The need for Transformative Change

Overexploitation of organisms
one of the five main causes of biodiversity loss

Percentage of assessed species that are classified as threatened with extinction
Source: IUCN, 2019

Elephant
- 96.7% to 400,000 over the last century

Rhino
- 5,000 black rhinos in Africa
- 65-68 Javan and 40-78 Sumatran rhinos in Indonesia

Pangolin
- 1,000,000 poached in a decade

Vaquita
- 12 left collateral damage from illegal trade in the critically endangered Totoaba

Snow Leopard
- 3,000-7,000 left between 220-450 poached annually for traditional medicine and skins

Lion
- 14% Currently occupies just 8% of its historic range

Cheetah
- 6,600 left currently occupies just 10% of its historic range in Africa

Ploughshare Tortoise
- 200 left critically endangered and illegally sold as a ‘luxury pet’

SCALE AND NATURE OF WILDLIFE CRIME

Global demand for wildlife products for furniture, fashion, art, decor, cosmetics and perfume, food, medicine and pets, is driving the illegal trade in threatened species.

Unprecedented levels of poaching

At least 500,000 pangolins trafficked between 2016 and 2019 poached for its scales for traditional medicine and meat as a luxury food

Source: IUCN SSC Pangolin Specialist group
Recent Estimates of Selected Transnational Crime Value

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crime</th>
<th>Estimated Annual Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illegal Logging</td>
<td>US$ 51-152 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illegal Fishing</td>
<td>US$ 11-24 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illegal Wildlife Trade</td>
<td>US$ 7-23 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>US$ 69-199 billion</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drugs trafficking</td>
<td>US$ 344 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counterfeit crimes</td>
<td>US$ 288 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human trafficking</td>
<td>US$ 157 billion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** UNEP-Interpol 2016

The value makes environmental crimes the fourth largest crime in the world.

**Loss of state revenue**

Fiscal revenues deprived by wildlife crimes estimated **US$ 7-12 billion** each year.

**Source:** World Bank, 2019

**Intact ecosystems**

are better at absorbing carbon than degrading systems. Illegal trade impacts functioning of ecosystems, including to mitigate climate change.

The World Bank estimates this to be worth **US$1-2 trillion**.

**CITES WAS SET UP TO REGULATE INTERNATIONAL TRADE NOT CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES**

CITES* is an international agreement that aims to ensure the international trade in animals and plants does not threaten their survival – it does not apply to domestic crimes such as poaching and illegal logging.

It penalises but does not criminalise.

---

**Corruption**

The money generated from wildlife crimes can be linked to financing rebel militia, money-laundering, corruption and violence.

**EXAMPLE:**

Impunity for illegal exploitation of natural resources such as rosewood is fuelled by patronage and other forms of corruption.

Investigations exposed the illegal timber trade in The Gambia under former president Yahya Jammeh. In total, US$325.5 million worth of illegal timber went through Gambia’s ports from 2010 to 2016. The former president took advantage of poverty and instability at the border to gain control of illegal rosewood trade in the Casamance region of Senegal.

**Risk to public health**

Wild animals, many of which are traded, are a potential source of zoonotic diseases and thus infections to humans e.g. Ebola, HIV, COVID-19, SARS.

Although the precise source of the COVID-19 outbreak has yet to be determined, it is believed that the world’s most trafficked mammal – the pangolin – served as an intermediate host. With the virus passing from bat to pangolin to human.

---

**The need for TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE**

**On Wildlife Crime**

We need a new global agreement on wildlife crime to fill the serious gaps in the international legal framework for tackling all forms of wildlife crime.

**On Wildlife Trade**

We need to amend existing international wildlife trade laws to include public health and animal health into decision making.

The two reforms are inter-related, as new regulations on the trade in wildlife, including possible new trade bans on health grounds and bans on certain high-risk markets and consumption, will require a scaled up, cooperative global enforcement effort.

---

**CITES**

**INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT**

**The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora**

5,800 animal species

30,000 plant species

are protected by CITES against over-exploitation through international trade.

40% of CITES parties do not have the necessary legislation to meet the requirements of the convention.

nearly 7,000 CITES listed species including mammals, reptiles, corals, birds and fish are found within global illegal wildlife trade.**

---

*The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora*

**Source:** UNODC World Wildlife Crime Report, 2016