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# BULLETIN UPDATE

Bulletin | 3 September 2024

**Bringing United for Wildlife Members and Partners the Latest Trends, Typologies, and Modus Operandi on the Illegal Wildlife Trade**

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**Seychelles: Moratorium on trade in Aldabra Tortoises**

In August 2024 Seychelles implemented stricter measures and enhanced their regulatory frameworks on the trade of Aldabra giant tortoise (*Aldabrachelys gigantea*), a CITES Appendix II listed species. The new rules [increase penalties](#) for poaching and trafficking. Authorities in Seychelles have expressed concern that importing countries are reporting numbers far higher than the number of tortoises legally exported.

**High Risk Hub:**

Bangkok's [Suvarnabhumi Airport](#) has featured in multiple seizures of Aldabra tortoises in recent years. The airport is a hub for live animal trafficking, particularly flights connecting Bangkok to Chennai, India.

**All transactions related to the export, re-export, or import of Aldabra giant tortoise should be scrutinized to ensure compliance with Seychelles legislation and CITES**

**permitting requirements.**

Read the full Alert [HERE](#).



**North America: Recent macaque imports raise disease, IWT risks for air transport sector**

Long-tailed macaques consistently [harbor and can shed](#) deadly bacteria, viruses, mycobacteria and parasites that can be transmitted to humans. Direct or indirect contact with monkey urine, feces, saliva, respiratory droplets, or blood through the handling of monkeys or their crates or exposure to a contaminated environment risks the transmission of zoonotic diseases. Further analysis indicates that a [company under U.S. federal investigation](#) for the illegal import of macaques from Cambodia now import the monkeys into Canada to be used in laboratories there rather than the U.S., presumably to avoid the U.S. restrictions placed on macaque imports.

- Between 2019 and 2023, monkeys imported into the U.S. and the EU arrived infected with Macacine herpesvirus 1 (herpes B), a highly pathogenic zoonotic virus; Mycobacteria tuberculosis, M. bovis, M. caprae, M. orygis, the causative agents of tuberculosis; and deadly gastrointestinal pathogens, including Yersinia, Shigella, Campylobacter, and Salmonella. In addition, monkeys in quarantine showed clinical signs consistent with filovirus [Ebola-like viruses] infections.

- In 2021, long-tailed macaques imported into the U.S. from Cambodia were infected with the bacterium *Burkholderia pseudomallei*, a biological agent listed as a bioterrorism agent of military significance.

**NOTE: Workers who have contact with the crates of monkeys, including those with the airline, airport handling crews, truck drivers, and laboratory staff, are potentially at risk, and these infections can be transmitted to the community.**

Read the full alert [HERE](#).

For more information on the risks associated with the trade in long-tailed macaques, see United for Wildlife Alerts: [00070](#), [00118](#), and [00142](#).



### **Monitoring Online Trade: Donkey Products and IWT**

The growing demand in China for ejiao ( 驴 胶 ), a traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) produced through processing donkey skins into gelatin, is driving illegal donkey rustling, smuggling, and processing worldwide. Chinese wildlife trafficking syndicates have been documented engaging in the illegal trade in donkey skins, according to research published by [The Donkey Sanctuary](#).

Donkey skins and hides can easily be found online within wholesale trade hubs and business



to business sites, often alongside illegal wildlife products such as abalone, pangolin scales, and rhino horn. For more information on the donkey skin trade and the convergence with wildlife trafficking activity, see United for Wildlife Alerts: [00039](#), [00043](#), [00092](#), [00128](#), and [00164](#).

**Access a list of keywords and images [HERE](#), provided by a United for Wildlife contact, to improve identification of products sold online containing donkey derivatives.**

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[Access the United for Wildlife ALERTS Library HERE](#)

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#### **ORGANIZED CRIME**

[Chennai: 647 animals belonging to scheduled wildlife species found inside dismissed policeman's rented house](#), Deccan Herald

[How the illicit trade in sea snails came to rival rhino poaching](#), The Telegraph

[Under the lion's paw: lion farming in South Africa and the illegal international bone trade](#), Nature Conservation

[Mexico Takes Aim Against Marine Animals' Trafficking But Criminal Networks Persist](#), Sea

Shepherd

[Major poaching kingpins convicted for rhino horn trafficking in South Africa](#), Down to Earth

[Malaysia: 13 new charges for wildlife trafficking suspects](#), The Star

[Argentina: For the first time: four men arrested for illegal hunting of endangered animals and illegal possession of weapons](#), La Nacion

[Poachers now shift to the trade in dried calipee of turtles](#), Times of India

[DRI busts international seahorse smuggling racket at Bengaluru airport](#), The Hindu

[Soetta Customs Arrests 10 Indian Citizens Who Want to Smuggle Dozens of Indonesia's Endangered Animals](#), Kompas

