment and Sustainable Development in Africa (NESDA – Cameroon), convened a regional workshop for West and Central Africa to explore how best to engage Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) that live close to wildlife in efforts to combat illegal wildlife trade (IWT).

Background

Globally, 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. Across West and Central Africa, IWT is a particular concern for elephants, timber, great apes, pangolins, birds, reptiles, and medicinal plants.

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 Conferences on Illegal Wildlife Trade in London (February 2014) and in Kasane, Botswana (March 2015), and the International Conference on Illegal Exploitation and Illicit Trade in Wild Flora and Fauna in Africa (Brazzaville, Congo, April 2015). These conferences and policy statements, alongside several African sub-regional ones, have increasingly recognised the important role of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities who live close to wildlife in addressing IWT (see table below).

London Declaration

Recognise the negative impact of illegal wildlife trade on sustainable livelihoods and economic development. This impact needs to be better understood and quantified. 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.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/281289/london-wildlife-conference-declaration-140213.pdf

African 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.

https://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/aes_final_summary_record_1.pdf

Kasane Statement

Promote the retention of benefits from wildlife resources by local people where they have traditional and/or legal rights over these resources. We will strengthen policy and legislative frameworks needed to achieve this, reinforce the voice of local people as key stakeholders and implement measures which balance the need to tackle the illegal wildlife trade with the needs of communities, including the sustainable use of wildlife.

Support work done in countries to address the challenges that people, in particular rural populations, can face in living and coexisting with wildlife, with the goal of building conservation constituencies and promoting sustainable development.

Establish, facilitate and support information-sharing mechanisms, within country, regionally, and internationally, designed with, for and targeted at local people and practitioners, to develop knowledge, expertise and best practice in practical experience of involving local people in managing wildlife resources, and in action to tackle the illegal wildlife trade.

Kasane Statement (continued)

Support work by countries and intergovernmental organisations, as well as non governmental organisations, that seeks to identify the situations where, and the mechanisms by which, actions at the local level, including with community groups, can reduce the illegal wildlife trade.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417231/kasane-statement-150325.pdf

Brazzaville Statement

Encourage Member States to recognize the rights and increasing the participation of indigenous populations and local communities in planning, management, and use of wildlife resources, promoting sustainable and alternative livelihoods, and in building their capacities to fight against wildlife crime.

http://unep.org/PDF/Brazzaville_Strategy.pdf

African Union Strategy

Promote the participatory approach with economic development and community livelihoods through sustainable use of wild fauna and flora.

<http://www.unep.org/environmentalgovernance/Portals/8/documents/African-Strategy-combating-illegal-tradeAU.pdf>

However, despite this recognition, the emphasis to date in discussions and in implementation 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 Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities who live with wildlife. Moreover, some recent commitments, such as the one stemming from the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) Johannesburg Action Plan (2016–2018) do mention the need to combat IWT, but do not recognize the strong role of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities.

IWT has an enormous impact on Indigenous Peoples and 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, militarized 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 long term survival of wildlife populations, and in particular the success of interventions to combat IWT, will depend to a large extent on engagement of the Indigenous Peoples and 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 and trade are likely to exist. Even the most focused and well-resourced enforcement efforts (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 West and Central Africa of governance models that empower indigenous peoples and 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 and trade – sometimes dramatically – and incentivising strong community engagement in enforcement efforts. 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 and implementation of approaches.

Crucially, the potential of community-based approaches needs to be analysed in the context of contemporary challenges of increasing involvement of transnationally-organized criminal syndicates in IWT, rising profits from illicit trade, increased access to firearms by community members, worsening poverty in many areas, erosion of traditional rights and governance systems, rapid urbanisation and changing community value systems, and large-scale threats from climate change combined with progressive habitat erosion affecting subsistence agriculture.

Approach

The organisers invited potential participants via a bilingual French and English call for contributions to submit summaries of analyses, case studies and experiences relevant to the focus of the meeting that they would be interested to present at the workshop. Organisers were particularly interested in exploring approaches that have worked – and the underlying reasons for their success – and approaches that have not been found to be effective. Organisers were further interested in case studies that document the impact on IPLCs of external efforts to control IWT (e.g., the impacts of private sector or government led anti-poaching patrols). The focus was on international IWT (i.e. wildlife trade that involves cross-border transactions), and not illegal use of wildlife for local subsistence use or trade (e.g., local bushmeat trade). Organisers particularly encouraged proposals or presentations from people who were members of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities affected by or engaged in tackling international IWT, or community support organisations, and from those with governmental (or inter-governmental) responsibilities or representing donor commitments for addressing wildlife crime.

