

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



Eighty-first meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 2-6 November 2026

RESPONSES TO NOTIFICATION TO THE PARTIES NO. 2026/085 ON
IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS 18.116 AND 20.81 ON *RHINOCEROSES (RHINOCEROTIDAE SPP.)*

1. This document has been submitted by the Secretariat in relation to agenda item 39.*
2. The Secretariat received responses from China, Malaysia, South Africa, Thailand, the United States of America and Zimbabwe. These responses are made available in the format and languages in which they were received.

* *The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat (or the United Nations Environment Programme) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.*

To the CITES Secretariat:

In accordance with Notification No. 2026/085, we are pleased to submit the following information as requested.

With regard to national regulatory measures, China has implemented the "Three Strict Bans" on rhino horn and tiger bone products, namely: the strict prohibition of the import and export of rhinoceros and tiger and their products; the strict prohibition of the sale, purchase, transport, carriage, and postal dispatch of rhinoceros and tiger and their products; and the strict prohibition of the use of rhino horn and tiger bone in pharmaceutical preparations.

With regard to law enforcement, China has established an Inter-Agency Joint Meeting System for Combating Illegal Wildlife Trade, comprising 27 member agencies, which convenes on a regular basis to coordinate and advance priority actions, including the refinement of relevant legal frameworks, the conduct of specialized enforcement operations, public awareness campaigns, and international cooperation. Equivalent inter-agency joint enforcement mechanisms have also been established at the subnational level across all regions. Since 2021, China has organized, for six consecutive years, multi-agency joint enforcement operations under the operational codenames "Qingfeng" and "Wangdun," rigorously targeting

illegal activities involving wildlife and their derivatives, including rhinoceros.

With regard to international cooperation, relevant Chinese law enforcement authorities, including China Customs and the Ministry of Public Security, have been actively enhancing bilateral and multilateral enforcement cooperation with countries and regions concerned through mechanisms such as the World Customs Organization, INTERPOL, and the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, with a view to jointly combating smuggling and other illicit activities involving rhinoceros and their products.

Sincerely,

Fauna Conservation and Management, Department of Wildlife Conservation / The Endangered Species Import and Export Management Office of the People's Republic of China(China CITES Management Authority, CCMA),China National Forestry and Grassland Administration

**IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS 18.116 AND 20.81 ON
RHINOCEROSSES (RHINOCEROTIDAE SPP.)**

**MALAYSIA'S REPORT TO THE 81ST MEETING OF THE
STANDING COMMITTEE (SC81)**

Background

At its 20th meeting (CoP20; Samarkand, 2025), the Conference of the Parties retained Decision 18.116 and adopted Decisions 20.81 to 20.84 on Rhinoceroses (*Rhinocerotidae* spp.). The decision directed to Malaysia is as follows:

This document serves to report on actions taken by Malaysia in response to the [Decision 20.81](#) whereby Parties affected by rhinoceros poaching and associated trafficking are encouraged to fully implement the strategies and proposed actions outlined in the [CITES Rhinoceros Enforcement Task Force meeting outcome document](#) as relevant to them, and to report on the implementation of this Decision to the Secretariat.

A. Strengthening national and regional collaboration

- i. Malaysia continues to strengthen the national collaboration in the enforcement of wildlife crimes including the trafficking of rhino horns under the *Operasi Bersepadu Khazanah* (OBK) framework. OBK is a national task force on combating wildlife crimes launched in 2019 whereby integrated operations are conducted regularly at targeted areas through intelligence based assessment and coordination involving various relevant enforcement agencies (**Annex 1**).
- ii. The Malaysia Wildlife Enforcement Network (MY-WEN) serves as a national platform to strengthen coordination and collaboration among enforcement agencies in addressing wildlife crime and illegal wildlife trade. MY-WEN comprises 22 member agencies, including various enforcement authorities as well as airport and seaport authorities and the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC). The platform facilitates information sharing, enhances cooperation among relevant agencies, and supports coordinated efforts to combat wildlife trafficking through a whole-of-government approach.
- iii. Malaysia Border Control and Protection Agency (MCBA) was established in 2024 as a single-border agency under the Ministry of Home Affairs to streamline the management of border checkpoints to ensure more effective measures can be taken in the enforcement of trafficking crimes. Since commencing operations in January 2025, MCBA has expanded its operation to cover all land, sea and air entry points (**Annex 2**).

- iv. At the regional level, Malaysia collaborate with ASEAN Member States as well as relevant partners under the ASEAN Working Group on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement (AWG CITES & WE), ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC) and other platforms to share current trends and modus operandi of illegal wildlife trade.

B. Strengthening international collaboration

- i. Malaysia actively participates in various programmes (operations, meetings, trainings) conducted in collaboration with International governmental organizations (IGOs) including CITES, World Customs Organization (WCO), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and INTERPOL to strengthen our capacity in combatting wildlife trafficking (**Annex 3**).
 - CITES Rhinoceros Enforcement Task Force Meeting, Pretoria, South Africa, 26-30 May 2025.
 - Targeting Regional Investigation & Policing Opportunity for Development (TRIPOD) Project: Cross-Transnational Organised Crime (CTOC) capacity building programme, Vietnam, 9-13 June 2025.
 - Global Wildlife Program (GWP) 2025 Annual Conference, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 3-7 November 2025.
 - Countering Wildlife Trafficking 1st Working Group Meeting, Bangkok, 24-26 February 2026.
 - Training of Royal Malaysia Police officers on cyber-enabled wildlife crime investigations, Kuala Lumpur, 26-30 May 2026.
 - Operation Thunder 2025 in collaboration with WCO and INTERPOL.
 - Operation Mekong Dragon, a regional enforcement operation coordinated by the WCO Regional Intelligence Liaison Office for Asia and the Pacific (WCO RILO AP) and UNODC.
- ii. Malaysia enforcement authorities also held bilateral meetings with other Parties to discuss latest trend of illegal wildlife trade in general and share intelligence on specific cases of wildlife trafficking, fostering strong network of international cooperation (**Annex 4**). Bilateral engagements held include:
 - Bilateral Meeting with India held in Kuala Lumpur on February 2025
 - Bilateral Meeting with Singapore in Johor on July 2025

- Case Coordination Meeting with Madagascar: Malagasy Subject Arrested in Malaysia for the sale of Radiated Tortoises, Online, 2 April 2026.
- Case Coordination Meeting with Singapore: Seizure of 116 Scorpion Mud Turtle at Kuala Lumpur International Airport, Online, 15 April 2026

C. National level actions

- i. Malaysia enforcement agencies including the wildlife department, police and customs continue to update the risk profiles for wildlife trafficking which would facilitate tactical raids and high-value interceptions. Operating on targeted tactical intelligence, high-risk raids were executed on safe houses and distribution nodes, shifting enforcement from passive detection to aggressive syndicate disruption.
- ii. To strengthen national efforts in addressing wildlife trafficking, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Sustainability (NRES) submitted a Cabinet Note on the Situation of Wildlife Smuggling at Malaysia's International Airports and Efforts to Address the Crime for consideration at the Cabinet Meeting on 6 June 2025. In this regard, the Cabinet agreed to strengthen border controls, take firm action against wildlife trafficking activities, and accord serious attention in addressing this issue at the national level.
- iii. The amendment to the Third Schedule of the International Trade in Endangered Species Act 2008 (Act 686) was gazetted on 17 November 2025 and came into force on 18 November 2025. The amendment was made to align the list of protected species with the CITES Appendices adopted at the 19th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP19).
- iv. Integrated border control operations (*Op Pintu Sempadan*) between customs, wildlife department and airport security was conducted in 2025 to combat the illegal trafficking of wildlife at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA). The operation strengthened inter-agency cooperation through joint enforcement activities, intelligence sharing and coordinated inspections to detect and prevent the cross-border smuggling of protected wildlife and wildlife products.