#### **PANDEMIC DISEASE**

[Animal apocalypse: Deadly bird flu infects hundreds of species pole-to-pole](#), Mongabay

#### **VIOLENCE AND INSURGENCY**

[Commentary: Wildlife and weapons trafficking converge in Southeast Asia](#), Channel News Asia

[7 security forces, 5 rangers killed in Benin by jihadi violence](#), Voice of America

[Lake Victoria: a convergence point for environmental crimes](#), Institute for Security Studies

#### **CORRUPTION**

[Chennai: 647 animals belonging to scheduled wildlife species found inside dismissed policeman's rented house](#), Deccan Herald

#### **CLIMATE CHANGE, BIODIVERSITY LOSS, AND EXTINCTION RISK**

[North Sumatra Police Seize 987 Kilograms Of Pangolin Scales](#), VOI

[Four arrested over possession of 29 elephant tusks](#), The Daily Maverick

[Podcast: India, Ivory Poaching, and Technology](#), Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime

[The World's Largest Wetland Is Burning, and Rare Animals Are Dying](#), The New York Times

[Botswana: Sharp Spike in Elephant Poaching - 'Someone is Dropping the Ball Here'](#), AllAfrica

[Investigation reveals global fisheries are in far worse shape than we thought – and many have already collapsed](#), The Conversation

[We must restore nature to avoid global catastrophe, warns biodiversity summit president](#), The Guardian

### **LIVE ANIMAL TRAFFICKING**

[Perhilitan seizes 40 white-rumped shamas in wildlife trafficking bust](#), The Star

[Seychelles introduces stricter measures on trade of Aldabra giant tortoise](#), Seychelles News Agency

[Deforestation, poaching leave Pakistan's wild parakeets on the brink](#), Anadolu Asia

[Texas man pleads guilty to importing rare Australian reptiles for fictional reptile center](#), Austin American Statesman

### **NEW: RESEARCH AND TOOLS TO COMBAT WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING**

[UK: Prosecution Practice and the Enforcement of Wildlife Crime Research Report](#), IFAW

[4 charts that show how organized crime is endangering wildlife and damaging ecosystems](#), World Economic Forum

[Preserving Rhinos: Poaching Declines In South Africa Due To Conservation Efforts & Dehorning](#), World Animal News

[Monitoring online illegal wildlife trade](#), Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime

[Scientists Made a List of Lost Birds and Now They Want Us to Find Them](#), The New York Times

[From Tiger Bone to Plant-Based Alternatives: A Survey on Traditional Chinese Medicine \(TCM\) Substitutability in Hong Kong](#), WWF

[Early warning of trends in commercial wildlife trade through novel machine-learning analysis of patent filing](#), Nature Briefing

[Wildcheck – Assessing the risks and opportunities of trade in wild plant ingredients](#), TRAFFIC

### **ONLINE ILLEGAL TRADE**

[Rare plants hidden in toys - and other trafficking tactics](#), BBC

[What can we learn from the cactus thieves](#), Los Angeles Times

NOTE: If you encounter suspicious wildlife content online, such as ads or social media

posts/videos for live animals or products for sale, report the content directly through the [Coalition to End Wildlife Trafficking Online reporting form](#). For more information on which species to watch for, check out the details in this bulletin as well as the Coalition's [prohibited content policy](#).

The Coalition recently flagged the issue of taxidermied bats being sold online with relevant companies who have since prohibited them and removed associated content. If you see these popping up again, please help report directly on the platforms.

Want to join the Coalition? [Contact the team](#)

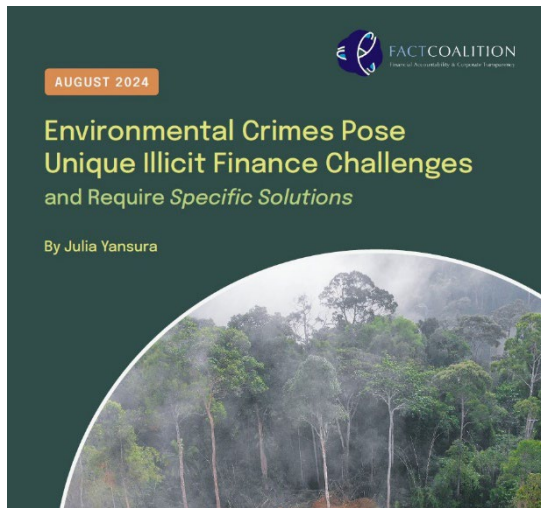
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## TAKING ACTION

News, success stories, and best practice from and for Taskforce members





[Policy Brief: Environmental Crimes Pose Unique Illicit Finance Challenges and Require Specific Solutions](#)

This [Financial Accountability and Corporate Transparency Coalition](#) policy brief outlines what makes wildlife trafficking and other environmental crimes distinct from other crimes commonly associated with money laundering risks, and details specific strategies to address the unique challenges they pose.