The call for contributions was distributed in mid-December 2015 by means of sharing via list-servers, web-based calls for contributions, and direct approaches. Proposals for presentations were solicited in the form of submission of an abstract of approximately 300 words by 15th January 2016. Subsequently, the organisers selected relevant contributions from West and Central Africa from the submissions received and invited selected participants. Organisers were also able to offer funding to meet travel and accommodation costs for selected participants.

Support

This workshop received support by the Austrian Ministry of the Environment and by the German Polifund project, implemented by GIZ on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the German Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB). Additional support was provided through the Wildlife Trafficking Response, Assessment and Priority Setting (Wildlife TRAPS) Project, supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Regional Focus

The workshop focussed on the Congo Basin – although drawing in wider experience from West and Central Africa.

Objectives of the workshop

The objective of this workshop was to improve understanding and guidance on how Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities can be engaged as active partners in protecting wildlife against Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT), through collecting and examining regional experiences and case studies.

This regional workshop is built on an international symposium on this topic held in Muldersdrift, South Africa, in February 2015 (see <http://pubs.iied.org/G03903.html>) which brought together experiences and case studies of different community engagement approaches from around the world. The Muldersdrift meeting highlighted the need for more focused regional exploration of the issues in order to contribute to an international effort toward raising awareness of and attention to the role of IPLCs in effective and just responses to IWT.

Workshop structure

The workshop discussed contributions in the following sessions, each followed by a chaired discussion:

- SESSION 1** Opening and introductions
- SESSION 2** Regional Perspectives: Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) and Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) in West and Central Africa
- SESSION 3** Impacts of IWT on Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
- SESSION 4** Impacts of Enforcement Against IWT on Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
- SESSION 5** Strengthening Community Rights to Manage and Benefit From Wild Resources: What Works and What Doesn't in Reducing Illegal Wildlife Trade?
- SESSION 6** Income Generating Schemes and Alternative Livelihoods as Strategies to Reduce Poaching
- SESSION 7** Involving Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities in Law Enforcement Efforts: Where and How Are Communities Actively Engaging in Enforcement Efforts, and What Factors Underpin Success?

WORKSHOP CLOSING

SESSION 1

Opening

Angeline Ndo, Chair of the Network for Environment and Sustainable Development in Cameroon (NESDA – CA) welcomed participants to the workshop. She highlighted that IWT is a serious threat to biodiversity in the Congo Basin and that the workshop was important in bringing together a wide range of stakeholders – from government representatives to local people – to explore the issue and seek possible solutions.

Edgar Kaeslin representing GIZ who had provided significant funds for the workshop provided information about the Polifund initiative which has a focus on combatting IWT and linking that with improving living standards of local people.

Mr Basile Ekomba, Sub-Divisional Officer, West Coast Division, Idenau then officially opened the workshop with a welcoming speech. He noted that Cameroon has ratified all the biodiversity conventions and takes the matter of IWT very seriously. The workshop was thus very timely and important.

Rosie Cooney, Chair of the IUCN Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialist Group, gave a brief introduction to the objectives of the workshop. She highlighted that, to date, there has been inadequate focus on the role of local communities in tackling IWT and too much focus on “top-down” enforcement efforts. She noted therefore that the objectives of the workshop were to:

1. Better understand when, and under what sort of conditions, community based approaches can help reduce IWT.
2. Develop a set of region-specific lessons learned .
3. Explore the potential for establishing a “community of practice” in the region to continue sharing experiences and lessons on community based approaches.

Roland Melisch of TRAFFIC then provided an overview of the current nature and scale of the illegal wildlife trade. He highlighted the wide range of international responses and policy statements that have emerged since the mass slaughter of elephants in Cameroon in 2012.

