



REDUCING WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING IN AVIATION

Opportunities to improve awareness, detection and collaboration
among aviation internal and external stakeholders



The USAID Reducing Opportunities for Unlawful Transport of Endangered Species (ROUTES) Partnership brings together transport and logistics companies, government agencies, development groups, law enforcement, conservation organizations, academia and donors to disrupt wildlife trafficking activities, and forms a key element of the concerted international response to addressing wildlife poaching and associated criminal activities worldwide. The ROUTES Partnership supports the transport sector by providing targeted data analytics, empowering personnel with the necessary tools and information to be a part of the solution, raising awareness, and ultimately embedding wildlife trafficking solutions within existing company policies.

As part of this partnership, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) has been working with the World Customs Organization (WCO) with the support from Airports Council International (ACI) to carry out a series of assessments at specific international airports from 2016-2019. Eight assessments took place in key regions, including Africa, the Middle East, and South East Asia, which serve as source, transit and/or destination regions for the illegal wildlife trade (IWT). Airports Council International participated in the final assessment only. The objective of these assessments was to “Measure whether there is appropriate awareness and procedures in place to mitigate against acts of illegal wildlife smuggling”. The results of the assessments attempt to identify areas for improvement, including how improvements could be achieved either through local activities or with specific assistance from the ROUTES Partnership.

The assessments and subsequent documented observations identified a number of opportunities applicable to other airports. These opportunities demonstrate the effectiveness of specific policies, procedures, and operations with a focus on IWT. The identified practices have been collated within this document with the aim of providing support to private and public sector stakeholders in designing and implementing actions to reduce wildlife trafficking at airports.

This document is intended for use by Customs and enforcement agencies, private sector, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations who regulate, operate or coordinate in the aviation sector.

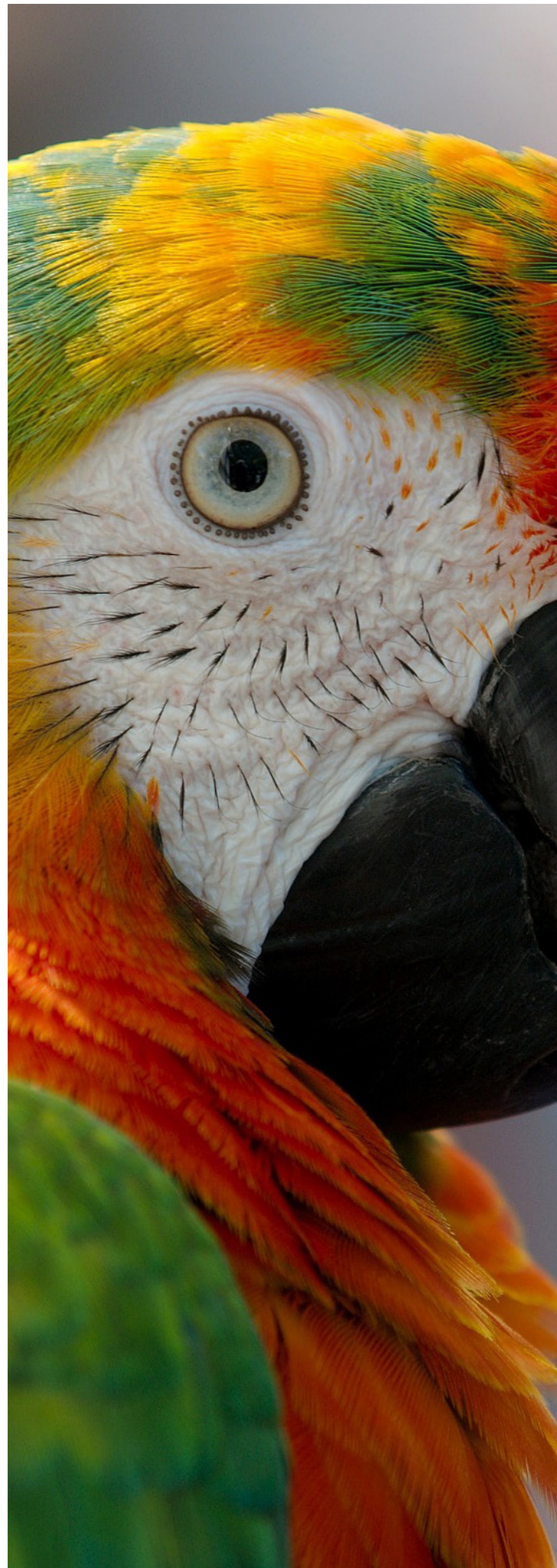


The recommendations are arranged under the following categories:

