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3 February 2020

**MC(20)14**

**TO: MARINE COMMITTEE**

**Copy: All Members and Associate Members (for information)**

**UNITED FOR WILDLIFE TRANSPORT TASKFORCE BULLETIN**

**Action Required: *members are requested to distribute the attached Transport Taskforce Bulletin to their member shipowner companies for their information.***

As members will be aware and further to ICS Circular BOARD(15)44 as a signatory to the declaration on illegal wildlife trafficking ICS will distribute the bulletins produced by United for Wildlife to all members.

The latest Transport taskforce bulletin is self-explanatory and is attached as an annex to this circular for member shipping companies' information.

Chris Oliver  
Nautical Director

Annex A – UNITED FOR WILDLIFE TRANSPORT TASKFORCE BULLETIN

# United for Wildlife TASKFORCE INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

1 February 2020

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*Joint monthly advisory for the United for Wildlife Transport and Financial Taskforces, highlighting recent issues of high concern related to wildlife trafficking. A core output of the Taskforce Information Sharing System.*

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## RISK TRENDS & DRIVERS

*Emerging wildlife trafficking trends and focus areas*

### **Illegal wildlife supply chains in Wuhan, Hubei province, China**

The current international coronavirus public health emergency originated, according to recent media reporting, in the Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market in Wuhan, Hubei province, China. Before being closed in January by Chinese

public health authorities, market vendors sold over a hundred different species of wildlife, including civets, wolf pups, koala, boar, deer, hares, foxes, crocodiles, giant salamanders, peacocks, porcupines, camel, and various types of snakes, rats, bats, bears, and other wildlife. As a so-called 'wet' market, wildlife available at the Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market was primarily sold live, with significant secondary trade also in dead animal parts, skins, meat, scales, and other derivative products. Wildlife is traded similarly throughout Wuhan city and Hubei province, in particular by vendors advertising themselves as pharmacies, traditional Chinese medicine suppliers, wild game dealers, zoos, and wildlife or safari parks.

According to Taskforce analysis of available information, a significant but unknown exact proportion of this market trade appears to be illegal, including in particular:

- Illegal sale of endangered or protected species. Wuhan and Hubei province are documented trafficking locations for pangolin and pangolin scales, elephant ivory, orchids, shark fin, and marine turtles.
- Illegal sale of otherwise legally traded species but which have been illegally sourced, e.g. through poaching and/or trafficking, domestically in China and internationally. In 2019, Hubei authorities reportedly investigated 250 cases of wildlife poaching and trafficking in the province.
- Illegal violations of the terms of commercial trading licenses, especially regarding the volume of wildlife or types of wildlife that can be sold, e.g. vendors using a business license to sell hares, wild boar, and deer to also acquire and sell more exotic species.

Many of the above features observed in wildlife trade in Wuhan and Hubei province are also found in other regions of China and in other countries in Asia.

#### FURTHER READING

- [China temporarily bans wildlife trade in wake of outbreak](#) AP

- [China's omnivorous markets are in the eye of a lethal outbreak once again](#) The New York Times
  - [On the menu at Wuhan virus market: rats and live wolf pups](#) CNA
  - [Inside the horrific, inhumane animal markets behind pandemics like coronavirus](#) Market Watch
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## **Illicit otter trafficking an emerging IWT threat**