Yuan Liu from the CITES Secretariat provided further insights into illegal trade and also highlighted resources produced by the Secretariat to explore the impacts of CITES regulations on local peoples’ livelihoods. He noted that trade patterns were changing somewhat, with an increase in captive breeding of species in trade. A key issue in the context is how local people can benefit from these changes.

Dilys Roe from IIED concluded the introductory session by presenting some of the key findings from the previous workshop on community engagement held in Muldersdrift, South Africa, in February 2015. That meeting concluded that:

- Current approaches to tackling IWT, focussed on law enforcement, are not working – as evidenced by a continuation of poaching.
- Furthermore, because law enforcement has had some negative social impacts – including severe human rights abuses in some cases – this has led to a distrust of conservation officials and questioning of the legitimacy of conservation regulations.
- We need to understand the broader land use context for wildlife crime – where people have no rights to benefit from wildlife they are more likely to succumb to pressure to convert land to alternative uses such as agriculture rather than setting it aside for conservation.
- But if the incentives are right, communities can be powerful and positive agents of change. Where there is rights and stewardship, then they have a strong sense of protection.

A key recommendation from the Muldersdrift meeting was that neither community engagement nor law enforcement on their own were likely to be effective in combating IWT, but both need to be integrated into effective responses.

SESSION 2

Regional Perspectives

Paulinus Ngeh and **Sone Nkoke** from TRAFFIC's Central Africa office in Cameroon, provided an overview of the nature and scale of IWT in the region highlighting its role as both a source of illegal products but also as a transit route – for example Douala, Kinshasa and Kisangani are key ports for ivory exports. They highlighted how indigenous people get pulled into IWT as they are often used as hunters and guides by external poachers.

Kapupu Diwa Mutimanwa from the Alliance of Indigenous Peoples of the Congo Basin Forest (FIPAC) picked up on this point noting that while indigenous people are involved in IWT they are not instigating poaching themselves. He suggested that it was important that the workshop should highlight who has what responsibility and that previously international meetings have not involved indigenous people's representatives and so they have not been sensitised to the issue. He stressed that enforcement efforts should focus on those who are initiating poaching, not on the indigenous people who are caught in the middle. He also noted that indigenous people needed to benefit more from conservation – through being involved in park management committees; through jobs; and through revenue generating activities.

Paul Scholte from GIZ highlighted that involving communities in conservation in the region had been attempted for the last 25 years but that there were still major challenges, particularly with initiatives that attempt to “de-couple” people and wildlife, such as alternative livelihoods projects. There has been much more success with “coupling” interventions such as NTFP harvesting, community hunting zones and ecotourism. But even here, major constraints such as immigration and the lack of an enabling policy framework have hindered progress. He concluded that the potential of community conservation seems to have been over estimated and that it was interpreted by government as meaning that state personnel could be withdrawn from protected areas resulting in a massive under-investment in conservation and a subsequent undermining of confidence in community conservation. He noted, however, that there were no baselines and no ongoing monitoring of either social or biological outcomes in order to determine the on-the-ground impact of community conservation.

Alain Ononino of WWF Cameroon described how WWF and others had developed a “zero poaching” framework which had six pillars, one of which was community engagement. Key activities that WWF has embarked on include:

1. Agreeing MoUs between protected area authorities and communities in three national parks in an attempt to extend community user rights
2. Working with local authorities to ensure representativeness in the governance structure managing forest and wildlife royalties
3. Promoting alternative livelihood initiatives and income generating opportunities
4. Advocating for community hunting zones in the new forestry and wildlife law. These are intended for subsistence hunting but also generate revenue from trophy hunting
5. Awareness raising about IWT – including providing training on community-based intelligence gathering.

The ensuing discussion focussed on:

- The role of the state and the need for much more significant investment in both conservation and in rural development.
- The challenge of alternative livelihoods initiatives in generating the kinds of benefits that can be derived from IWT.
- The need to increase community rights over wildlife but to accompany this with responsibility for conservation.
- The need for critical reflection to learn from failure in conservation and to improve practice in the future.