1. Organizational Commitment
2. Awareness
3. Human Resources
4. Coordination and Cooperation
5. Intelligence and Risk Management
6. Technology
7. Identification
8. Investigations and Consequence Phase

Each recommendation is marked with the following symbols to illustrate its intended audience:



- § – Customs and enforcement agencies
- ‡ – Private sector
- × – Intergovernmental organizations
- – Nongovernmental organizations



ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

Implementing measures to prevent IWT requires a demonstration of commitment at the highest level, in order to create a supporting environment for staff to allocate resources to the issue and take action.

Audience	Opportunities	Description	Additional Information
§	Government's Political Commitment	Include IWT as a secondary priority, after security, together with drug smuggling/ revenue collection, human trafficking, particularly in high-risk countries.	Priority statements issued by heads of agencies will raise the IWT profile.
§, †, x, □	Senior Management's Support	Ensure senior management's buy-in for the combat against IWT and the prioritization of this issue.	Brief high-level managers on the issue to get senior management's buy-in
§ †	Zero Tolerance	Develop a strict policy for staff involved in IWT cases, potentially including the immediate suspension of aviation staff under prosecution until the finalization of the case	Implement a zero-tolerance policy. Conduct a review of any aviation staff currently under prosecution for immediate suspension.
§, †	Facilities	Ensure specific facilities are available for the temporary care of seized live animals in accordance with international recommendations	Assess the feasibility to consider wildlife trafficking-related facilities in the planning and development of site expansion and renovation



Illegal Wildlife Trade
Help 

| Introduction

IATA is committed to helping combat the illegal wildlife trade and supporting its member airlines in doing so too.

Global connectivity built by the aviation industry is being exploited by wildlife traffickers. The illegal trade of wildlife, including many iconic and endangered species, is an issue which the aviation industry takes very seriously. However, through coordinated action with our industry partners and assisting the proper authorities we can help to end this dreadful trade.

Thank you for taking this course and demonstrating your commitment to learn how you can help combat wildlife trafficking.



02 of 25

AWARENESS

The value of well-informed stakeholders is critical in the battle against IWT. Knowledge is a powerful weapon which can equip individuals with heightened recognition of threat, indicators, and methodologies which can in turn lead to greater identification and interception of IWT.

Audience	Opportunities	Description	Additional Information
§, ‡	IWT Signage	Placement of wildlife trafficking awareness messaging and signage in specific and targeted public areas, such as passenger departure, transit and arrival areas, that highlight the consequences of IWT.	Adapt existing ROUTES awareness materials, including posters, factsheets, videos and other printed material, with airport branding for placement. ROUTES resources are available online . Additional information may be found through IATA , ACI and the WCO .
§	Publicity	Communicate and publicize the results of cases to the wider airport stakeholder community and the public.	Inform the relevant stakeholders to disseminate the information as appropriate.
‡	Leverage Media Products	Develop concise articles on IWT to be placed in airline magazines. Produce IWT videos to be played on airplane entertainment systems.	Utilize IWT reports and other available material produced by ROUTES analysis of wildlife seizures in the air transport sector as well as in the WCO Illicit Trade Report to draft articles. Use social media toolkits to highlight the issue during international days of interest.
§, x	Develop and Maintain IWT Database	Develop and maintain a centralized record of all IWT related cases at the airport, including actions taken, in accordance with local and national information sharing rules. Ensure that all airport stakeholders are informed about the initiation and conclusion of each case.	Cooperate among law enforcement agencies to document all IWT cases to date. Share these with relevant stakeholders, in accordance with local and national information sharing rules, as a baseline briefing to be followed up once actions taken have been updated and a long-term mechanism for storing and sharing this data is developed.