D. Prosecution of rhinoceros-related crimes

- i. In September 2021, two men were arrested for the illegal possession of 49 white rhino horns and 1 critically endangered black rhino horn near the Kuala Lumpur International Airport. The case was successfully prosecuted which led to Malaysia first ever conviction of rhino horn trafficking where both accused were sentenced to 6-month jail term (**Annex 5**).
- ii. The last case recorded in Malaysia for rhino horn trafficking was in July 2022 where Royal Malaysian Customs Department foiled an attempt to smuggle wildlife parts, including elephant tusks, pangolin scales and tiger fangs worth MYR80 million. 16 units of white rhino horns were seized in the operation and the case has been concluded and marked for no further proceedings.

E. Addressing illicit financial flows

- i. The Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (SPRM) has strengthened its efforts to address corruption linked to wildlife trafficking by adopting an intelligence-driven approach. Recognising that wildlife trafficking networks may exploit corruption within enforcement and regulatory systems, SPRM conducts financial investigations under the Anti-Money Laundering Act (AMLA) and works closely with relevant national and international agencies to detect and disrupt corruption and illicit financial activities that facilitate wildlife trafficking.

F. Sample collection and sharing for forensic analysis

- i. Malaysia has three (3) laboratories that are included in the CITES Directory of Laboratories that Conduct Wildlife Forensic Testing. Two (2) laboratories are able to make forensic analyses on terrestrial animals including rhino specimens.

G. Addressing corruption

- i. One notable example in addressing corruption is Ops Jaguar, launched in July 2023 based on international intelligence, resulted in the seizure of approximately 1.8 tonnes of pangolin scales valued at MYR23.4 million in Port Klang. Subsequent investigations uncovered corruption involving the

unauthorised release of confiscated wildlife specimens, leading to legal action against several individuals, including an enforcement officer. Ops Jaguar demonstrates SPRM's commitment to addressing corruption that facilitates wildlife trafficking through targeted investigations, inter-agency cooperation, and financial investigations to strengthen integrity within the enforcement system (**Annex 6**).

- ii. In addition, the Royal Malaysian Customs Department had establish the Organisational Anti-Corruption Strategic Plan 2026–2028 designed to strengthen integrity, transparency, and accountability across its enforcement and administrative functions.

H. Stakeholder engagement

- i. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Sustainability in collaboration with TRAFFIC successfully implemented a national project (CATALYSE) to strengthen the enforcement in combatting wildlife trafficking at the entry points. Through this project, series of trainings were conducted from 2025 to 2026 at main airports, seaports and land border checkpoints and participated by officers from law enforcement agencies, logistical sector and industry players. Common gaps, challenges, and way forward were identified to improve the detection and interdiction of illegal wildlife products at the entry points, paving the way for long term cooperation between all stakeholders (**Annex 7**).

I. Demand reduction

- i. Online Trade Choking: Collaboration between enforcement agencies and the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) to enhance monitoring and prompt actions could be taken for illegal trade of wildlife through e-commerce platforms and social media advertisements.

Operasi Bersepadu Khazanah (OBK)

AM NEWS

Khazanah's Integrated Operations Value Reaches RM398.6 Million From 2019 To 2025 – Perhilitan

© 25/04/2026 05:27 PM



PUTRAJAYA, April 25 (Bernama) -- The total value of seizures through Khazanah's Integrated Operation (OBK) Implemented by the Department of Wildlife Protection and National Parks (Perhilitan) from 2019 to 2025 is estimated to reach RM398.6 million.

In a statement today, Perhilitan said the figure covers the destruction of 2,838 wildlife traps and 874 illegal tent sites.

"During the Implementation period of the OBK from 2019 to 2025, a total of 834 investigation papers were opened with the arrest of 1,198 individuals, comprising 904 Malaysians and 294 foreigners," the statement said.

<https://www.bernama.com/bm/am/news.php?id=2549304>

Strategic cooperation strengthens efforts to combat wildlife crime

© May 16, 2025, Friday - 9:54am



MESYUARAT: Razarudin poses for a group photo after chairing the Khazanah Integrated Operations Meeting (OBK) Series 17 Number 1, 2025 here.

KOTA KINABALU: Inspector-General of Police, Tan Sri Razarudin Husain has stressed the importance of integrated cooperation between agencies in combating wildlife crime as well as threats to the country's natural treasures.

According to him, high commitment and strong commitment must be followed by concerted efforts through solid inter-agency agreements to ensure that natural treasures continue to be protected from encroachment and criminal threats.

<https://www.utusanborneo.com.my/2025/05/16/kerjasama-strategik-perkukuh-usaha-banteras-jenayah-hidupan-liar>

Annex 2

Malaysia Border Control Agency

Saifuddin: AKPS to deliver more efficient border management over time

By **Ahmad Mukhsin Mukhtar** April 26, 2025 @ 5:55pm



KULIM: The Malaysian Border Control and Protection Agency (AKPS) will require time to reach full operational capacity as it continues consolidating the functions of various enforcement agencies, said Home Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail.

Saifuddin said the agency, established to streamline and strengthen border enforcement, is still in its early stages, operating under a unified command structure.

"As this is a new initiative, agencies that previously operated separately are now working under one roof, under a single command," he said during a Madani Hari Raya Aidilfitri open house ceremony here today.

Saifuddin expressed confidence that AKPS would deliver improved outcomes over time, as its personnel adapt to their new roles and responsibilities.

He said the agency was founded to fulfil three main objectives: facilitating smoother border crossings, enhancing the efficiency of service delivery, and upholding integrity in border management.

"The first goal is for border control to function smoothly and efficiently - both for the movement of people and goods. It must ensure seamless mobility.

<https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2025/04/1207782/saifuddin-akps-deliver-more-efficient-border-management-over-time>

AKPS nabs Indian national trying to smuggle 2,500 turtles through KLIA



Red-eared Slider turtles are seen in a container seized from a wildlife smuggler. — AKPS pic

Stay updated on the latest news and insights. Subscribe to our newsletter [here](#)

By **Malay Mail**

First Published: Thursday, 07 Aug 2025 10:00 AM MYT

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 7 — The Malaysian Border Control and Protection Agency (AKPS) intercepted a wildlife smuggling operation at Kuala Lumpur International Airport, seizing over 2,500 live turtles valued at RM348,000 from an Indian passenger attempting to board a flight to Bengaluru last night.

The suspect, who was scheduled to board a flight to Bengaluru, India, was detained at 10.05pm at the departure gate during a routine security operation.