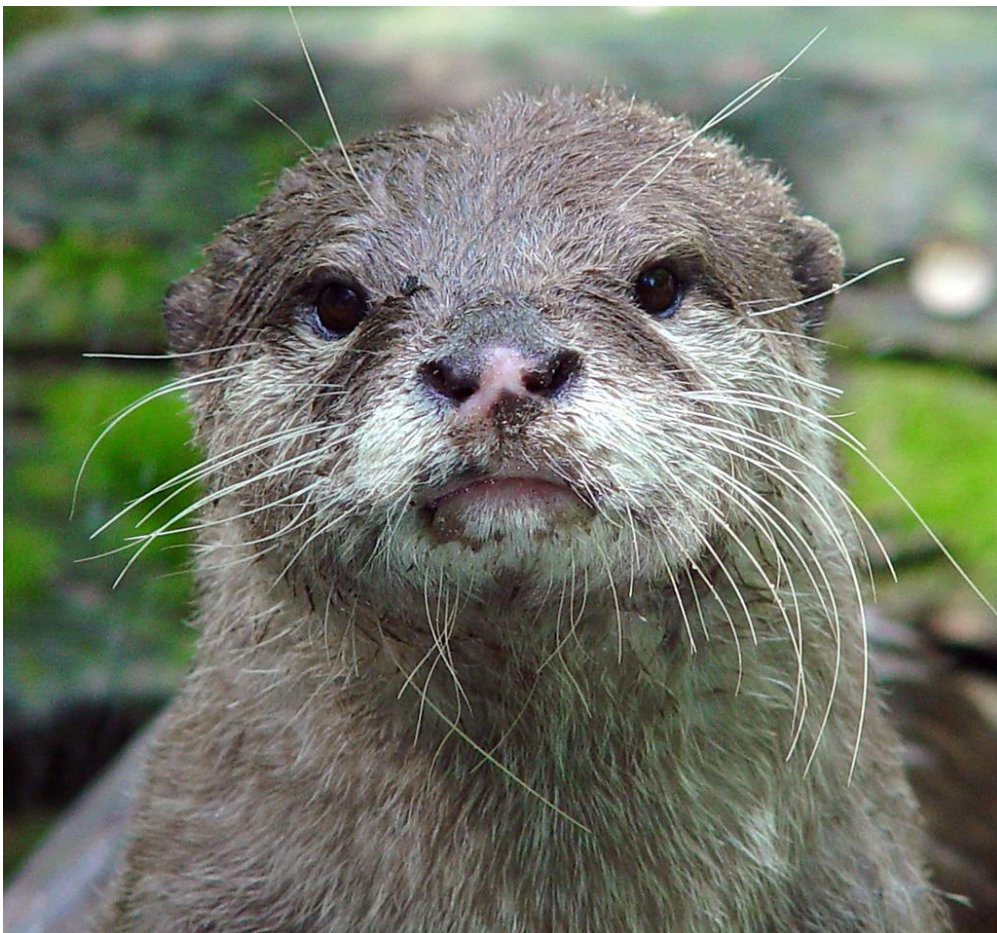
Transnational criminal trafficking of endangered otters, both alive and dead, especially in and via East and Southeast Asia, is a major emerging illegal wildlife trade threat, according to Taskforce assessment of available reporting. The smooth-coated otter (*Lutrogale perspicillata*) and the Asian small-clawed otter (*Aonyx cinereus*) are the most common trafficked species. Commercial trade in both is globally prohibited under CITES Appendix I.

According to reporting, Japan is the most significant demand country for trafficked otters, followed by Indonesia, Thailand, South Korea, and Malaysia. Bangkok is reportedly a key intermediary transit hub, with several organised criminal wholesalers reportedly based there. Otter traffickers reportedly often smuggle otter pelts and live otters alongside other illegal wildlife, especially tiger and leopard, primarily via air cargo and passenger baggage.

Illicit trafficking in otters is largely driven by demand for the mammal's smooth waterproof pelts, and also by the growing social trend in Japan and in Southeast Asia for "otter cafes", where customers can interact and photograph themselves with captured otters. The illicit otter trade is supplied by poachers who reportedly favour killing adult otters and capturing their pups for onward transport and sale. The most recent price data available indicates individual trafficked otters can range from USD 7,200 to USD 14,580 each.

FURTHER READING

- [Illicit trade of Southeast Asian otters via social networking sites on the rise](#) The Japan Times
- [Asian otters gain protection from the pet trade](#) Mongabay
- [Asian otters: Out of the water and into... a café?](#) The Revelator
- [Countries vote to ban trade in endangered otters coveted as pets](#) The Guardian
- [These otters are popular pets in Asia. That may be their undoing.](#) The New York Times
- [Japan's otter and owl cafes are Instagram hotspots, but experts warn of 'a lifetime of cruelty'](#) ABC News
- [Otter alert: illegal trade and booming demand in Japan](#) TRAFFIC report



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# TYPOLOGIES & RED FLAGS

*Key wildlife trafficking red flag risk indicators observed since most recent Bulletin. Presented in draft form and open for discussion and refinement.*

## **Clients – corporates**

*Risk indicators related to corporate and business clients*

**RED FLAG:** Café businesses in Japan, Indonesia, Malaysia, or Thailand with names indicating they are or which advertise being a zoo, animal sanctuary, or offering wildlife experiences or interactions.