South African Airways IWT awareness poster 2017 © Kayleigh Ghiot

HUMAN RESOURCES

HR departments provide existing resources, protocols and staff evaluation mechanisms which can be leveraged to address IWT. It is important to recognize that the private sector operators at airports (e.g. cargo warehouses, airline or airport staff) can play a critical role in the fight against IWT, particularly when provided with proper training and support to identify and report wildlife trafficking.

Audience	Opportunities	Description	Additional Information
‡, §	Awareness Training for Staff	Identify awareness and role-specific training needs for staffs working at the airport on wildlife trafficking, especially on signs of suspicious behaviour and the ways to report it to relevant authorities. Additional trainings for passenger-facing staffs, such as cabin crews, check-in staffs, may be considered. Ideally, this training may be delivered by experts from the appropriate authority with the mandate to oversee IWT-related issues, as well as by private sector experts as appropriate. More law enforcement focussed training should be provided to officers (such as Customs) to maximize their effectiveness. Finally, provide Risk Management training on non-fiscal and IWT matters.	Utilize existing ROUTES IWT training and awareness material to incorporate into training curricula. Utilize training material produced by the CITES Secretariat to assist CITES Management Authorities in providing training on CITES and the CITES Identification Manual. Utilize WCO technical assistance capabilities for Customs. Develop or incorporate a risk management IWT chapter or module into existing training platforms and programs.
§, ‡	Reporting Hotline	Evaluate the potential to incorporate or establish an anonymous reporting system to encourage staff to report IWT-related suspicious behaviors. Any such hotline or mechanism must be reinforced through awareness raising. IWT is often controlled by organized crime syndicates with the power to intimidate and harm those who attempt to intervene. This leads to a culture of non-reporting for fear of serious repercussions.	Review existing reporting systems for other illicit activity and assess the feasibility to incorporate IWT into that system or establish a new system for reporting.
§, ‡	Whistle-Blower* Protection	Develop whistle blower protection policies and anonymous reporting procedures that apply to IWT reporting.	Review existing HR policies and whistle blower protection procedures. Provide secure, anonymous reporting for employees or third party suppliers who may otherwise be fearful of reprisals.
§, ‡	Reward System	Encourage aviation stakeholders to establish a formal program to recognize the efforts made by their own staff in relation to IWT. Consideration should be given to a reward-based system for those individuals who report cases of IWT, while recognizing that some individuals would like to remain protected by whistle blower policies.	Cooperate among law enforcement agencies to document all IWT cases to date. Share these with relevant stakeholders, in accordance with local and national information sharing rules, as a baseline briefing to be followed up once actions taken have been updated and a long-term mechanism for storing and sharing this data is developed.

*Individual who, without authorization, reveals private or classified information about an organization, usually related to wrongdoing or misconduct.

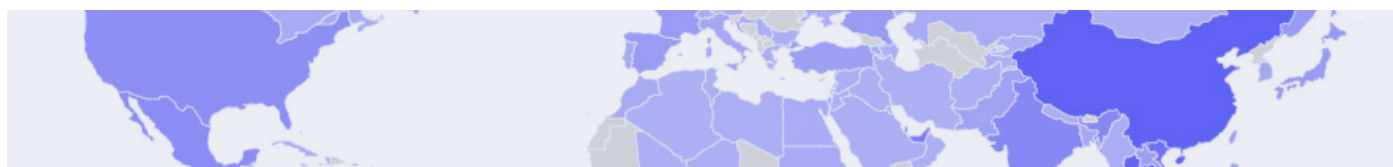


Airports Council International (ACI) Developing Nations Assistance IWT training for Latin America and the Caribbean 2018 © Hallie Sacks

COORDINATION AND COOPERATION

For an effective response to IWT it is critical to maximize levels of coordination and cooperation between stakeholders operating in the aviation sector, both internally and externally to specific airport locations.