SESSION 3

Impacts of IWT on IPLCs

Ernest Kentsa a Cameroonian environmentalist, presented a case study of Salapoumbe in East Cameroon where, prior to 1990, local people had successfully managed natural resources including elephants. From 1990 onwards, however, the area became increasingly commercialised including through logging and hunting concessions. While some people benefitted from employment, the majority lost out due to loss of rights to use resources. Poaching and illegal use proliferated and a vicious circle of decline ensued as tourism revenue dropped and poaching increased. The case study concluded that involvement in IWT had hugely benefitted a few individuals but had impoverished the wider community.

The discussion session highlighted similarities between this situation and that in Mali as described by the Mali Elephant project, where again poaching was benefitting a few but causing impoverishment of the majority. The need for increased revenue sharing was highlighted, including the example of Rwanda where 5% of revenue from national parks is returned to the local community.

SESSION 4

Impacts of Enforcement on IPLCs

Aurelien Douandji, another private environmentalist, noted that in Cameroon, the 1994 law does provide for participatory management of natural resources through community hunting zones. However, a key problem is that traditional rights-holders have been disenfranchised with the benefits going to outsiders. The legislation is somewhat contradictory in that on the one hand it confers rights through hunting zones and on the other hand it promotes sanctions against hunting. It has resulted in conflict between people and parks authorities and impoverishment of local hunters.

Charles Jones Nsonkali, representing the Baka in SE Cameroon, noted that the situation was worse for indigenous pygmies. He noted that the Baka have been denied rights to forest resources that they have used for generations. Meanwhile conservationists have turned a blind eye to abuses of local people by government rangers. As a result there is no trust between local people and conservationists. Mr Nsonkali advocated that trust needed to be rebuilt and that those working in conservation needed to interact directly with, and listen to, local people in order to develop respectful partnerships.

Jean-Pierre Jobogo, Chief Park Ranger in Virunga NP, eastern DRC, discussed the problem of social and cultural change brought about by war, political instability and in-migration. This was a catalyst for developing a community conservation strategy where local values are taken into account in protected area management and local leaders are invited to participate in meetings. This approach has had some positive impacts including provision of intelligence about poachers, development of alternative livelihoods initiatives and so on, but is still not without challenges with local people still feeling that the state has taken away the forest of their ancestors. The case study concluded that much more effort needed to be made to link conservation with cultural values.

William Kamgaing from Kyoto University concluded the session with a case study of Baka hunter gatherers and ecoguards in SE Cameroon. He noted that Baka have been drawn into poaching by outsiders because they are excellent trackers and so poor that they are willing to take on any job. They are therefore on the frontline of poaching but get little benefit and pay a high price of being the first targets of law enforcement officials. The case study concluded that the special skills of the Baka could be used to benefit conservation rather than to benefit poachers but that to do this, the trust of the Baka had to be earned and compromises such as allowing subsistence hunting – while protecting rare or endangered species – had to be made.

The discussion session highlighted a number of key issues including:

- Current law enforcement efforts are failing because they target the small people rather than the kingpins or drivers of IWT.
- Many people suffer costs from living alongside wildlife – such as through crop raiding – and there is no compensation for this.
- Often it is not the law itself that is problematic (although clearly sometimes it is for example when it is contradictory or undermines traditional rights) but the way the law is applied.
- A further weakness of the law is that it is focussed on catching poachers after they have committed a crime rather than trying to prevent poaching in the first place.
- We need rule of law and sometimes it can be harsh. We must be careful not to take isolated cases and assume this is a more general situation.

SESSION 5

Strengthening community rights

Matthew Ekeoba Isikhuemen from the University of Benin presented a case study of the Gilli Gilli Forest Reserve in Nigeria. Here a Biodiversity Action Plan was introduced to improve wellbeing, protect ecosystems and promote alternative livelihoods. Typically in Nigeria, forests are managed by the state with no community involvement. In this case the project was able to introduce a bylaw permitting community based forest management.

Olivia Rickenbach from the Forest Stewardship Council highlighted that community management of resources requires a huge amount of support if it is going to work and that there is a huge gap between social science theory and conservation practice. She noted that many local communities meet very few of Elinor Ostroms conditions for successful common property resource management and so the support of partner organisations is likely to be critical.

