

News story: UK government supports global action to fight illegal wildlife trade

Schemes to combat poaching and protect species like marine turtles and grey parrots from being illegally traded, are among fourteen new projects set to benefit from a UK government fund to combat wildlife criminals around the globe.

Ministers have today marked [Earth Day](#) (22 April) by announcing that the schemes will each receive a share in £4.6 million from the [Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund](#).

The projects set to benefit include:

- [Fauna & Flora International's](#) project for reducing demand for marine turtle products in Nicaragua
- [ZSL's](#) work to disrupt the illegal wildlife trade in grey parrots in Cameroon
- Cracking wildlife smuggling in Madagascar, a project run by the [Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust](#)
- Strengthening anti-poaching techniques and countering wildlife trafficking in Uganda, a project run by [WCS](#)

New education resources for school children around the globe will also be launched on Earth Day. The online packs aim to teach the next generation about the dangers of fuelling the illegal wildlife trade. The UK government has provided £40,000 to create these packs for children in multiple languages. The resources can be viewed and downloaded online at [WWF-UK's](#) and [Tale2Tail's](#) websites.

Environment Minister Thérèse Coffey said:

The illegal wildlife trade is an international tragedy. This serious organised criminal networks do more than just damage wildlife – corruption and illegal activities undermine sustainable development and the rule of law, bringing misery to local communities.

The Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund is backing projects that will tackle the criminals at source and in countries that are destinations for items made from illegally traded plants and animals.

Through the online education packs, we will make sure that younger generations understand the importance of not fuelling demand for products made from illegally traded wildlife. This will provide a strong legacy from last year's Illegal Wildlife Trade conference

for schoolchildren and teachers around the world.

This is real progress to crack down on environmental crime. Working together, we can end this insidious trade.

Six months since the Duke of Cambridge and world leaders gathered in London for the biggest IWT conference in history, progress has been made at a pace around the world to tackle and end this crime.

In recent weeks, the UK has brought together some of the world's leading specialists to form a consortium which will look at ways of reducing demand and driving behavioural change, to share knowledge and experience and inform further work to dampen demand for illegally traded wildlife and wildlife products.

Defra and the [British Embassy in Hanoi](#), with support from the consortium members, recently held a successful workshop in Vietnam to look at ways to tackle the demand for illegally traded species and products (25 to 26 March 2019).

The workshop brought together local specialists from Vietnam and the wider region, along with Defra's Demand Reduction consortium members and global academics and practitioners, to consider and share experiences on existing approaches to reducing demand for illegal wildlife trade products.

The outputs of the workshop will help inform the approach and scope of new initiatives and innovative projects to reduce demand for illegally traded wildlife and wildlife products. The discussions and outputs of the workshop will also inform other global work.

Further action

But that's not all – other actions from the conference are now well underway too.

Among the achievements so far, the UK government has established a new counter-poaching partnership programme. The first training has been completed and a deployment is underway in Africa.

British diplomatic work has been taking place to support the development of the Ivory Alliance 2024 and the [British Embassy Bangkok](#) has run a campaign called: '[Elephants are like us](#)'. This work is promoting the UK as a global leader on the issue of IWT and helping to close ivory markets and reduce pressure on elephant populations.

The [WILDLABS Tech Hub](#) was formed at the London conference to harness the power of technology, data-sharing and machine-learning to combat wildlife crime. The Tech Hub has completed an open-call for conservation technology developers and data providers to join the project. An impressive 37 developers applied. Projects selected from these applicants will participate in a three-month programme, receiving support from Digital Catapult, Satellite Applications Catapult, Amazon Web Services, Microsoft, [the FCO](#), the

[Open Data Institute](#), as well as seven international conservation organisations.

And next month, a review meeting on how countries are tackling the global illegal wildlife trade will take place at the [Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species Conference of the Parties](#) in Sri Lanka.

Mark Field, Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific, said:

Six months ago we hosted the London Illegal Wildlife Trade Conference and I'm hugely encouraged by the progress that's been made so far. The UK is committed to finding new ways to combat this illicit trade through a coordinated, global response and stamping out demand for illegal wildlife products is a crucial part of this.

Additional funding

With support from the [Department for International Development](#) (DFID), Defra has invested a total of £23 million in the IWT Challenge Fund.

DFID pledged an extra £6 million of UK aid for the Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund before the start of the IWT conference in 2018 and further rounds for funding applications will be opened shortly for projects to bid.

Harriett Baldwin, Minister for State for International Development, said:

The Illegal Wildlife Trade conference provided renewed impetus for all of the delegates and nations attending last year. This despicable trade in endangered wildlife and plants also destroys the livelihoods of some of the world's poorest people, robbing communities of the great economic benefits of wildlife, including tourism.

UK aid will be giving life to projects whose aim is to protect these species and secure the futures for people living alongside wildlife.

This is a win for those communities and a win for animal lovers across the world. None of us want to see these majestic animals dying out.