<https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2025/08/07/akps-nabs-indian-national-trying-to-smuggle-2500-turtles-through-klia/186734>

Annex 3

Capacity Building Programs In Combatting Wildlife Trafficking

Targeting Regional Investigation & Policing Opportunity for Development (TRIPOD)
Training, Vietnam, 9-13 June 2025



Countering Wildlife Trafficking 1st Working Group Meeting, Bangkok,
24-26 February 2026



Training of Royal Malaysia Police officers on cyber-enabled wildlife crime
investigations, Kuala Lumpur, 26-30 May 2026



Annex 4

International Collaboration

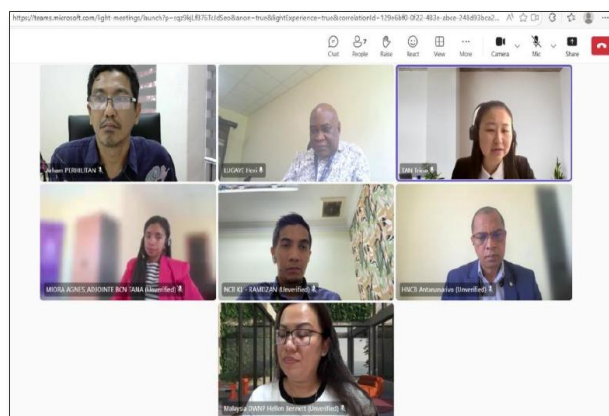
Bilateral Meeting with India, Kuala Lumpur, February 2025



Bilateral Meeting with Singapore, Johor Malaysia, July 2025



Case Coordination Meeting with Madagascar: Malagasy Subject Arrested in Malaysia for the sale of Radiated Tortoises, Online, 2 April 2026



Annex 5

Case Prosecution Update

TRAFFIC ABOUT US WHAT WE DO LATEST LEARNING PUBLICATIONS DONATE Search...



[» News](#) » Six months jail for duo in Malaysia's first rhino horn conviction

Published 15 October 2025

SIX MONTHS JAIL FOR DUO IN MALAYSIA'S FIRST RHINO HORN CONVICTION

It was one of Malaysia's most significant rhino horn seizures – 50 whole horns and pieces, declared as lobsters and hidden in the cab of a truck that was stopped not far from the Kuala Lumpur International Airport after a dramatic chase in September 2021. Now the two men in the truck will serve six months in jail after a court found them guilty of illegally keeping the contraband in the country's first trial involving trafficked African rhino horns.

Mohamad Sukry Wahab and Muhammad Hafiszan Naser faced two charges under the Wildlife Conservation Act 2010: one for possession of 49 White Rhino *Ceratotherium simum* horn pieces without a special permit, and a second charge for a single piece of horn from the Critically Endangered Black Rhino *Diceros bicornis*.

On October 15, they were found guilty of both charges and given six months of jail for each offence, with the court ordering the two jail terms to run simultaneously.

The men had faced a maximum fine of MYR100,000 (USD 20,930) and up to three years in jail for each of the charges. These charges were brought before the law was amended in 2022. The same offence now carries heavier fines.

<https://www.traffic.org/news/two-men-sentenced-to-6-months-jail-in-malaysias-first-ever-rhino-horn-trafficking-conviction/>

Annex 6

Op Jaguar

MALAYSIA
MACC busts international pangolin scale smuggling ring
This after raids in Klang, KL yesterday where RM23.4 mil of scales seized
Updated 3 years ago · Published on 15 Jul 2023 5:12PM



PUTRAJAYA – The Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) has successfully busted an international pangolin scale smuggling ring following raids in Klang, Selangor and Kuala Lumpur yesterday.


Turn Data into Growth
[LEARN MORE](#)

According to an MACC source, seven men involved in the smuggling syndicate, which was also involved in bribing enforcement officials and illegal money laundering, were arrested during the raids.

He added that almost two tonnes of pangolin scales worth RM23.4 million were seized during the raid in Klang, while several luxury vehicles linked to the syndicate were seized during the raid in Kuala Lumpur.

The raids were conducted by the MACC's anti-money laundering division under Op Jaguar based on intelligence received from enforcement agencies in the United States, United Kingdom, and Hong Kong.

<https://www.thevibes.com/articles/news/96321/macc-busts-international-pangolin-scale-smuggling-ring>

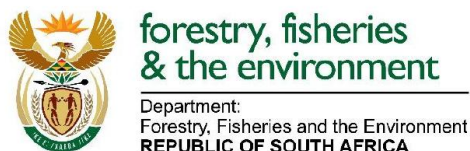
Annex 7

Project CATALYSE



<https://www.traffic.org/news/no-entry-malaysias-enforcers-forge-plans-to-prevent-wildlife-trafficking-at-borders/>

<https://www.traffic.org/news/building-vigilance-and-capacity-at-malaysias-main-maritime-gateway/>



**IMPLEMENTATION OF CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA (CITES) RHINOCEROS ENFORCEMENT TASKFORCE OUTCOME,
COP20 DECISION 20.81**

SOUTH AFRICA

20.81

Decision directed to: Parties affected by rhinoceros poaching and associated trafficking
Parties affected by rhinoceros poaching and associated trafficking are encouraged to fully implement the strategies and proposed actions outlined in the CITES Rhinoceros Enforcement Task Force meeting outcome document as relevant to them, and to report on the implementation of this Decision to the Secretariat.

South Africa remains committed to the implementation of the strategies and actions outlined in the outcome document. Implementation of Decision 20.81 is integrated into existing national strategies, structures, and collaborative mechanisms aimed at combating wildlife trafficking and protecting rhinoceros populations.

As required by Decision 19.120, paragraph a), participants in the CITES Rhinoceros Enforcement Task Force meeting developed strategies and proposed actions to further strengthen responses to address rhinoceros poaching and associated trafficking. These are listed below.

Strengthening national and regional collaboration

- 1. Parties affected by rhinoceros poaching and trafficking should where not yet done consider establishing, and where in place utilize:**
 - a) national mechanisms to facilitate and enhance coordination, information sharing, analysis and support to investigations, also with a view towards international collaboration. These**

mechanisms should clearly set out operational standards, roles and responsibilities of relevant authorities. An example of such a mechanism is the Environmental Enforcement Fusion Centre (EEFC) established in South Africa.

South Africa has established and continues to utilise the Environmental Enforcement Fusion Centre (EEFC) as a national multi-agency coordination mechanism to facilitate and enhance information sharing, intelligence analysis, operational coordination, and support to wildlife crime investigations, including those relating to rhinoceros poaching and rhinoceros horn trafficking. The EEFC serves as a central platform for the integration of environmental crime information and intelligence and brings together key enforcement and regulatory authorities to strengthen the national response to organised wildlife crime.

Roles and responsibilities of participating agencies are clearly defined through existing legislation, operational protocols, memoranda of understanding, and inter-agency governance arrangements. These mechanisms enable coordinated intelligence collection, information analysis, joint operational planning, investigation support, border risk management, and international cooperation

A central national database for the capture and analysis of data and information on crimes involving rhinoceros, to generate intelligence for use by national agencies responsible for investigations.

South Africa has established and continues to utilise centralised national information management systems and intelligence coordination platforms to support the capture, management, analysis, and dissemination of information relating to rhinoceros poaching and rhinoceros horn trafficking. These systems generate strategic and operational intelligence used by national law enforcement agencies to support investigations, prosecutions, risk profiling, and the disruption of organised wildlife crime syndicates.

