

# Assessing the Partner and Media Engagement with the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime

## 1 Introduction

Wildlife trafficking is a global green crime of growing concern as is evident by the establishment of several wildlife law enforcement networks, for instance the Association of Southeast Asian Nations - Wildlife Enforcement Network (ASEAN - WEN), and the subject of this chapter - the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCWC). This initiative is comprised of INTERPOL (predominantly their Environmental Crime Programme), the Secretariat of the Convention of the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the World Customs Organisation (WCO), the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and the World Bank. Wildlife crime in this case is defined as the exploitation of fauna and flora in particular the poaching, trafficking, and possession of illegal wildlife (CITES 2012a), which is also referred to as wildlife trafficking. From its official launch in November of 2010, ICCWC (pronounced i - quick) was intended to:

"bring coordinated support to national wildlife law enforcement agencies and to the subregional and regional networks that, on a daily basis, act in defence of natural resources. Ensure that perpetrators of serious wildlife crimes will face a more formidable and coordinated response, departing from the present situation where the risk of detection and punishment is all too low. It also seeks to deploy modern techniques and technologies that are applied in different areas to tackling wildlife crime, such as controlled deliveries and the use of wildlife forensics, and aims also to address international cooperation, money laundering and corruption" (CITES 2012a).

In short then ICCWC was designed to support, expand and enhance on-going wildlife law enforcement efforts to combat wildlife trafficking. In the mid to long term, ICCWC is well placed to enhance awareness of wildlife crime and make wildlife crime mainstream within national law enforcement agencies. This chapter analyses if after two-plus years ICCWC is managing to work towards these goals. First, the methodology used to gauge ICCWC's progress towards these aims is detailed.

## 2 Methods

In order to assess if ICCWC is making progress in the intended direction, a mixed methods approach was employed. This first included analysis of world news coverage of wildlife trafficking to search for evidence of increased reporting by the media about this green crime, which may also indicate enhanced awareness by the public. In turn, this is related to if wildlife trafficking is becoming a more mainstream rather than marginalised topic. Using LexisNexis, *all* available newspapers in *all* languages were searched using the terms 'wildlife trafficking' and 'illegal wildlife trade' from July 2002 to July 2012. This was done in order to gauge the historical trends of the coverage of this topic. As seen below, the countries discussed in this chapter are a selection of those with the most coverage. The use of the term 'wildlife crime' was also

explored, but as this can be used as a generic term to refer to a variety of crimes in addition to wildlife trafficking, such as badger baiting and hare coursing, this term was not included in the analysis. Additionally, a search was conducted for the 'International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime' from July 2008 to July 2012 to be sure to capture all references made to it as it was being created, once it was launched, and during its active period. Each newspaper article was entered into the software Nvivo and queries were formulated around month and year, species, and countries to gain an understanding of the nature and extent of the media coverage of wildlife trafficking.

The second part of the methodology was eight semi-structured interviews with staff of the INTERPOL Environmental Crime Programme and one with a member of the INTERPOL Environmental Crime Committee. A representative of CITES answered a questionnaire on behalf of CITES and the WCO. No responses were received from the other partners. INTERPOL was the main focus as it is the focal point for the sharing of wildlife law enforcement information and intelligence and therefore was judged to have the most complete picture of countries' engagement with wildlife trafficking. All respondents were given anonymity and are not referred to by name or position in this chapter to maintain this. Interviews and questionnaires focused on if staff felt that wildlife law enforcement engagement with the partners or with wildlife crime has changed since the launch of ICCWC, if the ICCWC activities were successful in raising awareness and increasing engagement, and what the next actions of the consortium would be to continue the progress towards their objectives. This was followed up by searching the partners' websites for documents and press releases related to ICCWC. This was done to see the levels of partner engagement with the consortium.

In order to undertake a complete analysis of the data that was obtained and the institutional factors that affect the formation and effectiveness of such a collaboration, the chapter will begin by giving the background and history of the creation of ICCWC. This will be followed by an exploration of the partners that are involved in the consortium including their missions and objectives as agencies. Next, an analysis of partner engagement with ICCWC will take place through examination of each agency's online ICCWC profile and the activities that have been organised through ICCWC. Then, the results from the interviews will be shared. This will lead to dissemination of the results of the newspaper searches. Finally, an analysis will take place in the discussion section assessing ICCWC and its future.

### **3 Background and History of ICCWC**

Use and trade of wildlife has always been taking place. Coinciding with that has been the overuse and exploitation of nonhuman animals and plants, which in the modern era continues yet has begun to receive more attention including in some cases the criminalisation of such overexploitation (Lyster 1985; de Klemm 1993). This is evident in the creation of a variety of international conventions designed to limit and/or stop the overexploitation and degradation of the world's wildlife. These include, but are not limited to; the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, and of particular importance to this discussion, the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna

and Flora. The latter was specifically created as a safeguard against trade threatening wild nonhuman animals and plants (CITES 2012a). Since 1975, CITES and its member states having been working around the globe to combat the illegal trade in wildlife, which is a contributing factor to the extinction faced by many of the planet's species. Annually, hundreds of millions of nonhuman animals and plants are traded within the legal international trade (CITES 2012b) and woven into this fabric is the illegal trade estimated to be worth around USD 10 billion for nonhuman animals (Fison 2011) and between USD 30 and 100 billion for timber (Nelleman and INTERPOL Environmental Crime Programme 2012). This does not include the illegal trade in fish, which is a large and highly profitable black market.