The discussion session highlighted that community conservation is not necessarily THE solution but just one approach that will work better in some cases than in others. In the case of IWT it is critical to look beyond the immediate perpetrators of poaching and address the real drivers – including global consumption. Community conservation is clearly not the solution at this level. It is also important to recognise that there are no quick and simple solutions – it can take decades for interventions to begin to bear fruit. The problem is when a crisis occurs such as the current IWT crisis, long term solutions are often not quick enough.

This session continued into Day Two of the workshop. **Guy Joules Kounga** from the Centre for International Sustainable Development Law discussed the problem of a mismatch between wildlife legislation and traditional practices in Cameroon (and elsewhere). He noted that local people were rarely consulted in the drafting of new legislation and suggested that traditional practices and cultural norms should be integrated into sustainable management policy and legislation.

Susan Canney from the Wild Foundation presented – on behalf of **Nomba Ganame** – a case study of elephant conservation in Mali whereby traditional CBRNM practices have been reinvigorated and elephants protected through youth-led forest brigades. In this case elephants were seen as an indicator of broader environmental health and conserved for the benefit of the ecosystem as a whole. The initiative worked well until a jihadi insurgency in 2012. To address this escalating threat the project convened a community meeting to develop a shared solution. Young men were recruited into the forest brigades rather than joining up as jihadis as a result of the prestige associated with the role. The forest brigades are generating good intelligence on poaching but unfortunately changes in government have meant that little action is taken to respond to this intelligence and so poaching is continuing. Nevertheless the community initiative has persevered in the face of adversity and while it is not solving the poaching problem on its own it is helping to prevent it getting significantly worse.

Mama Mouamfon from Living Earth Foundation discussed the establishment of community hunting zones around Dja Biosphere Reserve as a mechanism for generating community incentives to tackle IWT – specifically hunting for the bushmeat trade. They recognised that bushmeat hunting was a fact of life – albeit illegal – and decided that the best strategy was to see how it could be brought within the law rather than trying to ban it all together. Working with 13 communities, a community hunting zone is in the process of being registered as a legal entity. This will mean that bushmeat hunting can continue but in a regulated way. There is also an expectation amongst the community that ecotourism can be developed and that this will provide an incentive for local people to engage in tackling poaching of other species including gorillas and elephants.

Samuel Tsakem, Garoua Wildlife College, discussed how the 12000 households around Lobeke National Park were motivated to kill gorillas in revenge for crop raiding and other forms of human wildlife conflict. In addition, people rely on bushmeat hunting as a major source of protein. In a context of high poverty and few livelihood alternatives, however, it is hard to see a solution to this problem, Key strategies should include targeting middlemen in the bushmeat trade chain in order to close down the commercial (rather than subsistence) element of hunting, but also to find better ways to protect farmland from gorillas in order to reduce conflict; increase local environmental education and seek to involve local people in conservation activities.

The discussion session explored issues of:

- The potential for having both hunting and tourism in community hunting zones as complementary activities
- The problem that, benefits from enterprises such as tourism might take some time to materialise compared to the benefits from poaching which are available now. Also the beneficiaries from tourism won't necessarily be the same as the beneficiaries from poaching so there may be a conflict of interest here.
- The need to target the real drivers of commercial hunting (largely outsiders) rather than local people
- The need to target not just hunters but also those who buy bushmeat in markets and eat it in restaurants. This is just as illegal as hunting it in the first place.
- The need to clamp down on corruption and complicity in poaching amongst government officials
- Recognising that traditional rules – such as wildlife totems – don't necessarily result in conservation – there is a need to be careful when advocating for 100% respect of cultural norms as a strategy for conservation as these are not always effective and sometimes act against conservation rather than in favour of it. The example was given of a community that believes if you see a pangolin in the forest you must kill it to prevent your family being cursed.

SESSION 6

Alternative livelihood interventions

This session explored the experiences – real and potential – of various income generating initiatives as incentives for not engaging in IWT:

- **Jean Felix Kinani Sangwa** from Rwanda Development Board described how, in Rwanda, 5% of the revenue generated from tourism in protected areas is shared with the local community. He pointed out that local people made vital contributions to the tourism industry, the establishment of porters associations being one example of how local people can earn income from conservation. These often involve ex-poachers, One example is the Kabaho Ngagi Sabinyo cooperative which was established by an ex poacher in 2002 and now has 298 members all of whom previously had some link with illegal activities.
- **Kapupu Diwa Mutimanwa** from the Alliance of Indigenous Peoples of the Congo Basin Forest, highlighted the potential of harvesting edible caterpillars as a significant and as yet undeveloped income generation scheme, drawing on the traditional knowledge of the Baka who know which trees to plant to attract the caterpillars. He pointed out that tree caterpillars were such a cultural delicacy that they would generate very high prices at market – \$1.5/kg with a potential production of 131,250 kg per year if trees were widely planted on homesteads and village land.