A key component of South Africa's response is the utilisation of CMORE which serves as a central repository for capturing and managing environmental crime-related information, including incidents of rhinoceros poaching, illegal possession and trade of rhinoceros horn, permit transgressions, compliance inspections, investigations, enforcement actions, and prosecution outcomes. Information captured on CMORE supports trend analysis, monitoring of wildlife crime cases, performance reporting, and the generation of intelligence products to support operational and strategic decision-making. The information posted on CMORE is further enhanced, processed and captured to the National Environmental Crime Database (NECD) by the Environmental Enforcement Fusion Centre (EEFC) This therefor serves as a national multi-agency platform for integrating environmental crime intelligence. The system allows the

identification of linkages across cases at a provincial, national and international level. The EEFC works closely with law enforcement teams to ensure key syndicates are investigated.

b) Parties affected by rhinoceros poaching and trafficking should without curtailing informal inter-agency collaboration, where not yet done consider establishing regional forums and where in place strengthen and utilize such forums to:

a) facilitate personal interaction on rhinoceros-related crimes and other crimes affecting wildlife, strengthening professional working relationships and building trust:

South Africa recognises the importance of regional and inter-agency cooperation in combating rhinoceros poaching and associated wildlife trafficking and has established and continues to strengthen a number of formal and informal coordination mechanisms that facilitate cooperation, information sharing, and relationship-building among law enforcement and conservation agencies.

At the national level, the National Biodiversity Investigators Forum (NBIF) serves as a well-established multi-stakeholder platform that brings together biodiversity investigators, environmental management inspectors (EMIs), prosecutors, forensic specialists, South African Police Service (SAPS), Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (Hawks), South African National Parks (SANParks) and provincial conservation authorities. Through regular engagements, case discussions, operational briefings, and capacity-building initiatives, the NBIF facilitates personal interaction among officials responsible for investigating rhinoceros-related crimes and other wildlife offences. It plays a significant role in strengthening professional working relationships between the different investigative units and the prosecution agency, building trust among enforcement agencies, promoting cooperation across jurisdictions, and improving coordination of investigations involving organised wildlife crime syndicates. The forum also provides opportunities for members to exchange lessons learned, identify emerging crime trends, discuss operational challenges, and promote.

The following are some of the other collaborative forums that support implementation of the NISCWT:

DPP Environmental Working Group

The Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) Environmental Crime Working Group, established to also support implementation of the NISCWT, brings together environmental prosecution focal points from all

nine provinces in South Africa to strengthen the national prosecution response to wildlife trafficking and other environmental crimes, including those related to rhino. The Working Group provides a platform to share best practices, identify and address prosecution challenges, discuss the centralisation of cases, strengthen collaboration between investigators and prosecutors, assess national prosecutorial capacity, and coordinate targeted training and interventions, particularly in environmental crime hotspots.

SAMLIT IWT Taskforce

The SAMLIT Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Taskforce is a strategic public-private partnership that brings together the Financial Intelligence Centre (FIC), government law enforcement agencies, a number of NGOs and the financial sector (including all the banks in South Africa) to combat the financial dimensions of wildlife trafficking. By facilitating intelligence sharing, financial analysis and coordinated action, the Taskforce strengthens South Africa's ability to detect, investigate and prosecute organised wildlife crime, trace illicit financial flows, recover criminal proceeds and support complex investigations. This collaborative approach is an important force multiplier in disrupting transnational wildlife trafficking networks and protecting the integrity of the country's financial system.

IWZ Committee

The Integrated Wildlife Zone (IWZ) Initiative is an innovative public-private partnership that coordinates the efforts of government law enforcement agencies, conservation authorities, private reserves and other stakeholders within priority wildlife crime hotspots (in particular areas with rhino populations). While government agencies lead criminal investigations and law enforcement operations, private reserves play a critical role in prevention, surveillance, security, early detection and operational support. This integrated initiative enables a coordinated response across entire zones as well as between the zones, improving information sharing, optimising resources and enhancing South Africa's capacity to combat organised wildlife trafficking.

At the regional level, South Africa actively participates in the SADC Law Enforcement and Anti-Poaching (LEAP) Strategy structures, cross-border wildlife crime initiatives, and regional law enforcement engagements that bring together agencies from source and transit countries.

These platforms facilitate both formal and informal interactions among officials, strengthening transboundary cooperation and improving collective responses to organised wildlife crime. Furthermore, the implementation of NISCWT promotes collaborative partnerships and information-sharing networks among government departments, law enforcement agencies, conservation authorities, prosecutors,

academic institutions, and international partners. The Strategy recognises that effective wildlife crime enforcement depends on trusted professional relationships and sustained inter-agency cooperation.

- a) agree protocol that will facilitate real-time sharing of information on crimes affecting rhinoceros and associated modus operandi, as well as the use of such information.**

South Africa has established information-sharing protocols and collaborative arrangements among the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE), South African Police Service (SAPS), Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (Hawks), State Security Agency (SSA), South African National Parks (SANParks), Border Management Authority (BMA), South African Revenue Service (SARS Customs), National Prosecuting Authority (NPA), Financial Intelligence Centre (FIC), provincial conservation authorities, and other relevant entities. These arrangements facilitate the lawful exchange and use of intelligence and operational information for purposes of investigation, enforcement, prosecution, and disruption of wildlife trafficking networks.

The utilisation of CMORE to capture and manage information relating to environmental compliance and enforcement matters, including rhinoceros poaching and trafficking cases contributes to national situational awareness, trend analysis, risk identification, and strategic planning, while supporting information-sharing processes among relevant authorities.

At the regional and international levels, South Africa actively participates in information-sharing initiatives under the SADC Law Enforcement and Anti-Poaching (LEAP) Strategy, CITES mechanisms, INTERPOL, the World Customs Organization, and bilateral and multilateral law enforcement cooperation arrangements. These mechanisms facilitate the exchange of intelligence on transnational rhinoceros horn trafficking networks, suspects, trafficking routes, and emerging modus operandi, thereby strengthening collaborative investigations and enforcement actions.

- c) Parties should raise awareness among their national authorities responsible for the investigation of rhinoceros-related crimes, about information exchange and cooperation platforms that exist within their regions and encourage their use. For example the various Wildlife Information eXchange (TWIX) platforms such as AFRICA-TWIX, Eastern Africa-TWIX, EU-TWIX, SADC-TWIX, West Africa-TWIX, or any other similar platforms.**

Through the implementation of NISCWT, the activities of the EEFC and NBIF, and its participation in regional and international law enforcement networks, South Africa continues to strengthen awareness and utilisation of wildlife crime information-sharing platforms, including INTERPOL and World Custom Organisation platform and other relevant regional systems, to support effective cooperation and coordinated responses to rhinoceros-related crimes.

- 12. Parties affected by rhinoceros poaching and trafficking, should actively engage in initiatives developed to promote international collaboration and engagement such as the Wildlife Inter-Regional Enforcement (WIRE) meetings organized by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and the Regional Investigative and Analytical Case Meetings (RIACMs) organized by INTERPOL.**

South Africa has participated in and supports international collaborative initiatives such as the Wildlife Inter-Regional Enforcement (WIRE) Meetings coordinated by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) as well as the RIACMs arranged by INTERPOL.

The last meeting attended by the EEFC was the Information Collection Plan and Prep reports - INTERPOL Intelligence Exchange Meeting and Mentorship (9-12 June 2026, Angola)

National level actions

- 17. Parties affected by rhinoceros poaching and trafficking should, where not yet done, develop rhinoceros-specific risk profiles to target cargo, luggage and passengers moving on known trafficking routes, and regularly review their risk management practices to ensure that they remain relevant and effective.**

South Africa has adopted a risk-based and intelligence-led approach to combating rhinoceros poaching and rhinoceros horn trafficking, including the development and application of wildlife trafficking risk profiles to identify and target high-risk cargo, luggage, passengers, parcels, and conveyances moving through known trafficking routes. These measures support the implementation of the NNISCWT.

The risk management approach is informed by intelligence generated through the Environmental Enforcement Fusion Centre (EEFC), which analyses information relating to rhinoceros poaching

incidents, trafficking trends, seizure data, criminal networks, emerging modus operandi, high-risk destinations, and known trafficking routes.