**RED FLAG:** Pharmacies or pharmaceutical suppliers in Wuhan city or Hubei province, China, accompanied by secondary indications of dealing in wildlife or wildlife parts.

**RED FLAG:** Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) suppliers in Wuhan city or Hubei province, China.

**RED FLAG:** Wild game dealers or traders in Wuhan city or Hubei province, China.

**RED FLAG:** Zoos or safari parks in Wuhan city or Hubei province, China.

## **Transactions**

*Risk indicators related to transactions and client account activity*

**RED FLAG:** Payment message term: "KAWUSO" (Japanese term for river otter. Japanese text: カワウソ ).

**RED FLAG:** Payment message term: "CIVET LOVER".

**RED FLAG:** Payment message term: "YE WEI", "YEWEI", "WILD TASTE", or "WILD FLAVOUR" (Chinese text: 野味).

## **Commodities and concealments**

*Risk indicators related to smuggling concealments and commodity declarations*

**RED FLAG:** Rhino horn: Air cargo or express parcels originating from South Africa declared to contain plastic sheets or products, especially if combined with vague or incomplete recipient details or contact information on shipping documentation.

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# **MEDIA ROUND-UP**

*Summary of adverse and other media relevant to Taskforce members.*

## **Enforcement outcomes**

- *Canada:* [Convicted bear parts trafficker fined \\$29,120](#). Saskatoon StarPhoenix (see also [Saskatoon woman convicted of trafficking bear parts](#))
- *China:* [Scales from around 50,000 pangolins seized by Chinese customs](#) Mongabay (see also: [Smuggled pangolin scales seized in joint operation](#) China Daily)
- *China / South Africa:* [Local customs seize rhino horn stash](#) Shine.cn (Shanghai Daily)
- *South Africa:* [300 parrot carcasses found rotting at a Joburg captive-breeding facility](#) IOL
- *United States:* [Reno man sentenced for trafficking endangered lion and leopard parts](#) US Department of Justice
- *United States:* [U.S. lumber company found importing high-risk Peruvian timber](#) Mongabay (see also: [The last trees of the Amazon](#) OjoPúblico)



- *Vietnam:* [Vietnam seizes two tonnes of ivory and pangolin scales](#) Al Arabiya

## Transnational environmental crime (TEC)

- *Illegal mining:* [In Indonesia, deadly mercury poisoning isn't enough to stop outlaw gold miners](#) The Independent
- *Illegal mining:* [GameChangers 2019: illegal mining, Latin America's go-to criminal economy](#) Insight Crime

## Convergence

- *Child exploitation:* [Vietnam boats using child labour for illegal fishing](#) The Guardian

## Species

- *Cheetahs:* [Cheetah smuggling out of Ethiopia 'fuelled by exotic pets demand'](#) BBC
- *General:* [Illegal hunting and bushmeat trade threatens biodiversity and wildlife of Angola](#) Phys.org
- *General:* [All the species declared extinct this decade](#) Gizmodo
- *Rosewood:* [New global protection measures for threatened rosewood trees start this week](#) All Africa
- *Timber:* [Two million cubic meters of wood stolen from forests in Bosnia-Herzegovina annually](#) Sarajevo Times
- *Timber:* [Rare trees are disappearing as 'wood pirates' log Bolivian national parks](#) Mongabay
- *Timber:* [Despite foreign aid, Colombia struggles to rein in Amazon deforestation](#) Mongabay

## Responses

- *China:* [Restricting trade in endangered species can backfire, triggering market booms](#) The Conversation

- *China:* [Coronavirus: a wake-up call on illegal wildlife trade?](#) Basel Institute on Governance
- *Colombia:* [Colombia to increase monitoring to curb deforestation, minister says](#) Reuters
- *Malaysia:* [Intelligence unit, lab to combat illegal wildlife trade](#) Borneo Post Online
- *Mozambique:* [Meet the man fighting against poaching in Mozambique](#) (on the 2019 winner of the Prince William Award for Conservation in Africa) The Telegraph
- *Global:* [Deforestation can't be stopped by voluntary action alone](#) World Economic Forum
- *Indonesia:* ['Just like terrorists': Indonesia boosts vigilance for blast fishers](#) Mongabay