- **Jules Ngueguim** of the Institute of Agricultural Research for Development (IRAD) described the tourist ecovillage concept as a strategy for generating income from conservation of marine turtles, highlighting an impressive reduction in poaching as a result.
- **Alidou Lytti** of the Forest Savannah Sustainability Project (Cameroon) highlighted how in SE Cameroon the main strategies to tackle IWT had been awareness raising and militarised control with little attention paid to alternative income generating schemes. He discussed the potential of NTFP harvesting as an alternative to IWT but highlighted the huge discrepancy in the potential income that could be earned from just one elephant tusk compared to NTFPs. He highlighted that long term, the solution only lay in curbing the demand for high value illegal products.

The discussion session concurred on the challenge of developing any alternative livelihood initiatives that could generate sufficient income to replace that potentially earned by poaching and the need to couple this approach with other anti IWT strategies including demand reduction.

SESSION 7

Engaging local people in law enforcement efforts

Michelle Wieland, Wildlife Conservation Society, opened the final session of the workshop with an overview of the risks and rewards that face local people if they engage in law enforcement efforts. She noted that communities were most likely to engage in tackling IWT when they have rights of ownership over wildlife and can benefit directly; when they have strong social cohesion, and when they trust the police and legal system.

Radar Nishuli, Director of Kahuzi-Biega National Park in DRC emphasised the importance of engaging local people in conservation. He noted that Kahuzi Beiga park is so big that it would be impossible to protect without local support. The resident pygmy population was driven away when the park was gazetted but efforts are now being made to increase the transparency of management and engage much more with local people. He highlighted that 50% of the intelligence on poaching is now provided by local people. He also noted that it was important to use this intelligence to focus much more on preventing poaching before it happens rather than trying to catch poachers after the event.

Mohammed Garba Boyi of Nigeria Conservation Foundation provided a case study of illegal bird trapping in Hadejia Nguru wetlands in Nigeria. To address this threat a number of income generating activities have been introduced including:

- poultry farming and bee keeping
- mat weaving and fuel-efficient stoves
- employment in clearing invasive species.

Monitoring has shown a huge increase in bird numbers and species from 2008 to 2015 – the period when these activities were introduced.

Claude Keboy Mov Linkey Iflankoy presented the work of Synergie Rurale – Action Paysan – a local organisation involving traditional chiefs in the Batere chiefdom of DRC. The organisation has been conducting anti-poaching activities since 2015, focussing on pangolins. Poachers who had been commissioned to find pangolins have been recruited as members of a local patrol charged with protecting the caves where pangolins were living. Social media is used to report suspicious activities. Keboy suggested that donor funds would be most efficiently used supporting such community based initiatives rather to remote scientists who are not familiar with the local context.

The session continued with a presentation from **Esaie Waya** from the University Institute of Agricultural Sciences, University of Sarh, Chad. He recounted how wildlife had been decimated in Manda NP as a result of poaching by armed foreigners. Consequently, a surveillance committee was established to tackle poaching and integrate local ex-poachers into park management. A UNDP project is helping further with surveillance technology and with support from a micro credit scheme.

Saleh Adam of ROCAL concluded the session with a case study of Waza and Benoue National Parks in North Cameroon, noting that since the 1990s a biosphere approach has been adopted, providing for engagement of local people. A key issue, however, was understanding who was “local” in a context where the population around the park was increasing rapidly from in-migration. He also noted that local communities have received very little of the park revenue with more the 85% going to the state.

The discussion session raised the issue of the difficulty of getting government authorisation in many cases for community members to work as rangers or guards in national parks. Radar Nishuli suggested that much depends on making a convincing case to the Minister. Others noted, however, that having untrained community members conducting anti-poaching patrols is not wise given their lack of training. However, communities are well placed to provide intelligence so that they can be the eyes and ears of the formal authorities. The point was, however, strongly made that “Conservationists should put aside the militarised manner of trying to conserve the environment. We need to work with the people.”