The Border Management Authority (BMA), in collaboration with the South African Revenue Service (SARS Customs), the South African Police Service (SAPS), the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (Hawks), the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE), and other relevant authorities, utilises intelligence and risk indicators to target high-risk passengers, cargo consignments, courier parcels, freight shipments, and luggage associated with wildlife trafficking. Risk profiling considers factors such as known trafficking routes, countries of origin, transit and destination countries, travel patterns, concealment methods, previous seizures, criminal intelligence, and emerging trafficking trends.

- 18. Rhinoceros range States should, where not yet done, actively seek opportunities to establish informer networks, including amongst local communities, to promote the gathering of information and engagement with relevant authorities.**

In rhinoceros range areas, including those covered by the Integrated Wildlife Zone (IWZ) approach, conservation authorities, law enforcement agencies, protected area managers, and private rhino owners actively engage with local communities and community structures to foster cooperation and facilitate the reporting of suspicious activities. These engagements contribute to the development of trusted relationships that support the flow of information on poaching threats, illegal hunting activities, criminal recruitment, and trafficking networks operating in and around protected areas.

- 19. Parties should fully implement paragraph 2. a) of Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP20), by marking, registering and securing their rhinoceros specimen stockpiles and declaring them to the CITES Secretariat each year by 28 February in the standardized format provided.**

South Africa fully supports and implements the provisions of Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP20) on Conservation of and Trade in African and Asian Rhinoceroses, including the requirements relating to the marking, registration, security, management, and annual reporting of rhinoceros horn stockpiles. These measures form part of South Africa's broader strategy to prevent the illegal acquisition, diversion, and trafficking of rhinoceros horn and contribute to the implementation of CITES Decision 20.81.

The DFFE maintains records of rhinoceros horn specimens in the country and promotes compliance with applicable national and CITES requirements relating to stockpile management. These measures assist in ensuring accountability, traceability, and transparency in the management of rhinoceros horn

specimens and support efforts to detect and prevent theft, loss, substitution, or illegal trade. Through the implementation of national legislation, including specific norms and standards for the marking with rhino horns, stockpile management protocols, compliance monitoring systems, and reporting obligations under CITES, South Africa continues to strengthen the control, accountability, and security of rhinoceros horn stockpiles and remains committed to fulfilling its obligations under Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP20)

- 20. Parties with live rhinoceros and rhinoceros horn stockpiles are encouraged to collect samples for analysis to be recorded in a centralized database, such as RhODIS®, and the Secretariat, other organizations and donors are encouraged to seek or provide financial support for such efforts.**

The RhODIS system is used in South Africa and the government makes available funding for both forensic DNA analysis and the analysis of DNA from live rhinos and rhino horns.

- 21. Parties are encouraged to ensure that national level mechanisms are in place to accurately capture data on crimes involving rhinoceros and to report such data in a timely and standardized manner to relevant databases maintained by entities such as INTERPOL and the WCO, and to the CITES Illegal Trade Database following guidance as provided in the Guidelines for the preparation and submission of the CITES annual illegal trade report.**

South Africa has strengthened data collection and analysis through the Environmental Enforcement Fusion Centre (EEFC), which integrates information from multiple enforcement and intelligence sources to support strategic and operational analysis of wildlife crime trends, organised criminal networks, trafficking routes, and emerging modus operandi. The EEFC facilitates the sharing and use of information among national agencies responsible for investigating rhinoceros-related crimes and works with police crime intelligence units and other stake holders to support the generation of actionable intelligence for operational deployment and criminal investigations.

In accordance with CITES requirements, South Africa submits information on illegal trade incidents through the CITES Annual Illegal Trade Report process, utilising data obtained from CMORE, law enforcement agencies, customs authorities, conservation institutions, and other relevant stakeholders.

Where relevant information is routinely shared with INTERPOL to ensure continuous updates on local incidents as well as international related linkages. Excellent support from INTERPOL is noted and the INTERPOL structures routinely support South Africa on all horn related seizures and liaison with relevant countries.

Prosecution of rhinoceros-related crimes

- 24. Parties should implement programmes and activities to sensitize prosecutors and judges on the seriousness of wildlife crime, including crimes involving rhinoceroses.**

The Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) as well as certain other partners, regularly facilitate capacity-building initiatives to the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA), specifically prosecutors handling environmental cases to strengthen the investigation and prosecution of wildlife crime cases. These initiatives include workshops, training courses, seminars, case review sessions, and awareness programmes focusing on the provisions of the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, 2004 (NEMBA), CITES, the TOPS Regulations, CITES Regulations, wildlife forensic science, chain of custody requirements, financial investigations, and organised crime methodologies.

The DPP Environmental Working Group regularly meets to ensure docket oversight, discuss specific prosecutor-led focused investigations and the associated charges.

Sample collection and sharing for forensic analysis

- 36. South Africa is requested to identify and implement appropriate protocols to provide feedback to Parties on the results of the comparison with the RhODIS® database and any other information, as appropriate.**

South Africa acknowledges the importance of providing timely and structured feedback to Parties that submit rhinoceros horn samples for forensic comparison against the Rhino DNA Index System (RhODIS®) database. Such feedback contributes to international cooperation, strengthens wildlife crime investigations, and enhances the use of forensic evidence in combating rhinoceros poaching and rhinoceros horn trafficking, consistent with the objectives of CITES Decision 20.81

At present, discussions are still underway among relevant stakeholders to finalise a formal protocol governing the communication of RhODIS® comparison results and associated information to Parties. The proposed protocol will seek to clarify reporting procedures, roles and responsibilities, information-sharing arrangements, confidentiality requirements, and mechanisms for communicating relevant forensic findings arising from database comparisons.

Pending the finalisation of these arrangements, South Africa continues to cooperate with relevant Parties, law enforcement authorities, and competent international partners through established channels and on

a case-by-case basis, where appropriate and consistent with applicable legal, investigative, and operational requirements.

37. **Parties affected by rhinoceros poaching and trafficking should, where challenges exist regarding the exchange of samples for forensic analysis, consider undertaking country visits to agree on processes that could facilitate such exchanges and address any capacity building needs that may exist.**

DFFE and the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (DPCI/Hawks) have hosted officials from Singapore as part of ongoing cooperation on wildlife crime investigations and law enforcement operational support. These engagements focused on strengthening bilateral cooperation, promoting intelligence and information exchange, enhancing investigative collaboration, and facilitating the sharing of forensic evidence, including rhinoceros DNA samples obtained from rhinoceros horns seized in Singapore.

South Africa continues to support such bilateral and multilateral engagements as an effective mechanism to address challenges associated with the exchange of wildlife forensic samples, strengthen institutional relationships, build technical capacity, and improve international cooperation against transnational wildlife crime. These engagements complement broader efforts under NISCWT and support the utilisation of forensic tools such as the Rhino DNA Index System (RhODIS®) in identifying the origin of seized rhinoceros horn specimens and linking seizures to poaching incidents and criminal networks. However, there is also a need for South African officials to visit countries as South Africa could gain a lot of experience and knowledge if our officials can visit countries with the same or different systems to experience first-hand how it is done elsewhere.

38. **South Africa is encouraged to register the South Africa Police Service (SAPS) forensic laboratory on the CITES Directory of laboratories that conduct wildlife forensic testing, ensuring compliance with its requirements, to encourage the submission of rhinoceros horn samples from Parties, and ensure the standardization of forensic testing.**

Discussions are ongoing to register the SAPS FSL on the CITES Directory of laboratories.

