



Partnership against Wildlife Crime (in Africa and Asia)

Cross-sectoral and trans-continental approach along the entire illegal trade chain

Context

Wildlife crime threatens wildlife populations and their habitats and jeopardises the economic basis and security of the affected countries. Elephant ivory, rhino horn, and pangolin scales are among the most trafficked wildlife products worldwide, originating mainly from African countries. Demand for them is primarily driven by consumers, particularly in southeast Asia, where certain products are considered a status symbol or are used in traditional medicine. Driven by high-profit margins, operations are largely controlled by organised crime - international syndicates. Despite growing efforts worldwide to counter wildlife crime in recent years, well-organised criminal networks and weak governance still provide a breeding ground for corruption along the entire illegal trade chain.

Project name	Partnership against Wildlife Crime in Africa and Asia
Commissioned by	German 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

Wildlife population decline can lead to less opportunities for sustainable use, e.g. by decreasing tourism revenues.

Habitat loss and close interaction between humans and wildlife pose a global health risk through the increased potential for transmission of zoonotic diseases. Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) is therefore a global issue that causes biodiversity loss, threatens human health and livelihoods, and has the potential to undermine development efforts in general.

Objective

Given the complexity and cross-cutting nature of the issue, the German government commissioned GIZ with the implementation of the Partnership against Wildlife Crime. The project builds on the results and experiences of the previous GIZ projects “Partnership against Poaching and Illegal Wildlife Trade in Africa and Asia” (2017-2021) and “Combating Poaching and Illegal Wildlife Trade in Africa and Asia” (Cross Policy Cooperation Fund “Polifonds”; 2013-2017). The objective is to improve and broaden the implementation of proven approaches by key stakeholders to mitigating transnationally organised wildlife crime in various affected countries.



Contribution to the 2030 Agenda

Thus, the project contributes to fulfilling the Sustainable Development Goals set within the 2030 Agenda, particularly to SDG 15 (Life on land) and to the sub-goal ‘Combating poaching and illegal wildlife trade’ (SDG 15.7).

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On behalf of



Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development



Federal Ministry
for the Environment, Climate Action,
Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety

Our approach

The Partnership follows a twin-track approach by addressing supply and demand along the whole illegal trade chain from the countries of origin in Africa to the consumers (mainly in Asia). It pursues the objective of strengthening cross-border and inter-sectoral cooperation, especially between African and Asian countries. To this end, the project follows a multi-actor approach, mobilising the expertise and contributions of different partners from civil society, the private sector, science, and governmental organisations, such as national park authorities, police, customs and the judiciary. The selection of target countries is based on illegal trade routes of the three African target species (elephant, rhino, pangolin) and the opportunities for close linkages with bilateral/regional German development cooperation projects. This includes the SADC region with the focus countries Tanzania, Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique as major source and transit countries, and Laos, Viet Nam and China as key transit and demand countries. Other relevant regions and countries along the main and shifting trafficking routes in Africa and Asia are included through pilots, studies, cross-country measures and dialogue formats.

Within the Partnership and in the spirit of the overall concept of cross-cutting political cooperation, the BMZ and BMUKN work closely with the Federal Foreign Office (AA), the Federal Ministry of Finance (BMF), the Federal Ministry of the Interior (BMI) and the Federal Ministry of Justice (BMJV).

Success factors

To reach the objective, specific measures are defined in four areas of work along the entire illegal wildlife trade chain:

- Improving cross-border cooperation in the investigations of transnationally organised wildlife crime
- Continuous analysis of trade and consumption patterns and implementation of approaches to reduce demand mainly among Asian consumers, for example through target group specific campaigns
- Improving the exchange and coordination of knowledge and experience on curbing transnationally organised wildlife crime

Examples from the field

These four areas support a large variety of measures. Examples include mentoring and training of rangers and community scouts, as well as supporting wildlife detection dog units. Better management of human-wildlife interactions, environmental education targeting youth, and the promotion of alternative livelihoods help promote human-wildlife co-existence. Strengthened capacity of law enforcement (i.a. wildlife crime investigation units, wildlife authorities, police, customs, judiciary) enable better cross-border and cross-sector collaboration and the targeting of organised crime syndicates. Cross-border cooperation between Malawi, Zambia, Mozambique and Tanzania is supported by the Sub-Regional Platform of Wildlife Authorities. By developing and adopting Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), authorities are better able to share information in a timely manner and carry out coordinated joint operations. On the demand side, consumer-targeted awareness campaigns have already reached millions of people in China, Viet Nam and Laos. Moreover, behaviour change approaches are being piloted, and experiences are being shared between international practitioners and experts. Implementation of the Resolution on Demand Reduction adopted by the Multilateral Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is supported by newly developed guidelines that place an even stronger obligation on partner countries to take the necessary steps to reduce wildlife consumption.

Published by
Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

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As at
November 2025

GIZ is responsible for the content of this publication.

On behalf of
Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Federal Ministry for the Environment, Climate Action, Nature Conservation
and Nuclear Safety (BMUKN)

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