Following all the presentation sessions, the workshop concluded with a summary of lessons learned and key recommendations, facilitated by **Rosie Cooney**. These are presented below.

Angeline Ndo then closed the workshop thanking the delegates for their active participation and in particular thanking **Stanley Dinsi** for his organisation and coordination of the event.

All the workshop presentations are available to download at:

<http://www.iucn.org/commissions/commission-environmental-economic-and-social-policy/our-work/sustainable-use-and-1>

SUMMARY OF LESSONS LEARNED

The Limbe Deliberations on IPLCs and IWT

1. West and Central Africa are key regions for exports of some high-value illegally traded commodities, including elephant ivory, pangolins and timber.
2. Drivers of illegal wildlife trade (IWT) in this region include weak implementation and rule of law, corruption (including within the police, military and other legal authorities), political instability, extensive and extreme poverty, low levels of education, ready availability of arms, and large remote forest, savannah and dryland areas that make law enforcement or detection of illegal activity difficult.
3. This region has seen a strong recent growth in protected areas, illustrating clear commitment to conservation. However, these areas are primarily state-managed National Parks, often with inadequate resources and capacity for effective management and for community engagement, and limited or no formal involvement of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) in its management.
4. Community managed areas may be particularly targeted by organised poachers as, although states have formal responsibility for law enforcement in these areas, they often have less armed enforcement present.
5. While IPLCs are sometimes viewed as “the problem” or the perpetrators of IWT, members of these communities are often exploited by outside poachers – receiving tiny amounts of money for poaching wildlife for international IWT relative to their market value. They usually do not have information on the scale and damage caused by the trade.
6. Engagement in IWT typically only benefits few in the community, and results in longer term broad social costs including insecurity, resource depletion, and loss of community cohesion.
7. IPLCs have unique and outstanding skills enabling them to participate in either conservation or IWT because of their day to day proximity to wildlife. They can be either the “hands of the poachers”, or “the eyes and ears of enforcers”. This means it is crucial to develop approaches that make it more attractive to them to conserve wildlife than to engage in IWT.
8. Conservation organisations often fill a gap left by the state in providing or supporting basic services. However, as a result expectations are often raised as to what they can provide, and IPLCs feel let down by them. This can lead to poor relations with, and distrust of, conservation.
9. Law enforcement against IWT often mainly targets local people, particularly marginalised indigenous people, whereas the people driving and benefiting from the trade (the “white collar” culprits) are often not targeted, sometimes because it is too dangerous to tackle these powerful criminals.
10. There are cases where law enforcement against IWT has been associated with severe human rights abuses. Conservation organisations can be inadvertently complicit with these abuses by turning a blind eye to such issues.
11. Harsh or unjust law enforcement can contribute to alienating IPLCs and raise the incidence of poaching.
12. Trust in police and the legal system, and recognition of wildlife laws as legitimate and fair, are critical in motivating people to provide the information and intelligence that is key for effective law enforcement against IWT.
13. Enforcement solutions developed jointly with communities, and involving community members working alongside or cooperatively with enforcement authorities can be powerful ways to combat IWT.
14. Hunting for international IWT is distinct from subsistence hunting or commercial bushmeat hunting, although there is some overlap. Subsistence hunting is not the major conservation problem.
15. IPLCs also often feel like victims of an international demand for illicitly sourced wildlife commodities and request this particular matter to be included and taken seriously within strategies addressing behaviour change in consumer countries of IWT.