39. **Parties affected by rhinoceros poaching and trafficking should identify their national**

authority responsible for collecting rhinoceros samples for forensic analysis and inform the Secretariat accordingly, so that the details may be included in the CITES Directory of illegal trade in rhinoceros horn focal points.

Mr Oupa Chauke of the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) and Colonel Johan Jooste of the South African Police Service (SAPS DPCI) have been designated as South Africa's focal points for matters relating to illegal trade in rhinoceros horn and associated forensic coordination. The designated focal point details will be formally submitted to the CITES Secretariat for inclusion in the CITES Directory of Illegal Trade in Rhinoceros Horn Focal Points, thereby facilitating international cooperation, information exchange, and law enforcement collaboration relating to rhinoceros poaching and trafficking. South Africa will continue to update the Secretariat on any changes to the designated focal points as required.

Addressing corruption

42. Parties affected by rhinoceros-related crimes should:

a) pursue full implementation of Resolution Conf. 17.6 (Rev. CoP20) on Prohibiting, preventing, detecting and countering corruption, which facilitates activities conducted in violation of the Convention, including in the context of illegal trade in rhinoceros specimens;

South Africa is committed to the full implementation of Resolution Conf. 17.6 (Rev. CoP20) on Prohibiting, preventing, detecting and countering corruption, which facilitates activities conducted in violation of the Convention. The country recognizes that corruption facilitates wildlife crime, including rhinoceros poaching and the illegal trade in rhinoceros horn, and therefore has adopted a multi-agency approach to prevent, detect, investigate, and prosecute corruption-related offences linked to wildlife trafficking.

To address corruption risks, South Africa utilizes established national anti-corruption mechanisms and laws, including the Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act, 2004 (Act No. 12 of 2004), together with the National Anti-Corruption Strategy. Law enforcement agencies, including the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (DPCI), the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA), the South African Police Service (SAPS), and the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE), collaborate to investigate allegations of corruption involving officials, organised crime syndicates, and other persons facilitating rhinoceros-related crimes.

Furthermore, the NISCWT and the IWZ Initiative promote inter-agency cooperation, intelligence sharing, integrity management, and coordinated enforcement actions aimed at disrupting criminal

networks involved in wildlife trafficking and associated corrupt practices. Where evidence of corruption is identified during wildlife crime investigations, such matters are referred to the appropriate authorities for criminal investigation and prosecution.

b) implement measures and integrity policies, including integrity testing, vetting, codes of conduct and ethics for staff to promote honest behaviour, prevent misconduct and uphold accountability among authorities responsible for the protection of rhinoceros and the investigation of crimes affecting them;

South Africa has implemented a range of measures and integrity policies to promote ethical conduct, prevent misconduct, and strengthen accountability among authorities responsible for the protection of rhinoceroses and the investigation of wildlife crimes. These measures include codes of conduct and ethics, disciplinary frameworks, security vetting of officials occupying sensitive positions, employee wellness programmes, and integrity management initiatives aimed at reducing corruption risks and strengthening institutional resilience.

In February 2026, a specialised integrity management training workshop was convened for GEF7 Protected Area Managers. The workshop was designed to: (i) improve understanding of the drivers of corruption and factors affecting integrity within protected areas; (ii) identify practical measures to strengthen integrity and resilience to corruption; (iii) develop realistic polygraphing plans for protected areas with the capacity to implement such measures; and (iv) create a platform for managers to share experiences and address common challenges affecting integrity across the protected area system.

South Africa is also strengthening organisational integrity through integrity awareness programmes, leadership development, financial literacy initiatives, and employee support mechanisms aimed at addressing vulnerabilities that may be exploited by organised wildlife crime syndicates. These initiatives are complemented by consequence management processes, anti-corruption measures, and inter-agency cooperation mechanisms designed to detect, deter and address corruption and misconduct within wildlife law enforcement and conservation institutions.

Furthermore, South Africa continues to enhance vetting, risk management and accountability measures for officials involved in anti-poaching operations and wildlife crime investigations, while promoting a culture of ethical leadership, transparency and compliance throughout the biodiversity enforcement sector. It should be noted that in terms of NISCWT, the conservation agencies are

specifically required to implement integrity management programmes and a number of them have made significant progress in this regard.

c) undertake corruption risk assessments to identify high corruption risk areas and develop and implement strategies to counter corruption, including by developing corruption prevention policies, and whistle blower protection policies;

The recommendations arising from the integrity assessment process include strengthening corruption prevention policies, improving recruitment and screening processes, enhancing inter-agency cooperation, establishing structured integrity dialogues and awareness programmes, supporting whistle-blowing and confidential reporting mechanisms, and ensuring that consequence management is applied consistently at all levels of the organisation. These measures are intended to reduce corruption risks, strengthen accountability, and improve the effectiveness of efforts to combat rhinoceros poaching and wildlife trafficking. One of the indicators of NISCWT that is being tracked is whether there has been an increase in the detection, arrest and prosecution of corrupt persons involved in wildlife trafficking since the implementation of the strategy.

d) publicize information on arrests and prosecutions related to corruption to send a clear and deterrent message that such conduct will not be tolerated;

South Africa recognizes the importance of transparency and accountability in combating corruption associated with wildlife crime and rhinoceros protection. Information relating to arrests, investigations, prosecutions, convictions, and sentencing outcomes in significant wildlife crime and corruption cases is regularly communicated through official government statements, media releases, annual reports, stakeholder engagements, and law enforcement awareness initiatives. The NISCWT also requires that the communication of arrests and convictions of corrupt officials specifically be communicated.

Thailand's response to Notification 2026/085- Rhinoceroses (Rhinocerotidae spp.)

– Request for information

Thailand has implemented the strategies and proposed actions outlined in the outcome document of the CITES Rhinoceros Enforcement Task Force meeting as follows:

1. Strengthening national and regional collaboration

1.1 National mechanisms

Thailand established the Thailand Wildlife Enforcement Network (Thailand-WEN) in 2007 as a national cooperation mechanism to prevent and combat illegal wild fauna and flora trade. The network comprises law enforcement agencies and relevant authorities, including the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation (DNP), Customs Department, Royal Thai Police, Department of Special Investigation (DSI), Anti-Money Laundering Office (AMLO), Department of Fisheries, Department of Livestock Development, Department of Agriculture, Immigration Bureau, and other relevant agencies. These agencies jointly serve as a central mechanism for coordination, intelligence sharing, data analysis, and support for wildlife crime investigations, while also strengthening cooperation with international networks such as CITES, INTERPOL, the World Customs Organization (WCO), and wildlife law enforcement networks of ASEAN Member States.

On 21 April 2026, the Thailand-WEN convened a meeting to follow up on the implementation progress of the Thailand Wildlife Taskforce (TWT). Representatives from the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, Office of the Attorney General, and Central Investigation Bureau (Natural Resources and Environmental Crime Suppression Division) participated in the meeting to jointly develop strategies for preventing and intercepting illegal wildlife trafficking. The meeting focused on the use of intelligence analysis, improving inter-agency coordination, and enhancing the effectiveness of investigations and prosecutions of wildlife crimes.

1.2 Central national database

1.2.1 Wildlife Crime Intelligence Center (WCC)

Thailand, through the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, has established the Wildlife Crime Intelligence Center (WCC) as a central hub for integrating wildlife crime intelligence. The WCC supports coordination among intelligence and law enforcement agencies and promotes information exchange with domestic and international agencies and networks. The WCC utilizes i2 and iBase software systems to collect, store, manage, analyze, and visualize complex intelligence data. These systems support the identification of links between offenders, criminal networks, trafficking routes, and relationships among individuals or organizations involved in wildlife crimes.