Audience	Opportunities	Description	Additional Information
§, ‡	IWT Agenda and Inclusive Coordination	Ensure IWT is a standing agenda item in airport operation and enforcement meetings. Ensure private sector operators are represented in meetings discussing IWT with enforcement agencies.	Use up-to-date seizure information, such as from the ROUTES Dashboard , to maintain relevance of the topic. Relevant private sector personnel such as security & terminal operations managers may need to be vetted and cleared by law enforcement agencies for such discussions.
§, ‡, x, □	Partnership	Build firm collaborative partnerships between public sector agencies and the private sector.	Existing mechanisms such as secure supply chain programs (Regulated Agent, Known Consignor, Authorized Economic Operator) can provide a firm basis for such partnerships. The WCO provides Customs-Business Partnership Guidance .
§, ‡	CITES Teams / IWT Taskforce	Enforcement agencies to allocate a specific team responsible for the identification of CITES species inside the airport which can serve as the focal point for quick interventions related to wildlife trafficking (e.g. collect evidence, contact relevant authorities, ensure the safety and security of the material apprehended, etc.). The team/taskforce should be comprised of relevant law enforcement authorities, and other public and private stakeholders as appropriate. This can remove the typical silo challenges (i.e. information sharing) which often hinder effective coordination.	Select a pilot team to receive ROUTES IWT awareness training . Utilize training material produced by the CITES Secretariat to assist CITES Management Authorities in providing training on CITES and the CITES Identification Manual. Incorporate information from IATA's Safe Handling of Escaped Animals in the Cabin: Best Practice guide . Utilize supplemental identification guides available through CITES and quick reference databases such as Species+ and CITES Checklist . Establish a port-specific protocol for IWT response for the pilot team to implement.
§	Fellowship	Develop linkages with the law enforcement agencies in other countries connected by the airport and, if possible, consider an interagency exchange program benefiting the staff of the enforcement agencies operating at each airport.	Customs Mutual Assistance Agreement (CMAA) provides the legal basis for this level of information exchange.
§, ‡, x, □	Action Plan	Develop an IWT strategy and action plan for the airport, to be adopted by all stakeholders.	ROUTES Industry Guidance and Airport Case Studies are available online to help guide the design and implementation of action plans at airports.
§	Interagency Reporting	Implement a system for reporting incidents, in accordance with local and national information sharing rules, between agencies when a consignment containing wildlife or wildlife products is refused shipment.	Ideally an electronic system with shared access will provide a seamless report sharing process, but alternative low-tech methods such as establishing an email cascade notification process can yield the same positive results.
§	Alignment	Align IWT strategies and actions amongst enforcement agencies.	While legislative and jurisdictional powers can be a challenge in achieving alignment, joint development of IWT specific SOPs by relevant enforcement agencies can minimize gaps.



INTELLIGENCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Utilization of available intelligence (both open source and restricted (as appropriate) information on IWT trends, etc.) to drive risk forecasting within organizations allows for efficiency gains in terms of responding to IWT.

Audience	Opportunities	Description	Additional Information
§, x	Information Sharing	Develop a systematic and formal approach to information sharing including cross-agency cooperation and if possible, a shared electronic system to ensure the protection of sensitive, risk related information or nominal data.	WCO ENVIRONET is a global tool for real-time communication of information related to environmental protection, to enhance information sharing and cooperation between Customs and other agencies internationally.
§, †, x, □	Reporting	Key personnel from aviation stakeholders should be identified and reporting protocols should be established to enable the sharing of non-sensitive information between appropriate stakeholders that can support efforts to combat IWT.	Inform relevant heads to disseminate to their relevant staff as appropriate.
§	Feedback	Implement a procedure to provide feedback about the conclusion of IWT cases to relevant stakeholders who made the initial detection.	Close the information loop by informing official security heads of relevant stakeholders to influence necessary policy and procedural changes.
§	Leverage International Tools for Information Exchange	Promote the use of WCO ENVIRONET for information exchange at the international level.	WCO ENVIRONET is a global tool for real-time communication of information related to environmental protection, to enhance information sharing and cooperation between Customs and other agencies internationally.