Despite these focused national and international efforts of law enforcement and CITES, wildlife trafficking continues and it could be argued that it is increasing. This is seen in the news coverage over the last several years. For instance, in 2009 BBC News reported on the 'global surge' in rhinoceros poaching, where hundreds of rhinos were poached in several African countries (BBC News 2009). A similar increase has been seen in the poaching of elephants where hundreds of elephants each year are poached for their ivory (Hamlin 2011) or as was reported at the time of writing this chapter over 11,000 elephants have been killed in Gabon in eight years (Dabany 2013). It is these disturbing trends and the persistent facts that wildlife crime is not a mainstream crime and that the risk of detection and punishment for wildlife crime remains low (CITES 2012a) that seemed to have prompted CITES and the four other partners, detailed below, to undertake a targeted effort to decrease the incidents of wildlife crime. As stated in the document introducing and detailing ICCWC, these five partners bring a unique set of complementary skills and expertise that should enable ample support and hopefully improvement in the combat against wildlife crime undertaken by wildlife law enforcement agencies around the world (CITES 2012a).

#### **4 The ICCWC Partners**

The ICCWC partners are a conglomeration of different types of organisations that inevitably have different missions and different objectives to achieve. As with any collaboration, particularly those that are large-scale and international, the dynamics between the organisations involved have a bearing on the project created. This is true of ICCWC as well, so the type and purpose of each organisation is important to know before exploring in more detail how ICCWC is working. The Environmental Crime Programme of INTERPOL aims to "assist member countries in the effective enforcement of national and international environmental laws and treaties. Through this we can contribute to the on-going conservation of the world's environment, biodiversity and natural resources" (Environmental Crime Programme 2011, p. 2). To do this, they have set themselves four strategic goals: 1. Enhance and develop capacity, capability and co-operation for effective enforcement of environmental laws. 2. Encourage and assist in exchange of environmental information and intelligence. 3. Provide operational support in enforcing environmental laws. 4. Encourage and provide opportunities to network, communicate, and exchange skills related to environmental crime enforcement (Environmental Crime Programme 2011). Though not exactly a law enforcement agency as it does not have arrest powers etc., INTERPOL is still a law enforcement agency as the information exchange that they facilitate is intelligence, often confidential, about crimes and suspects. Gathering

criminal intelligence and developing crime prevention programmes is a very particular mission that differs from some of the other partners of ICCWC.

With the closest organisational purpose to INTERPOL, the WCO has some focus on law enforcement and compliance:

"the development of global standards, the simplification and harmonisation of Customs procedures, trade supply chain security, the facilitation of international trade, the enhancement of Customs enforcement and compliance activities, anti-counterfeiting and piracy initiatives, public-private partnerships, integrity promotion, and sustainable global Customs capacity building programmes. The WCO also maintains the international Harmonized System goods nomenclature, and administers the technical aspects of the WTO Agreements on Customs Valuation and Rules of Origin." (WCO 2012)

So there is common ground with INTERPOL in terms of illegal activities that take place at borders and violate criminal laws and Customs regulations. This is certainly applicable in regard to ICCWC as wildlife trafficking involves the smuggling of wildlife across borders or through Customs. Yet in addition to this, the WCO also works to facilitate trade and oversee implementation of the World Trade Organisation agreement, which again is about streamlining trade. Furthermore, the WCO's "Customs enforcement is concerned with the protection of society and fighting trans-national organized crime based on the principles of risk management" (WCO 2012). In order to do this, like INTERPOL's Environmental Crime Programme, the WCO facilitates the exchange and use of information and intelligence in relation to smuggling of wildlife, but also for the gambit of other black markets, such as cigarettes, drugs etc., which would fall into other divisions of INTERPOL. Much of the information that the WCO is seeking is related to compliance with various trade conventions in addition to criminal violations.

The UNODC by name might appear to have much in common with regard to purpose and information gathered by INTERPOL and the WCO, but this is not the case. In essence, they are a research organisation that aims to improve the capacity and knowledge of UN member states to combat drugs, crime and terrorism. Particular emphasis of their work is on the ratification and implementation of relevant international treaties and national legislation targeted at these areas, for instance the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime. This includes projects to expand the evidence base for policy and operations (UNODC 2012a). Primarily, they are gathering data on the array of crimes, but focused on drugs, terrorism and organised crime.

The World Bank has a purpose that is again different to the partners previously described. It serves as a source for technical and financial support for developing nations and creates and implements strategies to reduce poverty (World Bank 2012). Their involvement in ICCWC then is connected to the overlap between development, poverty and poaching. This type of wildlife crime can be associated with inadequately designed or implemented environmental protection regimes in transitional or developing nations, which may then fail to protect wildlife. Additionally, wildlife crime may be committed by impoverished people poaching or overexploiting wildlife as a means of income and/or subsistence. The information that the World Bank obtains from their projects then pertains to very different elements of society than the other partners. This tends to focus on success of poverty reduction projects as well as

information on grant recipients and financial services. There is an element of research to these activities as it relates to poverty and then knowledge transfer.