1.2.2 Data Exchange Center (DXC)

Thailand, through the Ministry of Justice, has established the Data Exchange Center (DXC) to enhance and develop mechanisms for information exchange among agencies within the justice system. The center supports data integration, database connectivity, and the exchange of information related to law enforcement. The system contributes to improving the efficiency of investigations, analysis of case linkages, and prosecution of transnational crimes, including illegal wildlife crimes.

1.3 Intergovernmental law enforcement bodies

1.3.1 Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC) Working Group on Illicit Trafficking of Wildlife and Timber (SOMTC WG on ITWT)

Thailand, as the Lead Shepherd of the SOMTC Working Group on Illicit Trafficking of Wildlife and Timber (SOMTC WG on ITWT), with the Royal Thai Police serving as the main coordinating agency, has regularly organized annual meetings of the working group. Relevant wildlife and timber law enforcement agencies participate in these meetings to exchange information and collaborate on joint actions. The most recent meeting was the 8th SOMTC Working Group on Illicit Trafficking of Wildlife and Timber (8th WG on ITWT), held on by Thailand 24 March 2026 via video conference. The meeting discussed approaches to strengthen cooperation among ASEAN Member States in preventing and combating illegal wildlife and timber trafficking, reviewed progress in implementing the SOMTC WG on ITWT under the ASEAN Plan of Action in Combating Transnational Crime, and exchanged information on current situations, best practices, and implementation results among Member States. The meeting also considered approaches to strengthen cooperation on law enforcement, intelligence exchange, capacity building for officers, and collaboration with relevant international organizations to enhance regional efforts against illegal wildlife and timber trafficking.

1.3.2 ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC)

Thailand, with the Royal Thai Police as the responsible national agency, participates in the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC) on an annual basis. The most recent meeting was the 26th ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (26th SOMTC), held by Republic of the Philippines from 16–18 June 2026 via video conference. At the meeting, Thailand contributed to advancing cooperation and implementation in five key areas, namely: combating illicit drug production and trafficking; preventing and combating trafficking in persons; addressing cybercrime and online scams; preventing and combating money laundering; and preventing and combating illegal wild fauna and flora trafficking. The meeting served as a platform to promote cooperation among ASEAN Member States and ten dialogue partners (China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, India,

New Zealand, Canada, Australia, the European Union, Russia, and the United States) in developing conclusions and recommendations for submission to the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC) for further consideration and endorsement.

1.3.3 ASEANAPOL

Thailand actively participates in the ASEANAPOL Conference, coordinated by the Royal Thai Police. The 43rd ASEANAPOL Conference, hosted by Thailand from 3–7 November 2025, focused on strengthening regional police cooperation to combat transnational crime through intelligence sharing, joint investigations and coordinated enforcement operations. Priority areas included cybercrime, trafficking in persons, drug trafficking, money laundering and illegal wildlife trade. The Conference also emphasized enhanced cooperation with INTERPOL and the World Customs Organization (WCO) to improve intelligence exchange and disrupt transnational criminal networks across the ASEAN region.

2. Strengthening international collaboration

2.1 Implementation of Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP20) on the Conservation of and Trade in African and Asian Rhinoceroses, paragraphs 1 (e), (g) and (h)

2.1.1 International information exchange

For rhinoceros horn seizure cases, where some of the seized rhinoceros horn pieces are found to contain microchip identification numbers, Thailand promptly notifies the CITES Secretariat to facilitate coordination with the possibly countries of origin for verification of the source of the specimens (if possible). In addition, following an email request received from the Lao People's Democratic Republic on 19 November 2025 regarding a rhinoceros horn trafficking case detected in Thailand, in which the declared destination was the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the requested information was provided on 5 February 2026. Thailand and the Lao PDR have also designated national focal points to facilitate the exchange of transnational wildlife crime information through the WhatsApp communication platform.

2.1.2 Forensic examination and secure storage of seized specimens

Whenever rhinoceros horns or rhinoceros horn products are seized, the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation (DNP) collects samples for DNA analysis, where feasible, to determine the species and geographic origin of the specimens through the Wildlife Forensic Science Center. Seized rhinoceros horns are securely stored in security safes to preserve evidence for criminal investigations and prosecutions.

2.2 Engage in initiatives developed to promote international collaboration and engagement

2.2.1 Participation in international meetings

Thailand actively contributes to international cooperation through participation in regional and international meetings, including:

(1) Wildlife Inter-Regional Enforcement (WIRE) Meeting: The meeting was held from 14–16 **October 2025** in Thailand and organized by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the meeting brought together representatives from the Natural Resources and Environmental Crime Suppression Division, the Department of Special Investigation (DSI), the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, and the Office of the Attorney General. During the meeting, Thailand presented a case study on the successful investigation of a transnational wildlife trafficking network involving the illegal importation of lemurs and Radiated Tortoises, together with other tortoise species, from Madagascar, as well as the successful repatriation of the confiscated live animals to Madagascar.

(2) Exchange Coordination Meeting on Transnational Rhino Horn Trafficking Networks: Thailand participated in the Exchange Coordination Meeting on Transnational Rhino Horn Trafficking Networks, held on 25–26 June 2026 in Hanoi, Viet Nam and organized by UNODC. The Thai delegation comprised representatives from DNP, the Natural Resources and Environmental Crime Suppression Division, the Customs Department, the Department of Special Investigation and the Office of the Attorney General. During the meeting, Thailand presented recent law enforcement achievements and progress in prosecuting transnational rhinoceros horn trafficking cases. Intelligence and case-related information were exchanged with the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Viet Nam, Singapore and INTERPOL to strengthen evidence collection, support criminal investigations and enhance prosecution outcomes.

2.2.2 Global operations

Thailand actively participated in Operation Thunder 2025, a global wildlife enforcement operation coordinated jointly by INTERPOL and the World Customs Organization (WCO) to combat illegal wildlife trafficking.

Thailand also attended the Post-Operation Meeting, held in Doha, Qatar, from 2–5 February 2026, where participating countries reviewed operational results, exchanged intelligence, shared best practices and lessons learned, and discussed opportunities to strengthen international cooperation in investigations, law enforcement and information exchange among Customs, Police and wildlife authorities. During the meeting, representatives of Thailand's Natural Resources and Environmental Crime Suppression Division participated in a panel discussion and presented "Thailand Success Story: Effective National Coordination", highlighting Thailand's integrated approach to combating wildlife crime. The presentation emphasized:

- Unity of effort : real-time intelligence sharing among law enforcement agencies, including the Police, Customs Department, DNP and the Office of the Attorney General;
- Operational handover between agencies : seamless coordination from border detection through criminal investigation to prosecution.

Thailand also shared "Thailand Success Stories: Landmark Cases the World Should Know," which demonstrated concrete achievements resulting from inter-agency cooperation. The Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation and the Thai Customs Department showcased successful cases involving the seizure of transnational rhinoceros horn trafficking concealed in steel boxes and logs, as well as illegal wildlife shipments detected at Suvarnabhumi Airport. The Office of the Attorney General presented the prosecution process following the arrests to ensure that offenders receive the maximum penalties under the law.

