

# Future Direction of United for Wildlife Taskforces



The United for Wildlife Taskforces have been operational for 3 years, with Transport launching in 2016 and Financial in October 2018. The role of the Taskforces have developed, having previously been focused on convening the key organisations and partners who can assist in combatting the trafficking of illegal wildlife products from source to destination, and the financial flows associated with it.

The Royal Foundation (TRF) have conducted an analysis of the strategic and operational opportunities available to the Taskforces. This comes at a pivotal time: a platform for impact has been built with 150+ Taskforce members convened; next, we need to realise the potential impact by having all members actively identify and refer suspected IWT, and support financial intelligence units (FIUs) and law enforcement agencies (LEAs) to build investigations. The effort to embed best practice will be supported by the Secretariat for a timebound 3 year "push" to meet specific targets.

## Challenge

- For too long the illegal wildlife trade ("IWT") has been ignored as a significant crime and has been addressed solely as a conservation issue. The evidence is clear:
  - 60% of the world's wildlife has been lost in the last 50 years.
  - IWT is a crime, with a human impact, which fuels and is fuelled by organised crime and is enabled by money laundering.
  - IWT is the fourth most profitable criminal trafficking enterprise worldwide and has close links with other forms of organised crime.

## United for Wildlife

- United for Wildlife Taskforces are a network of private, public and third sector partners working individually and co-operatively to reveal, disrupt and prevent illegal wildlife trafficking.

- Our shared ambition is to make it impossible to use private sector infrastructure to facilitate the financing and transportation of IWT products with impunity.
- Over the course of 3 years, two Taskforces focussed on the transport industry and financial services have been established boasting over 150 members. We have a truly global footprint including government bodies, law enforcement and NGOs, have developed a set of red flags for IWT, are contributing to law enforcement cases and have played a key role in raising awareness among external stakeholders of the importance of recognising IWT as a crime.

## 3 year goal

- For IWT to be embedded into business-as-usual operations across all members.
- TRF is committed to redoubling its support to members, and will scale up the Secretariat, including capabilities to deepen the support and influence it can provide to members, and increased capacity to maintain proximity to a growing membership.

## Focus areas

- As a Taskforce, we have given ourselves 3 years to get there, and will focus our action in four areas:

**1. Expand the network of members** – to make sure that the Taskforce represents actors with influence right across the spectrum including in key source, transit and demand markets for IWT.

**2. Develop useful, central resources and expertise** – providing an evolving set of red flags and typologies for IWT, sharing case examples and good practices and joining the dots between members and other key stakeholders.

**3. Embed IWT into training, systems and processes** – so that our members can detect suspicious activity by interrogating transaction data and running typologies, analysing results, and can deliver actionable intelligence to relevant authorities.

**4. Call for greater focus across the ecosystem** – using the special voice of this global group to advocate for an effective end-to-end chain, where FIUs and LEAs are equipped and ready to receive and act on information that the members report.

## Tracking progress

We will track progress towards our 3-year goal and have a clear set of objectives aligned to the focus areas in our plan, including:

### Transport Taskforce

1. Strong membership representation across key shipping lines and freight forwarding.
2. Increased engagement with Customs and LEAs to assist with IWT investigations.
3. Development of innovative systems that help identify suspicious cargo or organisations associated with previous cases of IWT.
4. Regional hubs tying in localised expertise.

### Financial Taskforce

1. Increased representation from retail banks and mobile money providers in Africa, Asia and the Middle East.
2. IWT embedded as a financial crime in members' financial crime compliance programmes.
3. Development of typologies to use in member FIUs' financial crime programmes.
4. Establish regional hubs tying in localised expertise who will take this work beyond 5 years.
5. Increased number of jurisdictions in which FIUs and financial investigators are engaged in wildlife crime investigations.



## Future direction

The first phase United for Wildlife has focused on convening key members and raising awareness of IWT across the board. We can and must build on our achievements to date.

The next 3 years will see a surge in activity and innovation to fight back against IWT, making our work sustainable and part of Business As Usual.