Seized ivory. Department of National Parks, Bangkok. © Ola Jennersten / WWF-Sweden

TECHNOLOGY

Significant technological solutions currently exist, and are being developed, and when applied appropriately can serve to support the identification of and response to IWT.

Audience	Opportunities	Description	Additional Information
§	DNA	The use of species DNA identification can significantly assist the fight against IWT by providing law enforcement authorities with critical information to improve the focus of operations, investigations, and prosecutions.	South Africa's Rhino DNA Index System (RhODIS) is a database of unique DNA profiles for individual rhinos.
‡	Electronic Data Exchange	Review the use of SITATEX cargo clearance system in warehouses to assess if there is sufficient commonality to utilize a combined system. Extend the SITATEX system to include electronic exchange of information with ramp and ground handlers.	SITATEX is an online mail system, designed for airlines, airports and other related businesses, which enables access to communications through any computer.
§, ‡	Maximize Current Systems	Explore opportunities for how current technology can be leveraged for IWT detection purposes (e.g. machine learning algorithms, remote image processing etc.).	Contact your technology representatives for more information.
§	e-CITES	Expand the use of e-CITES certificates.	e-CITES permits and automated trade procedures support government agencies to build risk profiles for IWT and better target inspections.



Customs officials scan a case of smuggled elephant ivory in Bangkok, Thailand © WWF / James Morgan

IDENTIFICATION

The ability to identify commonly trafficked species and their products is paramount in the fight against IWT. Identification knowledge may be limited to technical staff; therefore, building links with stakeholders able to identify species (e.g. CITES MA) is advisable. However, to enable staff to be confident in a first response situation, access to identification manuals or resources could increase the potential to address IWT. Alternatively, detection dogs can be a very effective tool for identifying selected illegal wildlife goods: canines which are imprinted specifically for IWT products have demonstrated positive results in the field and have led to many successful IWT seizures.

Audience	Opportunities	Description	Additional Information
§, ‡	WildScan App	Disseminate the use of Wildscan as a tool to detect and identify illegal wildlife smuggling.	The WildScan app contains a library of commonly smuggled species as well as other key information to support identification, response and reporting of IWT, and is available for free download in four languages.
§	IWT Imprinted Detector Dogs	Utilize a Detector Dog Unit expert to assess levels of competency, operational readiness, and logistical requirements for establishment or expansion of dog detection units.	As with any detection dog program it is important that an adequate number of teams (dog and handler) are available to work effectively and can support peak time operations. Consideration should be given to third party canine providers.



A Kenyan Wildlife Service (KWS) ranger with a trained sniffer dog © Juozas Cernius / WWF-UK

INVESTIGATIONS AND CONSEQUENCE PHASE

It is important to develop a culture and understanding of appropriate reactions to IWT situations so as not to negatively affect potential investigations.

Audience	Opportunities	Description	Additional Information
§	Joint SOPs	Develop SOPs with the judiciary and other enforcement agencies in order to secure the crime scene at the airport and ensure the respect of the chain of custody on cases related to IWT.	The WCO Compendium of Customs Operational Practices for Enforcement and Seizures (COPES) is a collaboratively developed platform providing examples of good practice in enforcement and seizures and other procedures.
§	IWT Prosecutor	In countries/locations where IWT-related crimes are frequent, it could be extremely useful to have a dedicated prosecutor/prosecutor office to handle IWT cases and to ensure consistency and effectiveness of the procedures.	Ideally, a well-equipped prosecutor/prosecutor office can provide training to law enforcement officers on proper IWT crime scene preservation and evidence handling. Such practices result in more successful prosecutions of IWT criminal cases.



The government prosecutor in Oyem, Gabon discusses upcoming trials regarding illegal ivory trade © WWF / James Morgan



Reducing Opportunities for Unlawful Transport of Endangered Species

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