**RESOURCE: Wildlife Trade News**

Access the latest news and analysis on wildlife trafficking trends in India and the region [HERE](#). When available, information includes number and types of species trafficked, routes, concealment methods, and links to adverse media. Recent incidents catalogued by the [Wildlife Conservation Society- India](#) include:

- 1) Chennai International Airport: 349 Common Green Iguanas, 53 Grand Cayman Blue Iguana seized, concealed in boxes within passenger baggage.
- 2) Chennai International Airport: 138 Indian Star Tortoises seized, concealed in a passenger's checked-in baggage who was travelling to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
- 3) Chennai International Airport: 427 live Indian Star Tortoise seized, concealed in carton boxes from a Bangkok-bound passenger.

Click to [Contact WCS India analysts](#) if you want to learn more



The [ICCWC Wildlife and Forest Crime Analytic Toolkit](#) and [Indicator Framework](#) are complementary technical tools designed for use by competent national law enforcement authorities around the world to enable them to assess and measure the effectiveness of criminal justice system responses to wildlife and forest crime and identify technical assistance needs. Learn more about ICCW, and read their Annual Report, [HERE](#).



**New Campaign Launched: “*Há Viagens que Marcam Vidas*” (There are journeys that mark your life)**

[VINCI Airports](#), which signed the Buckingham Palace Declaration in 2023, has recently partnered with the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) to improve the capacity of Amazonian airports to detect and prevent cases of wildlife trafficking, by assessing the current capacity of airports to combat wildlife trafficking, collecting images from baggage scanners, reinforcing inspections in departure terminals, and training employees. The campaign will raise passenger awareness of the dangers and damage caused by wildlife trafficking. Read more [HERE](#).



**Navigating the political context**  
Practice insights and adaptive strategies  
to strengthen the anti-corruption and asset  
recovery justice chain



**[Basel Institute on Governance](#): Practice insights and adaptive strategies to strengthen the anti-corruption and asset recovery justice chain**

Politics matters for the success of anti-corruption and asset recovery efforts. This Working Paper:

- discusses the political and governance factors that affect the performance of the justice system in relation to anti-corruption and asset recovery;
- provides guidance on assessing these factors systematically, including through a novel Assessment and Monitoring Framework;
- reveals how to use these assessments to develop adaptive strategies to strengthen the justice chain in line with changing contexts.

It fills an important gap by enabling the systematic assessment and monitoring of contextual factors that impact the effectiveness of justice systems in relation to anti-

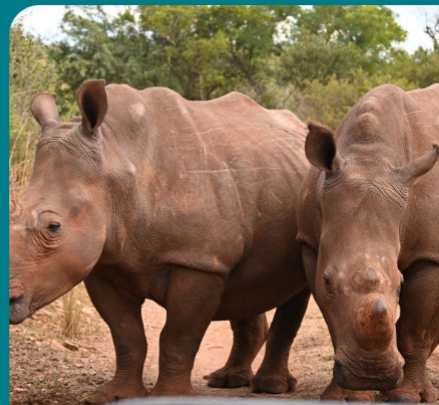
corruption and asset recovery.

[Download the paper](#)

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## Offender Data

Publicly Available Information



### DATA

1. Download: [Alleged offender data](#) collated by the **United for Wildlife Southeast Asia and Australasia Chapter**.
2. Access a sample offender dataset developed by the [Environmental Investigation Agency's](#) Media Monitoring Programme (MMP) [HERE](#), and learn how to sign up to receive the data directly [HERE](#).

### SEIZURES

[ADM Capital Foundation's Wildlife and Landscapes Programme](#) is now making available a **'Seizure Alerts' mailing list**. By signing up to this resource, you will receive insights into the efforts of the Hong Kong Government in combatting the illegal wildlife trade, analysis from ADM-CF's 'Wildlife Product Seizures' (WiPS) database and overviews of trade data (e.g., CITES Trade Database). Sign up to the mailing list [HERE](#). Read recent Seizure Alerts [HERE](#).



## Live Wildlife Seizures

Resources to identify and care for live animals



Live animal seizures appear to be increasing, creating serious challenges, particularly for law enforcement and frontline staff in the transport sector. United for Wildlife collates valuable resources to aid in identifying wildlife in trade; safely handling and caring for seized live animals; and guidelines for repatriation or other actions, [available HERE](#).

## Resources Index

Training, Tools, Data, and  
Information



Updated monthly by the Intelligence Sharing System (ISS), the Resource Index provides access to tools to increase understanding of corruption risks and IWT, the latest training for how to combat wildlife trafficking, red flag indicator compendiums, and more. Access the Resources Index [HERE](#). To contribute an entry, email the ISS [HERE](#).

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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 Information Sharing System.

### **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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## Contact

For questions or additional data/analysis relevant to this Bulletin and the Alerts, please reply to this message or contact your relevant United for Wildlife Taskforce points of contact:

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