

Call for Tender

Consultancy Analysis on financial crimes in wildlife and timber trafficking in the EU

Date of publication: 19 April 2022

Deadline for application: 11 May 2022

Background

Environmental crimes, including wildlife and timber trafficking, are among the largest and most profitable transnational criminal activities. Traffickers perceive them as a low-risk – high value as they generate high profits with low-risk of detection and traffickers' assets are rarely recovered. This highly lucrative illicit business is managed by organised criminal groups through a variety of payment mechanisms. Currently, there is a noticeable lack of financial investigations related to wildlife and forest crime cases. As such, the information about how criminals extract the profits from wildlife and forest crimes, and the identities of the main financial beneficiaries of those crimes, remains limited. The result of this is that low-level criminals, such as poachers, are caught and prosecuted, leaving the more senior members of criminal groups and actual beneficiaries of these crimes free to continue their illicit activities¹. In its 2020 report - Money Laundering and the Illegal Wildlife Trade² - the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) echoed these concerns mentioning that authorities regularly seize illegal wildlife, while rarely conducting financial investigations in parallel to bring to justice organised crime groups (OCGs) involved.

The European Union (EU) has a vital role to play in addressing wildlife trafficking and dismantling associated OCGs, as it is a major consumer of wildlife and wildlife products, while it also plays a role as source and a transit region for wildlife trafficking. The EU priorities for the fight against organized and serious international crime for 2022-2025 cover environmental crimes, including wildlife trafficking, and combating criminal finances, money laundering and facilitating asset recovery. In 2020 the European Commission emphasised that the confiscation of criminal proceeds should be a key component of the fight against serious and organised crime³. Yet EUROPOL estimates that only about 2% of criminal proceeds (for all types of crimes) are frozen and 1%

¹ TRAFFIC report, 2021 "Case Digest: initial analysis of the financial flows and payment mechanisms"

² <https://www.fatf-gafi.org/media/fatf/documents/Money-laundering-and-illegal-wildlife-trade.pdf>

³ European Commission report, 2020, "Asset recovery and confiscation - Ensuring that crime does not pay"

confiscated in the EU.

In December 2021, the 2-year UNITE project was launched, funded by the European Commission. This project aims to disrupt criminals and organised crime networks trafficking in wildlife, timber, and waste in and via the EU, and to recover the assets generated from these illegal activities. The UNITE project will target the need for strategic action on financial investigations, money laundering and asset recovery related to wildlife and timber trafficking. The project will improve the understanding of financial flows associated with illegal wildlife/timber trade; improve capacity and co-ordination between authorities responsible for combatting environmental crimes and for conducting financial investigations as well as prosecutors; cooperate with the financial sector to identify suspicious activities. UNITE is implemented by the French Gendarmerie (coordinator), the Spanish Guardia Civil, the Italian Carabinieri, the Slovakian Police, the Hungarian Police, WWF (Belgium, France and Hungary), IFAW Germany, with in-kind support from TRAFFIC.

Report on financial crime related to wildlife and timber trafficking in the EU

One of the UNITE project activities is to undertake analysis on financial crimes linked to wildlife and timber trafficking in the EU to highlight trends and patterns to date, financial typology of wildlife/forest crime cases and to share best practices. The objective is for law enforcers and financial institutions to better understand the payment mechanisms, financial flows and money laundering methods associated with illegal wildlife/timber trade involving the EU. The report should fill gaps in knowledge from investigators, prosecutors and financial institutions to help them better address the issue.

The report will build on the [Case Digest](#) report from TRAFFIC on Financial Flows and Payment Mechanisms Behind Wildlife Crime. This report analysed 40 case studies from Africa, Asia and Latin America. Under the UNITE project, the new report will focus on European case studies, to complement the analyses undertaken in the Case Digest report where Europe was not a focal region.

Role and responsibilities of the consultancy

The TRAFFIC department at WWF Belgium is looking for consultancy support to develop the above mentioned report on financial crime related to wildlife and timber trafficking in the EU. Under the supervision of WWF Belgium/TRAFFIC staff, the consultant will be expected to:

Lead and develop the report, which includes:

- Refining the methodology and scoping of the report provided by TRAFFIC/WWF;
- Analysing wildlife and timber trafficking cases in the EU, where a financial investigation was conducted, and judicial charges associated. The cases will be collected via WWF/TRAFFIC's contacts;
- Highlighting in particular modus operandi, money flows, common payment methods, high-risk entities and industries for money-laundering and other financial crimes linked to illegal wildlife/timber trade (IWT);
- Sharing best practices identified in financial investigations and prosecutions;
- Interviewing key contacts from investigation units, prosecutors, banks, etc. (provided by TRAFFIC/WWF) to support the analyses;



- Undertaking background research and literature review;
- Reviewing archives of court cases;
- Writing the report.

Consultancy Profile

- At least Masters degree in relevant field
- Relevant professional experience in research and analysis related to financial crime, organised crime and environmental crime;
- Proven experience in analytical report writing;
- Experience working with law enforcement agencies, prosecution, or financial sector.
- Excellent writing skills in English, with clear, concise and analytical writing; knowledge of another EU language is an advantage;
- Knowledge of EU legislation related to money laundering, asset recovery and/or environmental crime is an advantage;
- Good communication and interpersonal skills.

Timeframe and budget

The work should start the earliest possible and be finalised by February 2023.

The maximum budget for this work is up to 45 000€ including VAT. Best value for money will be looked at.

Location: Consultant(s) are expected to work remotely from their home location.

Application

- A cover letter
- Maximum 3 pages of conceptual approach to conduct the deliverable including time planning and a budget estimate
- A detailed CV
- Example of relevant work done during previous similar assignment

Please send your application to Emilie Van der Henst, Senior Manager at WWF Belgium/TRAFFIC. emilie.vanderhenst@wwf.be, phone number: +32 485 33 27 59.

Tender procedure

WWF Belgium/TRAFFIC follow an open tender procedure.

The evaluation grid is as follow:

Competencies of consultant	Score
Experience in research and analysis in relevant field	/20
Experience leading analytical report development	/20
Experience working with law enforcement, prosecution and/or financial institutions	/10
Expertise in EU regulations	/5
Relevance of CV	/5
Language skills	/5



Quality of the proposal	
Relevance to the call for tender objectives	/10
Quality of the approach	/20
Budget efficiency	/10

Selection process

- Deadline to apply: 11 May 2022
- Interviews with selected candidates: Week of 16 May
- Final selection phase: by 20 May