In addition, the Thai delegation participated in multilateral meetings with partner networks (China, Lao PDR, Viet Nam, Qatar, and African countries) to discuss issues regarding:

- Controlled Delivery: A system for the controlled transfer of seized items to trace and dismantle networks up to the masterminds
- Exotic Pets & Rhino Horn: Suppression of wildlife trafficking networks and rhinoceros horn trafficking
- Interpol Red Notice: Close monitoring and tracking of transnational criminals through Red Notices

3. National level actions

Thailand has enhanced the investigation and prosecution process for rhinoceros horn trafficking cases by coordinating with the Anti-Money Laundering Office (AMLO) to apply measures under anti-money laundering legislation for financial investigations, tracing financial flows, and seizing or freezing assets associated with the commission of offences in accordance with relevant legal authorities.

4. Demand reduction

Thailand has implemented measures to reduce demand for rhinoceros horn and its products through law enforcement measures combined with public awareness campaigns, as follows: monitoring illegal wildlife trade through social media platforms (Cyber Patrolling), such as Facebook, LINE, and e-commerce platforms, while conducting investigations and controlled buys to apprehend offenders. These efforts focus on the trading of rhinoceros horns and rhinoceros horn products, as well as other protected wildlife species. In addition, Thailand disseminates public awareness materials through social media, airports, tourist destinations, and targeted areas to promote understanding of the impacts of illegal wildlife and emphasize scientific evidence that rhinoceros horns have no medicinal properties. These measures aim to reduce consumer demand for rhinoceros horn products and support sustainable wildlife conservation. Examples include:

Examples of Demand Reduction Campaign and Materials



On 22–23 February 2025, on the occasion of World Wildlife Day 2025, the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation organized a public awareness campaign rally to reduce illegal wildlife trade. The activity aimed to provide knowledge and understanding, raise awareness, and promote public consciousness regarding the reduction of illegal wildlife trade. The target groups included the general public, Thai and foreign tourists, pet shop operators, and school/university students. The campaign was conducted at Chatuchak Weekend Market and Sanam Luang 2 Market, which are popular destinations among both Thai and foreign tourists.

Chatuchak Weekend Market





Sanam Luang 2 Market





On 22 October 2025, the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation organized the “Stop Illegal Wildlife Trade” awareness campaign in collaboration with the Thailand Wildlife Enforcement Network (Thailand-WEN), including Airports of Thailand Public Company Limited (AOT), the Customs Department, the Department of Fisheries, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Livestock Development, the Natural Resources and Environmental Crime Suppression Division (NRECD), as well as airlines including Thai Airways, Air India, IndiGo Airlines, and VietJet Air. The activity aimed to strengthen efforts to prevent and suppress illegal wildlife trafficking and was held at Suvarnabhumi Airport.





United States of America

Dear Colleagues,

This email is to inform you that the United States is not a Party in which illegal markets for rhinoceros horn exist nor a Party affected by rhinoceros poaching and associated trafficking, and therefore, we do not have information to share that is responsive to Notification to the Parties No. 2026/085 - Implementation of Decisions 18.116 and 20.81 on *Rhinoceroses* (*Rhinocerotidae spp.*).

Regards,

Wildlife Trade and Conservation Branch
Division of Management Authority
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
5275 Leesburg Pike, MS: IA
Falls Church, VA 22041-3803



Implementation of Decisions 18.116 and 20.81 on Rhinoceroses (Rhinocerotidae spp.)

1. Introduction

This report is submitted in response to Notification No. 2026/085 (11 June 2026), concerning Decisions 18.116 and 20.81. It outlines the measures undertaken by Zimbabwe to reduce demand for rhinoceros' horn, close illegal markets, and strengthen enforcement actions against poaching and trafficking. The report also highlights Zimbabwe's implementation of strategies recommended by the CITES Rhinoceros Enforcement Task Force, as well as the challenges encountered and areas where international cooperation and support remain essential. Through this submission, Zimbabwe seeks to demonstrate its continued dedication to fulfilling its obligations under CITES, contributing to global efforts to combat wildlife crime, and ensuring the survival of rhinoceroses for future generations.

2. Implementation of Decision 18.116

Demand Reduction and Market Closure

- **Public Awareness Campaigns:** In 2025, Zimbabwe launched nationwide campaigns aimed at reducing demand for rhinoceros' horn. These initiatives specifically targeted traditional medicine practitioners and consumer groups, emphasizing both the ecological importance of rhinoceroses and the legal consequences of engaging in rhino horn trade. Radio broadcasts, television segments, brochures, billboards at Airports and roadsides and community outreach programmes were used to reach rural and urban audiences alike.
- **Educational Outreach:** Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (ZimParks), in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, introduced wildlife conservation modules into school curricula and organized awareness events at universities. These efforts are designed to instil conservation values in younger generations and discourage the consumption or trade of wildlife products, including rhinoceros horn.

- **Market Closure and Enforcement:** Enforcement actions were carried out across all ZimParks regions to identify and dismantle illegal markets dealing in rhinoceros' horn. These operations involved close coordination between law enforcement agencies, customs officials, and community rangers. Continuous monitoring systems have been established to prevent the re-emergence of such markets, with intelligence-led patrols ensuring compliance.
- **Collaboration with Partners:** Zimbabwe has strengthened partnerships with NGOs, conservation organizations, and international agencies to share best practices in demand reduction. Joint workshops and training sessions have been conducted to build capacity in communication strategies, enforcement techniques, and community engagement. These collaborations have enhanced Zimbabwe's ability to implement effective demand reduction programmes aligned with CITES Resolution Conf. 17.4 (Rev. CoP19).
- **Dehorning**
Zimparks has built its own capacity to carry out dehorning exercises. This requires specialized equipment and resources to sustain these operations. Dehorning reduces poaching incentives but must be paired with strong monitoring.
- **DNA Laboratories**
Zimbabwe now has labs for DNA testing and sequencing which enables identification of individual rhinos and tracking of horn origins. Ultimately this strengthens prosecution by providing scientific evidence.
- **Legal Framework**
Rhino was declared a specially protected animal through a Statutory Instrument and has mandatory 9-year sentences for possession of rhino horn. The legal deterrence complements field protection.
- **Intensive Protection Zones (IPZs)**
New Intensive Protection Zones (IPZs) established in Gonarezhou and Matusadona. Concentrated protection allows better resource allocation. In addition, there was movement of rhinos from high-risk areas like Chivero and Thetford to safer zones.
- **Offshore Gene Banking**
Zimbabwe exported rhinos to Botswana and Democratic of the Republic of Congo to serve as secure gene pools. The objective is to provides insurance against localized extinction and supports long-term genetic diversity and resilience.

3. Implementation of Decision 20.81

Enforcement and Anti-Poaching Measures

- Strengthened patrols in key rhinoceros' habitats, supported by aerial surveillance and community ranger programmes.
- Intelligence-led investigations conducted in cooperation with INTERPOL and regional enforcement networks, resulting in several arrests and seizures of rhino horn in 2025–2026.
- National task force established to coordinate enforcement agencies, customs, and police.

- Adoption of recommendations from the CITES Rhinoceros Enforcement Task Force outcome document, including improved data-sharing and cross-border cooperation.

4. Challenges and Needs

- Persistent demand in neighbouring countries continues to drive trafficking.
- Limited resources for advanced surveillance technology and forensic analysis.
- Request for technical assistance and capacity-building support from the CITES Secretariat and partner organizations.

5. Conclusion

Zimbabwe remains committed to implementing Decisions 18.116 and 20.81, reducing demand for rhinoceros' horn, and strengthening enforcement against poaching and trafficking. Continued international cooperation is essential to safeguard rhinoceroses for future generations.