Finally CITES which “aim(s) ... to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival” (CITES 2012*b*). Their approach to wildlife trafficking then is that wildlife is a resource. As it is an international convention, the 178 member signatories adhere voluntarily to the regulations such as the protection afforded to different species by listing them in one of the three Appendices, which limit trade depending upon if the species is endangered or threatened. The information that CITES gathers is not typically intelligence data related to crime. In fact it is predominantly population numbers of wildlife, scientific estimates of the amount of certain species that can be ‘harvested’, trade data that includes quantities, units, import and export country and the purpose of the transaction. As is evident, this differs substantially from a law enforcement orientated mission, a research mission, and/or one aimed to reduce poverty. These differences translate into different expectations and objectives which might clash within a cooperative project such as ICCWC. With these differing missions in mind, the next section explores the online profile of ICCWC at each of the partners’ websites as well as detailing data from INTERPOL’s Environmental Crime Programme that may give some indication of member states’ engagement with wildlife trafficking and ICCWC.

## **5 ICCWC in action**

Information that reveals in part the differing partners’ engagement themselves with ICCWC is a search of their websites for the number of press releases and other documents that they have generated or posted about ICCWC. At the time of writing, CITES had the most coverage with 239 separate entries mentioning ICCWC. These range from documents from Standing Committee meetings to press coverage of big events like the Tiger Summits and ICCWC launch; from film clips of the events to a job announcement for a post specifically created to coordinate ICCWC activities. UNODC had 192 pages. These are quite similar to the CITES web pages in their content, which consists of coverage of the ICCWC launch, the release of a toolkit created by UNODC and the Tiger Summit that took place in February of 2012. The Wildlife and Forest Crime Analytic Toolkit intends to provide a framework for Government officials, customs, police officers and others engaged in combating these crimes to analyse, prevent and detect wildlife and forest offenses (UNODC 2012*b*). In contrast, INTERPOL’s Environmental Crime Programme has six web pages, the WCO five, and the World Bank three. Whilst the content again is similar – the ICCWC launch, the Tiger Summit in February of 2012 and the UNODC Toolkit, there is an evident difference in the level of engagement with ICCWC.

It is possible that this stems from the above discussion around the differing organisational missions of the partners. Wildlife crime is not the main focus of the World Bank or the WCO. Nor is it the main focus of UNODC. Yet maybe because UNODC is a research organisation that seeks to increase the knowledge of its member states, it engages in more outreach through its website, in this case resulting in more coverage of ICCWC. The World Bank has a multitude of other programmes to both manage and disseminate information from, so as ICCWC falls outside of its main priority areas maybe this is why there is limited coverage of it. The coverage from the WCO and INTERPOL’s Environmental Crime Programme centre on events that have taken place under the ICCWC banner, again the ICCWC launch, the Tiger

Summit, UNODC's Toolkit and workshops around how law enforcement officers can conduct controlled deliveries of wildlife products to catch wildlife criminals. As there have been very few events actually labelled with ICCWC's involvement, this might explain the apparently low engagement by the WCO and INTERPOL's Environmental Crime Programme as their coverage is a direct reflection of the activities undertaken. Additionally, being law enforcement orientated, their public presence and outreach is most likely constructed much differently. This may result in a website that is less about raising awareness of the general public. More dissemination of ICCWC information may occur more directly with members of the WCO, though this is not the case at INTERPOL's Environmental Crime Programme (personal communication). CITES is unique in this partnership as its main focus is solely on wildlife and this inevitably leads to a pronounced concern about wildlife crime. This may explain why CITES is the most vocal, at least on their website, about ICCWC.

As mentioned, through February 2013 when data collection stopped for this chapter, there had been only a few activities that have taken place in connection with ICCWC. In fact, just four events had occurred in the two years of ICCWC's existence; the aforementioned Tiger Summit in February of 2012, the creation and dissemination of UNODC's Toolkit, and the controlled delivery workshop. Additionally, CITES hosted a workshop discussing rhinoceros poaching. It is difficult to say if four events in two years is a sufficient or effective number of activities to raise awareness of wildlife crime. Almost certainly, member nations of these different partners are hearing about wildlife crime in other capacities. Yet to make an impact on increasing awareness and importance of wildlife crime by only reaching out twice a year, it could be argued ICCWC may need to increase its efforts. This may possibly take place in the future with changes to ICCWC's funding. Whilst ICCWC has drawn interest in terms of possible funders from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the United States State Department, the Environmental Investigation Agency, the World Bank, the International Fund for Animal Welfare, TRAFFIC, the World Wide Fund for Nature and the UK's Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (personal communication), the European Commission has allocated EUR 1.73 million to INTERPOL over the next three years to support ICCWC (European Commission 2012). Additionally, ICCWC was on the agenda multiple times at the March 2013 CITES Conference of the Parties meeting and there are several events in the planning stages (personal communication CITES), this may indicate an increase in activity.