### **Demand trends**

- *China:* [China's wénwan drives a deadly mix-and-match of endangered wildlife](#) Mongabay

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## **RESOURCES & UPCOMING EVENTS**

*Events, tools, training and other resources relevant to Taskforce members*

### **Taskforce Kenya Chapter meeting on 5 February in Nairobi**

The newly established joint Kenya chapter of the United for Wildlife Financial and Transport Taskforce will meet in Nairobi on 5 February. This will be the third meeting of the chapter. It will focus on industry-led discussions of Kenya and East Africa-specific wildlife trafficking red flags and typologies, as well as

how to fully integrate IWT intelligence and best practice into compliance, ESG/CSR, legal, and other core business areas.

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## TASKFORCE SUCCESS STORIES

*Success stories and examples of Taskforce collective action*

### **Joint Taskforce Meeting at St James Palace, London**

On 21 January 2020, the Royal Foundation hosted the second joint United for Wildlife Taskforce meeting at St. James's Palace in London.

The Duke of Cambridge (pictured) and Lord William Hague spoke about the Royal Foundation's continued commitment to the work of the Taskforces and our collective fight against global wildlife trafficking. Financial Taskforce Vice Chair David Fein spoke about the specific achievements of Taskforce members and the shared goal to embed counter-IWT measures into members' business-as-usual operations.

Following this, Tim Wittig, Head of Intelligence and Analysis for the UfW Taskforces, set out plans for the future expansion of the Taskforce Information Sharing System. Special Agent David Hubbard, Head of International Law Enforcement Operations at US Fish & Wildlife Service, gave a presentation on Taskforce integration with law enforcement operations.

The event concluded with closing remarks from President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya, who spoke eloquently about the important and urgent work of the Taskforces in the larger context of Kenya's and the world's efforts to stop poaching and wildlife trafficking and support conservation. See [more information](#) about the event.



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## **Financial Taskforce IWT Learning Academy, Johannesburg**

The UfW Financial Taskforce convened an IWT Learning Academy in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 28 January. The Academy brought together over 70 representatives of the financial sector, law enforcement, Financial Intelligence Units, NGOs, and government policy makers in South Africa, Botswana, and other parts of southern Africa.

The three-hour event, generously hosted by South Africa-based Financial Taskforce member Investec, consisted of keynote speeches and panel discussions from South Africa's FIU, law enforcement and wildlife conservation agencies, the heads of compliance and financial investigation departments of Taskforce member companies, and NGOs working with the private sector.

The event was a great success for our regional partners, as it enabled the sharing of regionally specific knowledge and perspectives on the problem of the illegal wildlife trade. It also tackled questions such as why the private sector

(focusing in this case on the financial industry) should care about IWT, and what financial institutions in southern Africa can do from a practical perspective to combat it. This was the fourth in a series of similarly fruitful IWT Academy events around the world.

View [media coverage of the Johannesburg IWT Learning Academy](#) by SABC Digital News.

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### About

United for Wildlife Taskforce Intelligence Bulletins are joint monthly advisories for both Buckingham Palace and Mansion House Declaration Signatories on issues of high concern related to wildlife trafficking and the finance and transport sector, and are a core output of the Taskforce



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## Sharing

United for Wildlife Taskforce Bulletins are for limited distribution within the transport, finance, and law enforcement sectors only and should not be released publicly. We encourage you however to share these Bulletins with colleagues from within the finance and transport industries or law enforcement who may find them useful.

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## Disclaimer

This Bulletin is provided for information purposes only. The Taskforce has high confidence in the analysis and findings presented in this bulletin, and while every attempt has been made to ensure accuracy of this information, no warranty is made on the accuracy or reliability of this information. Any and all company or individual decisions and the consequences of those decisions made based on or informed by this information are the sole responsibility of the persons and organisations making such decisions.

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## Contact

For questions or additional data/analysis relevant to this alert, please reply to this message or contact your UfW Taskforce points of contact, Rob Campbell ([robert.campbell@royalfoundation.com](mailto:robert.campbell@royalfoundation.com)) or Tim Wittig ([timothy.wittig@unitedforwildlife.org](mailto:timothy.wittig@unitedforwildlife.org)).

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