16. Small-scale subsistence hunting is often very important for nutrition and traditional medicinal practices, but also for small cash revenues to access modern market goods and services, particularly health care. It plays important cultural roles in traditional communities. However, subsistence hunting is often only legal with gun and hunting permits that are financially or technically inaccessible to IPLCs and even legal hunting is sometimes illegitimately stopped by laws and law enforcement against IWT.
17. Many IPLCs have been excluded from traditional territories and prevented from exercising traditional hunting rights without prior consent or compensation, exacerbating conflict with – and resentment of – conservation and conservation agencies and organisations.
18. There is a mismatch between formal legal approach to wildlife management and local practices, realities and traditional approaches, including cultural and spiritual traditions. Identifying synergies between these approaches could help reduce conflict.
19. In the West and Central African regions, in some areas subject to poaching for IWT, there is relatively little funding being directed towards community development activities; with much more being directed to enforcement.
20. Funding and resources that go direct to IPLCS and the organisations that work directly with them are likely to be most effective, where effective governance structures are in place.
21. Engaging communities in a meaningful way needs to go well beyond consultation or co-management “on paper”. IPLCs need to be empowered, with strengthened rights and ownership or stewardship over wildlife. A feeling of empowerment and having control over their own resources can be a very powerful motivator for people to protect and conserve wildlife.
22. Improving the meaningful engagement of IPLCs in the management of protected areas, and/or supporting community managed wildlife areas, can be powerful approaches in combating IWT. Diversifying categories of protected areas beyond state-managed ones – particularly considering the inclusion of Indigenous peoples’ and community conserved territories and areas (ICCAs) – is likely to be beneficial in the region.
23. The relative benefits that IPLCs gain from IWT, on one hand, and from conservation and sustainable use of wildlife, on the other, is a critical equation. Where IWT gives people more benefits, they are more likely to engage in it. Relevant benefits from conservation and sustainable use include financial benefits, but broader socio-cultural benefits including communities’ control over their own wildlife resources, and access to large undisturbed areas to pursue traditional modes of life.
24. Most importantly, what is considered a cost and what a benefit needs to be determined locally by IPLCs in order to get the equation right.
25. Even remote communities are now part of the cash economy, and want and need cash income to raise their standards of living. IPLCs need to be able to gain income or other non-financial benefits from conserving wildlife or from other activities that do not threaten the survival of wildlife; and that are freely chosen and culturally appropriate. Whether these benefits are realised and who gains them is inextricably related to governance.
26. Such activities can include carrying out tourism, including gaining a share of revenues from sport hunting or viewing tourism, hunting and gathering of wild species, and wildlife trade.
27. Motivating people to support conservation is a critical challenge for alternative livelihoods-based approaches, including tourism, alternative meat sources like poultry, and sustainable use of wild resources. These must be approached with caution, given that benefits from these are unlikely to outweigh what can be gained from illegal wildlife trade, especially in high value commodities. Tourism is very difficult in many parts of this region.
28. Making conservation beneficial for people is more difficult when people are negatively impacted by wildlife, such as crop damage from elephants and gorillas, with no compensation.

29. Raising awareness of the illicit profits being made from IWT by others, the damage caused by IWT, and the long-term costs to their livelihoods when these resources are lost, is very important. Those involved in sensitisation of IPLCs themselves need adequate knowledge and capacitation to support this important work.
30. IPLCs should be engaged from the start in discussing and guiding conservation and management approaches – approaches and solutions should be “co-developed” with IPLCs.
31. Building community institutions and solidarity is critical for effective community-based management of wild resources, and is challenging. Often traditional structures of authority and organisation have been eroded. External forces (political conflict, armed poaching gangs, jihadism, etc.) can exacerbate tensions within a community, but also be a strong motivator for communities to unite to tackle problems, including security of life and property. Conservation that requires collective action for mutual benefit can be a way to unify the community in tackling these problems.
32. The living conditions (including adequate salaries) of ecoguards, customs officers and other law enforcement staff are important elements in effective responses, including community engagement. Improved living conditions and strengthened incentives and knowhow for good performance are likely to improve conservation outcomes.
33. Despite decades of investment in community-level initiatives to achieve conservation objectives, there has been little systematic monitoring – biological or socio-economic – in the region to evaluate whether the approaches taken have been effective.
34. IPLCs in West and Central Africa currently have no functioning and effective communication platform where experiences and solutions on the issues of IWT can be exchanged.
35. Community-based conservation is not a silver bullet – this has to be part of an integrated package of measures addressing IWT. Short term initiatives are very unlikely to achieve success and long-term investments are likely to be required. However, once the right enabling conditions are in place, community conservation can be a critical tool in the fight against IWT.

Done in Limbe, Cameroon, 25 February 2016

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