## **6 Findings**

### **Interview and Questionnaire responses**

As INTERPOL is the main focus of centralised communication for law enforcement worldwide, especially their Environmental Crime Programme in terms of wildlife crime, as stated previously, to gauge the possibility that more law enforcement agencies are more aware of wildlife crime and therefore it might be becoming a more mainstream crime, staff of INTERPOL's Environmental Crime Programme were interviewed. They were asked if after the launch of ICCWC they witnessed an increase of engagement with wildlife crime from Member countries. This would be in the form of direct contact with their unit or through what is called an 'Ecomessage' which comes through the members' in-country INTERPOL National Central

Bureaus to INTERPOL headquarters and then to the Environment Crime Programme (INTERPOL 2013). Initially, their impression was that Ecomessages had not increased in relation to ICCWC (personal communication). The number of Ecomessages did increase from 2006 to 2010 by approximately 20% and then rose again from 2010 to 2011 by about 25% (personal communication). From 2011 though to July 2012, Ecomessages have declined, which is attributed to a probable change in the way that the intelligence is managed rather than a decrease of engagement with law enforcement members (personal communication). So whilst, the Ecomessages' have increased staff felt this was not specifically or directly connected to ICCWC. Additionally, Member countries contact INTERPOL about wildlife and other green crimes through standard intelligence channels rather than the Ecomessage. It was estimated that around 100 information reports were received by the Environmental Crime Programme in 2010 and that these have risen to over 300 currently (personal communication). Though this increase coincides with ICCWC's launch, again there was no indication that the two were directly related.

There are a number of factors that limit the conclusions that can be drawn from this information. First, it is standard practice at INTERPOL to not give specific statistics on this sort of information as far as number of messages in one month, the country contacting them, or more specific details of the incident. This is because technically INTERPOL is not the 'owner' of the information (personal communication). They have not obtained permission from the source of the information to share this with a third party (personal communication). There are also presumably security and confidentiality concerns regarding on-going investigations. In order to get more specific data then as to the level of contact between countries and INTERPOL about wildlife crime, or any crime, each country would have to be contacted individually. Second, there is no way to link ICCWC activities to the increase of Ecomessages or reports as the Environmental Crime Programme and all the other ICCWC partners engage in projects that are not attached to ICCWC, but may deal with wildlife crime. Third, member countries are also involved with NGOs and other inter-governmental programmes that are combating wildlife trafficking so those too may be increasing their awareness.

In general, interviewees tended to think that ICCWC so far was limited in its effectiveness as it had not undertaken very many activities (personal communications). This could be attributed to the growing pains of a new project and partners learning to work with one another at the more senior levels within the organisations (personal communication). It could be too that there are other such cooperative efforts that take up partners' time or that have not achieved their intended aims, such as the Green Customs Initiative (personal communication). This initiative started in 2004 and was designed as "an unprecedented partnership of international organisations cooperating to prevent the illegal trade in environmentally-sensitive commodities and the facilitation of trade in these" (Green Customs n.d.). It, too, seeks to improve capacity of Customs and related enforcement agencies to detect and prevent illegal trade of wildlife, but other environmental black markets as well (Green Customs n.d.). All partners in ICCWC except for the World Bank are involved, so it could be argued that the organisations spread themselves too thin with duplicated efforts. If these attempts at cooperation repeatedly are unsuccessful or undertaken half-heartedly, this affects the enthusiasm and level of engagement of the partners involved, as there is some amount of distrust and worry over the other agencies' commitment. At the operational level for the partners

involved, ICCWC is not particularly relevant (personal communication). Individuals from each of the partner agencies have always and will continue to work together regardless of programmes like ICCWC when assisting each other with seizures for instance and sharing intelligence (personal communication).

Whilst ICCWC as of yet may have had limited impact on Member country engagement with wildlife trafficking, as CITES (personal communication) indicated there is evidence of more high-level international awareness of this green crime. This is seen in discussions at United Nations Security Council Meetings and other United Nations meetings such as the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, where wildlife trafficking was recognised as a serious organised crime and ICCWC was encouraged to continue its efforts to combat it (personal communication CITES).

ICCWC is designed in the medium and long-term to increase awareness of wildlife trafficking and bring it more into the mainstream. From the above, the actions undertaken under the ICCWC banner to do this have been limited, but are showing clear signs of progress and commitment to continue their efforts. There is awareness on the part of INTERPOL's Environmental Crime Programme of ICCWC's potential to improve and a willingness to make this happen (personal communication). There is some indication that wildlife crime awareness by law enforcement is increasing with the increase in Ecomessages and reports received by the Environmental Crime Programme. Whilst this cannot be directly correlated to ICCWC, it is a small piece of evidence that the intentions of ICCWC are being brought about. Part of making wildlife crime more mainstream is also to make it part of the global consciousness and there is indication of this with the discussion taking place at the UN. Another way to achieve increased global consciousness is to raise awareness of its newsworthiness and to see that this is happening, the media coverage of wildlife trafficking can be assessed. The following section outlines the findings from the content analysis of the newspaper articles collected for this study.

## **ICCWC and Wildlife Trafficking in the media**

### *The Media Coverage*

The LexisNexis newspaper archive searches detailed above resulted in nearly 1400 articles between July 2002 and July 2012. When looking at full calendar years, so 2003 to 2011, the news media coverage is consistently around 100 articles between 2003 and 2008 with a noticeable dip in 2009 and then coverage doubles in 2010 and increases again by nearly 50% in 2011 (see Figure 1). Again, ICCWC was launched in November of 2010. Looking more closely at the time period around when ICCWC came into being, it can be seen that news coverage in 2009, the year with the least frequent coverage in this sample, had less than 15 articles per month with March and October having only one article in the global media about wildlife trafficking (see Figure 2). The year 2010 also starts off with low coverage, but this is not repeated to the same degree after February 2010. The fewest articles seen are in December 2010 with seven articles and April and May of 2010 with nine articles. The average number of articles per month from January 2009 to June 2012 (the last complete month of data) is 16.4. The year preceding the introduction of ICCWC (November 2009 to October 2010) has an



average number of articles per month of 14.7. After the introduction of ICCWC (December 2010 to November 2011), the average is 24.1. Initially, it might be that ICCWC may be having some impact with the increase in coverage.

