



Demand and Supply Reduction of Ivory, Rhino Horn and Pangolin

Partnership against Wildlife Crime in Africa and Asia

Context

Persistently high demand for wildlife products is one of the main drivers of illegal wildlife trade (IWT). Illegal wildlife products such as ivory, rhino horn and pangolin scales are mainly consumed in China, Vietnam and regional neighbouring states like Thailand and Laos, which also often serve as trafficking countries. While African countries primarily serve as a source region for the mentioned products, consumption has been also on the rise in Africa, influenced by the increasing economic ties between Asia and Africa and the rapidly growing Asian diaspora.

In China and neighbouring countries, ivory and rhino horn have a long-standing tradition as luxury items and status symbols. Pangolin scales, rhino horn and even ivory are also believed to have therapeutic values in traditional Chinese medicine.

The bans of the legal domestic rhino horn and ivory markets in China (in 1993 and 2017 respectively) constituted milestones against IWT but did not put an end to the still existing demand. Domestic pangolin trade is still legal for medicinal and research purposes. Reducing the demand of illegal wildlife products in Asia eventually results in less poaching of elephants, rhinos and pangolins in African range states and thus decreases transcontinental IWT from Africa to Asia. Demand reduction is therefore a crucial component in the multi-level approach of the Partnership against Wildlife Crime.

Project name	Partnership against Wildlife Crime in Africa and Asia
Commissioned by	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) Federal Ministry for the Environment, Climate Action, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMUKN)
Project region	Global with focus on Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia
Duration	10/2021 - 02/2026
Implementing Partners	Relevant Ministries, National Wildlife and Law Enforcement Authorities, CITES Management Authorities, NGOs: TRAFFIC, WCP, WCS, WWF private sector

Our approach

The Partnership aims to reduce the demand and supply through a twin-track approach: First, the project focuses on targeted and tailor-made initiatives to change consumer behaviour. This requires innovative social marketing strategies and interventions, such as engaging social leaders (agents of change) and (social) media as key innovators and influencers for behaviour change. Secondly, the Partnership assists partner countries in developing and improving their strategies and legal frameworks to control the supply and demand of illegal wildlife products. This includes supply reduction through online and physical market monitoring, enhanced law enforcement and awareness raising among resellers.

Changing consumer behaviour

First of all, it is important to understand the motives of consumers of illegal wildlife products to effectively tailor the respective demand reduction strategies. According to consumption research in China and Vietnam, the biggest consumer groups of illegal wildlife products are tourists, business people, and collectors. Purchase incentives include the demonstration of status and wealth, including private or business gifts as well as traditional medicinal purposes. Based on these insights, the Partnership supports the development and up-scaling of strategic tailor-made approaches for behaviour change.

Examples from the field

One tailor-made approach is social behaviour change communication (SBCC). SBCC uses target group-oriented communication to change behaviour by influencing people's attitudes, knowledge, and social norms. The goal is to reach multiple levels of society including opinion and policy makers.

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Market research has identified opinion leaders from politics, economy and media as key innovators for behavior change. As ‘agents of change’ such leaders are crucial actors for demand reduction initiatives that influence a broad audience in China, Vietnam, and the whole region as well as Asian diaspora in Africa.

An exemplary awareness-raising campaign, “Travel Ivory Free” successfully reached a total of 171 million views on multiple social media platforms, educating Chinese travellers about the repercussions of consuming illegal wildlife products. Industry partners as well as social media influencers supported the campaign. Pre- and post-campaign evaluation on social media indicates that consent with the ivory ban and elephant conservation has increased by 33% among the target group. This trend is also reflected in a major study on ivory demand in China showing that regular overseas travelers reached their lowest stated intention to buy ivory since the ban enforcement. Another approach tackles the use of pangolin scales for medicinal purposes in China. While previous campaigns primarily targeted consumers, this particular project aims to engage medical practitioners, encouraging them to no longer prescribe substances containing pangolin scales.



Messages of the campaign “Lao Wildlife Heroes” © GIZ

Collaboration with the Academy of Journalism and Communication in Vietnam is a further approach to raising general awareness of wildlife crime. More than 1200 journalism students have been trained in investigative journalism, reporting skills and on the negative impacts of IWT. A mentoring programme provides hands-on experience to the trained journalists. These measures further contribute to a higher visibility and thus greater public awareness to the negative impacts of wildlife crimes.

COALITION TO END WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING ONLINE

47 company partners across Americas, Asia, Europe and Africa



Members of the Coalition to End Wildlife Trafficking Online (©)

Reducing supply of illegal wildlife products

Furthermore, the curbing of illegal purchasing opportunities on online platforms and physical markets is important. In order to reduce the supply of illegal wildlife products in the Asian focal region, the Partnership supports physical and online market monitoring to generate evidence on IWT and consumer trends. The results provide CITES management authorities and law enforcement agencies with investigative information to prosecute offenders.

Moreover, the project cooperates with the “Coalition to End Wildlife Trafficking Online”. The Coalition is formed by a wide range of leading online companies that have committed themselves to closely monitor and delete any advertisements or offers of illegal wildlife products on their platforms and to actively cooperate with responsible enforcement authorities. As a consequence, the number of illegal online offerings has been significantly reduced. Finally, the Partnership also supports the implementation of the CITES Resolution on Demand Reduction through newly developed guidelines. These guidelines to curb illegal trade in CITES-listed species were accepted at the last Conference of the Parties (CoP 15) in November 2022. Through the guidelines, partner countries are further supported in their efforts to reduce the consumption of illegal wildlife products.

Together, the described measures for demand and supply reduction in Asia form a crucial element in the transcontinental approach of the Partnership against Wildlife Crime.

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