Reducing demand for illegal wildlife products is critical to stopping the illegal wildlife trade. As long as the demand for these goods persists, criminals will seek new ways to circumvent anti-trafficking and anti-poaching enforcement efforts, and the threat to wildlife populations worldwide will continue.

Promising consortium outcomes

The UK is encouraging a global shift in our approach to demand reduction interventions to ensure that they are properly evidenced, impacts are measured and evaluated, and results and best practice are shared. The UK is also keen to see an increase in interventions that have a strong basis in behaviour change science.

That is why the UK established a consortium of demand reduction and behaviour change specialists to develop recommendations on approach and scope of future illegal wildlife trade demand reduction initiatives.

The consortium helped Defra deliver a workshop that focused on exploring the following existing approaches to reducing demand: environmental education, social marketing, social and behavioural change communication, and behavioural economics.

Attendees considered when these approaches might be best utilised in demand reduction interventions, how interventions using these approaches might be designed, implemented and evaluated to 'good standards', and who needs to be involved to ensure interventions are successful.

Naomi Doak, Head of Conservation Programmes for [The Royal Foundation](#), said:

Looking at how the conservation sector approaches behaviour change for illegal wildlife products is crucial if we are to improve our efforts.

The workshop provided a crucial space for those discussions and how we build on previous actions.

Dr Vuong Tien Manh, from Vietnam CITES, said:

We appreciate the support from the UK government and international organisations to help tackle the Illegal Wildlife Trade.

Although good work has been done in this area, there is still demand in some parts of Vietnam. Interventions need to be based on scientific research. Vietnam is contributing to global action on IWT but there is a need to do more.

The consortium currently consists of [Oxford Martin School](#), [TRAFFIC](#), [Wildlife Conservation Society \(WCS\)](#), [United for Wildlife \(The Royal Foundation\)](#), [UN Environment Programme](#) and [USAID](#).

Education packs

WWF-UK has produced two packs aimed at primary (KS2) and secondary (KS3) school students. These will be available from today for schools to register

to access from the [WWF-UK website](#).

Tale2Tail has produced a separate and beautifully illustrated pack which is also accessible online and provides teaching notes and lesson plans to help teachers in the classroom. There are illustrations of animals in their pack from Axel Scheffler, the illustrator behind the Gruffalo; and photography from world-renowned photographer David Yarrow. The images bring the story telling alive for young people. Download the pack here:

<http://www.tale2tail.org>.

Background

WWF-UK education pack:

WWF-UK, in partnership with DEFRA, is today launching two new resources for schools focusing on raising awareness of the illegal wildlife trade – what it is, and the part we can play as individuals to tackle it.

Illegal Wildlife Trade Detectives (KS2) and Illegal Wildlife Trade: Investigations (KS3) are now available to teachers and include activities that can be delivered through different subject areas or as part of a themed week on sustainability.

Activities include an interactive quiz, photo cards and a map showing species at risk from the illegal wildlife trade. Together, these activities combine to create an engaging resource to inspire school communities to take action to help protect nature and wildlife, both locally and globally.

Schools are encouraged to register on [the WWF-UK website](#) to access this new, free classroom resource.

Tale2Tail education pack:

Tale2Tail, a charity which uses storytelling, art, photography and creative materials to educate children about saving wildlife, has produced this beautiful education pack, with over 20 hours of illustrated lesson plans, including a play, to raise awareness of the trade in Illegal wildlife and build a worldwide child wildlife ambassador network.

The pack includes stunning photography and illustrations by renowned wildlife photographer David Yarrow and the illustrator behind 'The Gruffalo,' Axel Scheffler.

By helping children understand and find their voice on this global issue, Tale2tail aims to change behaviour around the buying and selling of elephant ivory, rhino horn, pangolin scales, cheetah cubs and other endangered wildlife. The charity wants today's children to be the generation that takes the lead to ensure the survival of wildlife.

Kate Studholme, CEO of Tale2Tail said:

We need to ensure elephant and rhino don't become the 21st

century's unicorn, only to be found on the pages of a book, so we have created an original and beautifully illustrated education pack to raise children's understanding and awareness of illegal wildlife trade. With over 20 hours of lesson plans, including a play, it will engage children across the UK and international curriculum. By helping children find their voice on this crucial issue, Tale2Tail aims to change behaviour around the buying and selling of endangered wildlife.

The charity is looking for support in both finding channels to further distribute their educational materials in the UK and globally, and to reach influential readers in a number of countries worldwide.

The [Tale2Tail education pack can be downloaded on their website](#).

London Declaration 2018

The London Declaration 2018 committed the UK to investing more than £36 million between 2014 and 2021 to take action to counter IWT, including work to reduce demand, strengthen enforcement, ensure effective legal frameworks and develop sustainable livelihoods.

The [full text of the London Declaration 2018](#) is available online.