Also of interest is how much press coverage ICCWC itself is receiving and the search results yield that this is limited (see Figure 3). The earliest mentions of ICCWC are a few articles in March 2010 announcing that a cooperative project to combat wildlife crime would be launched later in the year. The most reporting then coincides with its launch (21 articles) and the Tiger Summit in Bangkok in February 2012 (19 articles). In other months, there are occasional mentions of it. The reporting on ICCWC is in addition to the reporting on the illegal wildlife trade.

Further content analysis of the sample of articles reveals connections between the news coverage and the press releases at the partners' websites. Particularly the coverage of ICCWC by the news media appears to be prompted by the press releases of the partner agencies. This is apparent by the date of reporting and the quotes in the news media taken from the ICCWC partners' press releases. That is not to say that this is not impactful or influential, only to note that there is a clear engagement by the partners with the media. This is mostly coming from CITES and then UNODC, which as mentioned are more prolific in terms of press releases and documentation of ICCWC according to their websites. Press releases from the partners about other projects, such as law enforcement operations by INTERPOL's Environmental Crime Programme or Conference of the Parties meetings by CITES, also feature within the sample. Other wildlife trafficking news media coverage appears to be generated on its own, meaning that it was researched by a journalist rather than the journalist being given material to report on. Often times, these are stemming from a particularly dramatic poaching incident or major seizure by a police agency.

### *The Species and the Countries in the Media*

Now that the trends of wildlife trafficking in the media and the type of reporting that has taken place has been discussed it is interesting to note the species that receive media coverage as well as the location of the reporting and the places that are being reported on. As would be expected, the so-called charismatic mega-fauna receives the most newspaper coverage. The majority of articles (24%) when talking about wildlife trafficking or wildlife trade discuss the tiger. These queries were run through Nvivo using only frequency. This means that one article may be counted more than once if it refers to multiple species (i.e. counted under tiger and counted under elephant). This explains why the number of articles in Figure 4 exceeds the total sample number. Additionally, this is not a comprehensive list of the species mentioned, but an indication of those discussed most frequently. Tigers are followed by elephants, primates, rhinoceros and bears in descending order of frequency. Turtles receive some coverage as do parrots. Pangolins also are reported on and to a lesser degree gorilla though the latter may also feature within the primate articles. Timber is reported on the least of those species queried (see Figure 4).

Of further interest is where is the news media coverage coming from and which countries or regions of the world are being discussed within the context of wildlife trafficking. Not every country was queried and with the global profile of many media organisations, it was not always possible to link a particular country with a specific article. That being said some

indication can be gleaned as to which countries are reporting on wildlife trafficking, which means there is also information on those who are not. The country with the most coverage is the United States, which is most likely connected to the population size of over 300 million people and to the nearly 1400 daily newspapers that exist there (Newspaper Association of America 2012). The total number of articles over the ten year time period of this study was 289 (see Table 1). This was followed by the United Kingdom with 204 articles. Proportionally, it would seem this is more coverage considering the population is smaller at over 63 million yet there are more newspapers. Media UK (2012) has a database of 1592 newspapers in the UK. Australian newspapers contained 113 articles about wildlife trafficking and Canadian newspapers 104. The next country with the most articles was Malaysia with 75, followed by Singapore with 54 and Thailand with 50. There is also coverage in Africa as South African newspapers had 49 articles. So whereas the West may have the most coverage, other regions of the world are also reporting on wildlife trafficking. Missing from the list of more substantial coverage though is China, which had only 17 articles.

It is possible however, that even though LexisNexis is searching all languages that the concept of wildlife trafficking and wildlife trade may not translate and so possibly it is being discussed in a different context in countries, which in this sample appear to not engage with the topic. What is apparent though is in the sample generated here, China is mentioned in 395 articles as being connected to wildlife trafficking (see Table 2). This is significantly more than any other country, the next being Thailand at 275 and India at 224. In reviewing the articles where these countries are mentioned, it is clear that these three countries are referred to in the context of being the drivers of wildlife crime in the case of China and the origins of the wildlife in the case of Thailand and India though Thailand is a driver to a lesser degree. Queries were not undertaken for the US or the EU simply because there would be too many search variables (countries and major cities) to capture a complete picture of those particular areas connection to wildlife trafficking in this context. Of interest though is that Australia is mentioned fairly often with 190 articles. Whilst it may be sometimes that they are an origin country of trafficked species such as birds, it is more often that the coverage discusses the measures taken to protect their wildlife and their involvement in international efforts to curb the global trade. With all of the data outlined, an exploration of what this means as far as ICCWC and the increase of awareness of wildlife crime will now be discussed.

