

CASE STUDY

Lao PDR

Civil society supports Lao authorities with intelligence information on trafficking of wildlife that helped to rescue endangered species and enforce action against offenders

2019

Partners against Wildlife Crime

@CTW

Abstract

The project aims to disrupt illicit supply chains of wildlife from source to market by leveraging civil society partnership to increase the effectiveness of Government action. To achieve this objective, the work in Lao PDR focusses on increasing the effectiveness of law enforcement and private sector responses to wildlife trafficking occurring in and through the country. The project seeks to increase public reporting of wildlife crimes through an accessible hotline and information reporting system, and enables the mandated law enforcement agencies to better respond to wildlife crime cases through technical guidance and support from civil society.

Context

In recent years, and despite increased efforts by the Government of Lao PDR to implement its CITES obligations and commitments to address illegal wildlife trade, governmental responses to combat wildlife trafficking have been continuously hindered by insufficient capacity, lack of information and weak coordination among law enforcement agencies, and with those of neighboring countries. Lao PDR, as it shares borders with Thailand, Viet Nam and China, has been identified as an important source, transit and destination country for wildlife trafficking – with a growing ivory and wildlife market for transiting Chinese consumers and travelers, and increasing reports of tigers and other wildlife being trafficked to Viet Nam from and through Lao PDR.

EU-funded project tackles wildlife trafficking

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Ministry orders registration of social media news platforms

Authorities have told the administrators of social media news platforms to register their accounts, or they could face legal action.

The warning comes after many unregistered digital news platforms have circulated fake news and disinformation on social media, which seriously confused people and on several occasions caused public panic.

The Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism last week issued an announcement requiring administrators to register their accounts with the ministry's Media Department.

Individuals who have personal accounts which they use to post news about their activities are not required to register, Director General of the Mass Media Department Mr. Praphanphana Phanlanthany said.

Anyone who sets up an account as a news platform that provides information to the public must register.

"Any party creating a news platform on social media must register. If they fail to do so, we will partner with the relevant sectors on the next step to regulate the issue in accordance with the law."

Mr. Praphanphana said the main purpose of the regulation is to ensure the quality and quantity of information and news provided to the public.

The latest case in point is the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation and the Ministry of Energy and Coal Industry of Laos in cooperation in shaping the legal basis of nuclear energy training and skills development in Laos during the 15th Session of the Cooperation between the Russian Federation and Laos.

Both sides welcomed the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the State Atomic Energy Corporation "Rosatom" of the Russian Federation and the Ministry of Energy and Coal Industry of Laos on cooperation in shaping the legal basis of nuclear energy training and skills development in Laos during the 15th Session of the Cooperation between the Russian Federation and Laos.

The MOU is a landmark agreement in the history of bilateral relations between the two countries. It provides a legal basis for the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed in September 2017 in Moscow.

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Lao media coverage of the EU Action launch event @WCS

Ministry orders... FROM PAGE 1

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Objectives

- 1** TO INCREASE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT RESPONSES TO WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING IN LAO PDR.
- 2** TO PROMOTE TRANS-BOUNDARY COOPERATION IN TACKLING ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE BETWEEN LAO PDR AND NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES.



@WCS



Mr. Khamhu Mukdara, Head of Champassak Forest Inspection

Results

- 1** **105 INFORMATION/INTELLIGENCE REPORTS** received from key informants and investigation trips to wildlife trade 'hotspots', of which 45 shared with law enforcement agencies, and 12 of them resulting in enforcement cases and actions including seizure, arrest and prosecution.
- 2 COOPERATIVE ACTIONS** to coordinate CWT enforcement between Lao PDR and Viet Nam's mandated agencies well underway through a series of political dialogues and technical exchanges.



Bilateral meeting btw. Lao's Dpt. of Forest Inspection and Viet Nam's Forest Protection Dpt. @WCS

Testimonial

Late October, CTW received a tip-off on its Facebook hotline page about a Red-shanked langur, an endangered and legally protected species, being kept for trade in a village in Champassak province. The information was verified and corroborated by WCS through a Vietnamese key informant. In liaison with the Department of Forest Inspection at central level, the Provincial Office for Forest Inspection (POFI) got alerted. With technical assistance in handling the case from CTW and WCS, provincial officers moved in and confiscated the langur, while a no-re-offense warning was issued to the offender. Mr Khamhu Mukdara, the Head of Champassak POFI, said: *"On behalf of the Provincial Forest Inspection, I wish to express my deep gratitude and appreciation to the European Union, WCS and CTW for the support and assistance in the rescue of this infant langur in Paksong district. In the future, we hope that Champassak Forest Inspection will continue to receive technical assistance and implementation support to combat illegal wildlife trade in our province"*. Upon completion of all paperwork, the young female individual, named "Princess" was handed over to CTW and brought back to the LCTW Wildlife Rescue Centre in Ban Keun, Vientiane Province She is now thriving there alongside a similarly aged Indochinese grey langur named "Frida".



The Law Enforcement Coordination Conference @WCS