## **7 Discussion and Conclusion**

It could be argued that only four events over a course of two years would not be enough to make a difference or meet the goals that ICCWC has set for itself. Of concern as well as is the apparent skewed nature of the partner engagement with ICCWC, where CITES and UNODC generate substantial documentation, which reveals discussion of ICCWC at regular meetings, and the other partners have limited coverage of the same project only discussing the few events. As indicated, maybe this is due to the organisations coming to terms with how ICCWC would work in reality. It could then have simply been a slow start. There is evidence to that fact with multiple ICCWC events in the planning stages and multiple events having taken place as the March 2013 CITES meeting (personal communication CITES). Additionally, a substantial, EUR 1.73 million, influx of funding for the next three years may increase activities. And despite

this possible negative first impression, data from INTERPOL's Environmental Crime Programme, whilst small, shows that Ecomessages and reports have increased, which could indicate an increase of awareness and therefore the possibility that wildlife crime is becoming more mainstream in members' law enforcement agencies. Of some concern is that on some level ICCWC seems to be replicating other initiatives, like the Green Customs Initiative. Hopefully though with a clear source of funding, ICCWC can have events in addition to those that the partners partake in as part of other collaborative efforts. From interviewee responses, it seems that ICCWC's best possibility for generating impact is for the senior managers to overcome their reservations and develop more joint operations that incorporate the many strengths of the varying partners.

The possibility of increased awareness is further supported by an exploration of the media coverage of wildlife crime around the time of the ICCWC launch. Whilst as acknowledged, there are limitations to this study, value remains in the analysis generated since as is known the media plays a crucial part in how environmental crimes, in this case wildlife trafficking, are perceived (Jarrell 2009) and if they are receiving attention. By exploring the media connection to ICCWC, some understanding of how wildlife trafficking is being conceptualised on a global scale as well as the seeming importance of this crime to the wider society can be glimpsed. In turn, this allows exploration as to if efforts such as ICCWC are making the difference that they intended. There is the possibility that ICCWC is helping to raise awareness of wildlife crime. The content analysis of the sample of world news coverage shows that wildlife crime articles have been reported upon with more regularity than before the launch of ICCWC. Admittedly, there is no way to definitively connect the two, but this provides a basis for further examination. The mega-fauna receive the most coverage and this can be useful to know as efforts can be made to increase the awareness and concern over the exploitation of other species that are threatened, but overlooked. The media coverage was shown to be centred in certain regions of the world and this too may be helpful in revealing where to target campaigns to increase awareness. This seemed to particularly be the case in parts of Africa and South America. The lack of coverage may not only indicate the lack of awareness, but it may also indicate a need for improving or creating the media apparatus itself. This is important as a majority of the regions outside of the West, where coverage is highest, are victimised by this wildlife crime as they are the centres for biodiversity. So in addition to uncovering concern over wildlife trafficking, assessing the media coverage in certain areas also exposes the possible need to develop the media itself to not only help to combat green crimes, but other crimes and human rights violations as well.

Wildlife trafficking is a multi-billion Euro black market that involves hundreds of millions of plants and non-human animals annually (Fison 2011; CITES 2012*b*). This has finally begun to gain the attention of academics and law enforcement communities, who are collaborating with environmental and conservation non-governmental organisations in developing strategies to reduce this violent, environmentally destructive green crime. Key to this is raising the global awareness of the prevalence and impact of wildlife trafficking and to coordinate law enforcement operations, which is the aim of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime discussed in this chapter. ICCWC is a collaborative effort of INTERPOL, CITES, WCO, the World Bank, and UNODC that aims to bring coordinated support to national wildlife law

enforcement agencies and enhance the awareness of this green crime. Whilst there is no concrete evidence to suggest that in the two-plus years of existence ICCWC has succeeded in increasing the awareness of wildlife crime or making it more mainstream, there are small indications that these things are taking place albeit on a small scale. With increased funding and the commitment of dedicated agencies and people, ICCWC is a collaboration worthy of continued observation and exploration as it may yet prove to be highly impactful.

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Appendix

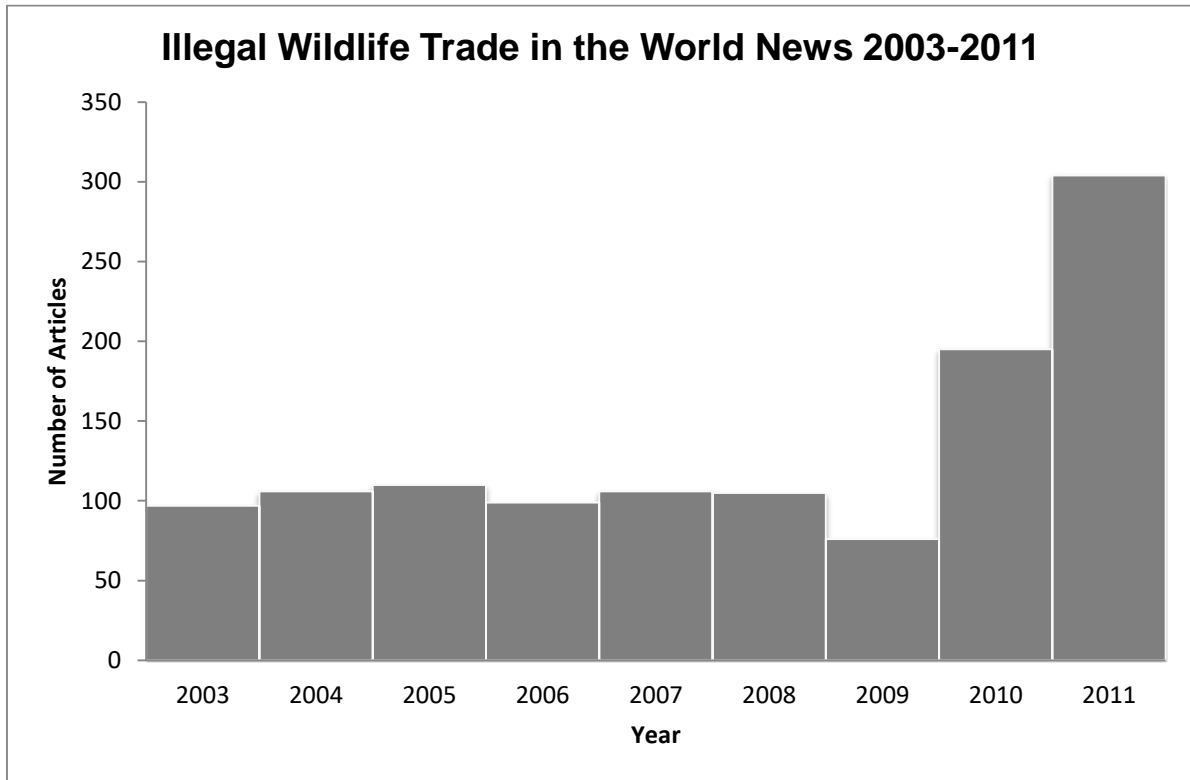


Figure 1

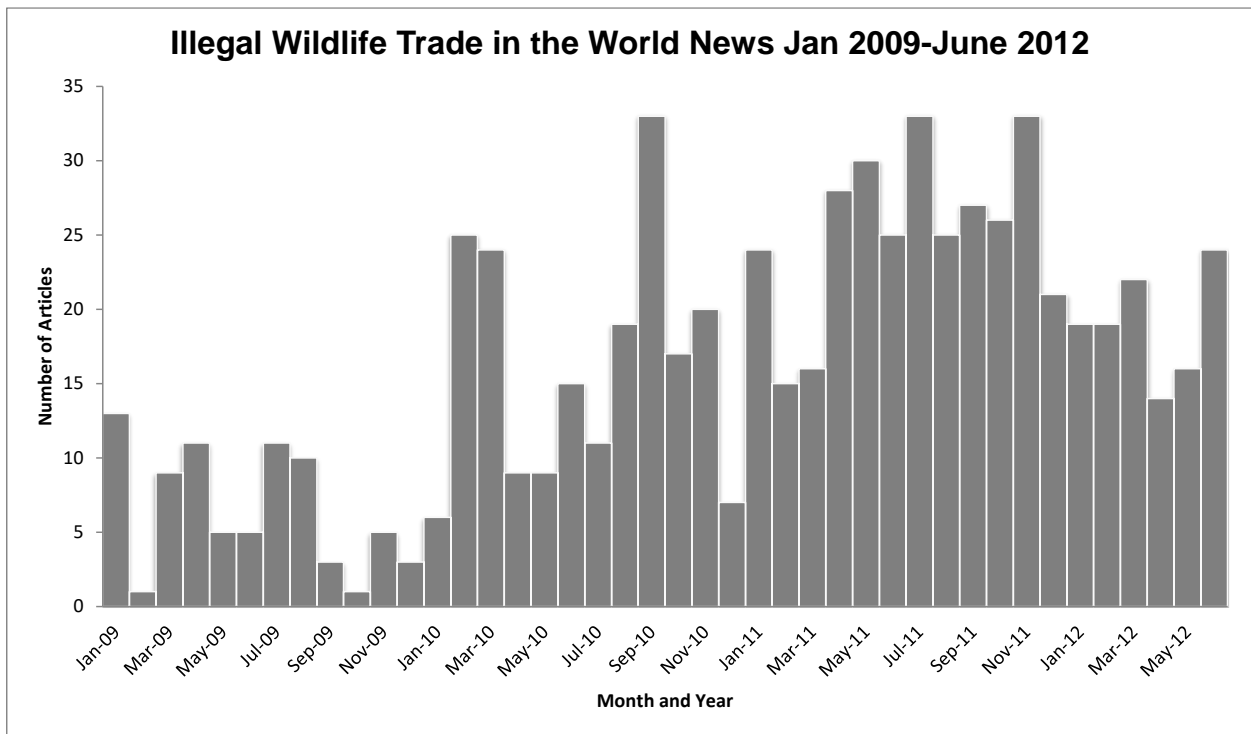


Figure 2

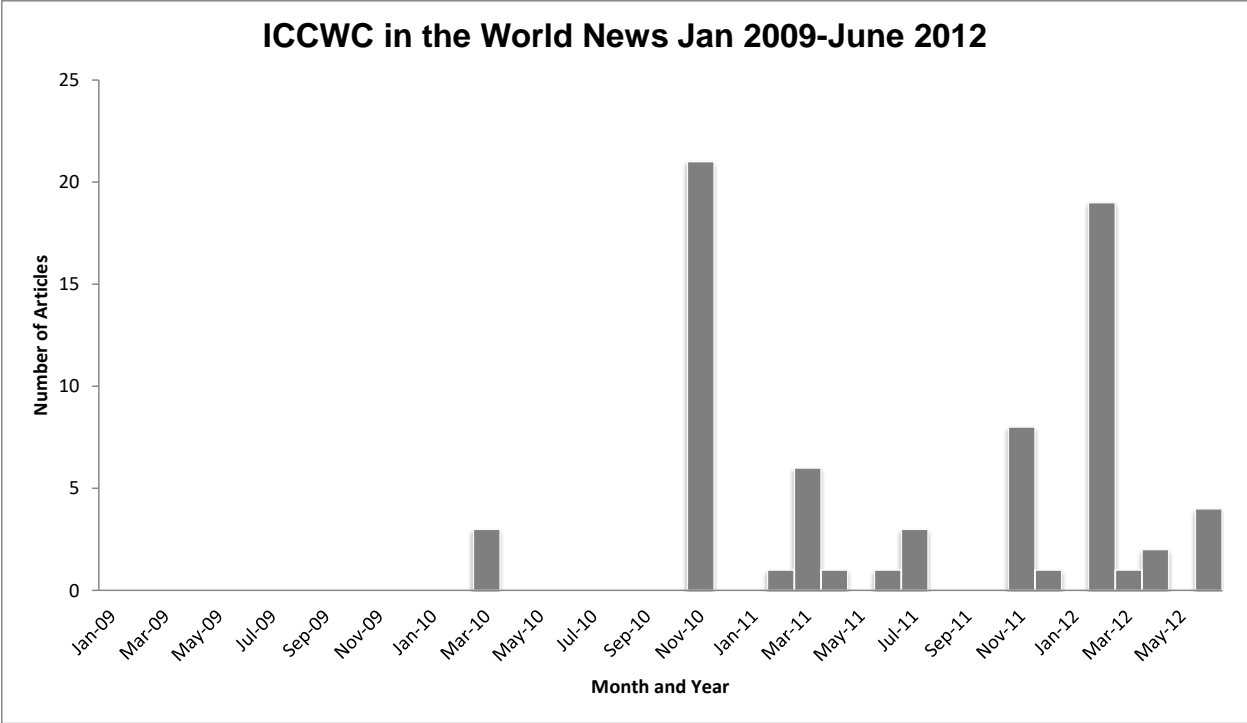


Figure 3

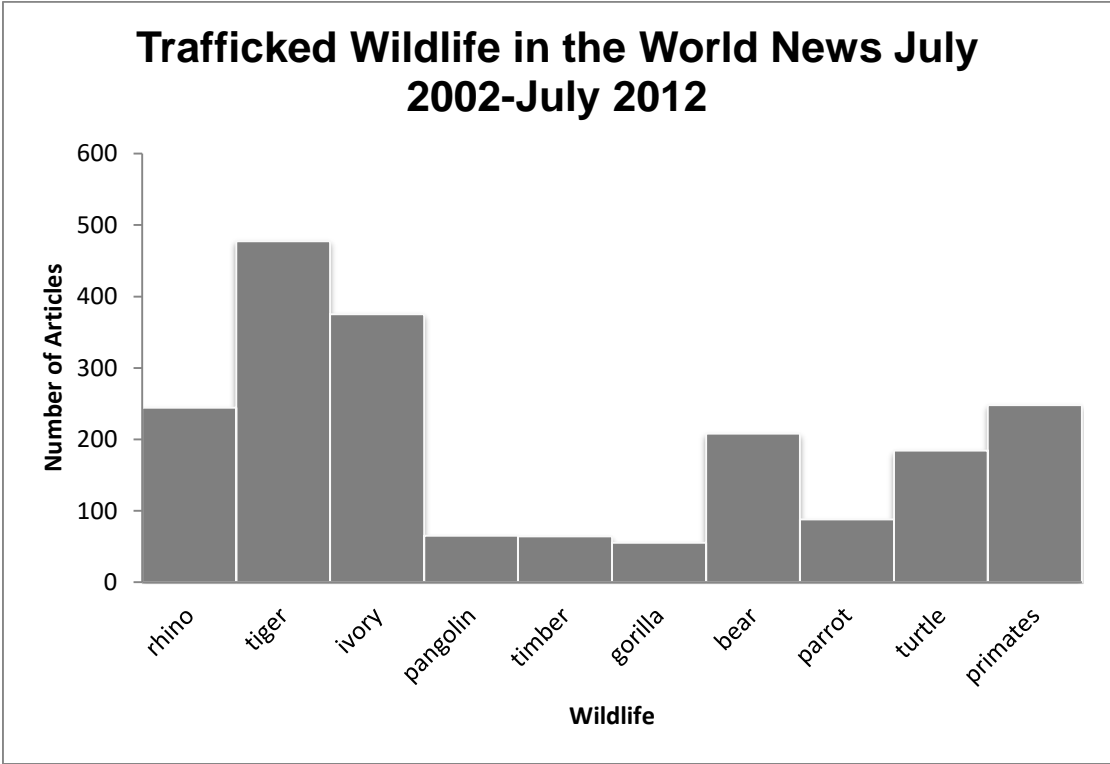


Figure 4

<b>Table 1 – Selected Countries' Newspapers reporting about Wildlife Trafficking</b>			
<b>Country</b>	<b>Number of Articles</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Number of Articles</b>
Australia	113	Malaysia	75
Botswana	0	Mexico	4
Brazil	0	Nepal	15
Cambodia	2	New Zealand	15
Cameroon	1	Singapore	54
Canada	104	South Africa	49
China	17	Tanzania	0
France	16	Thailand	50
Germany	2	UAE	13
India	27	UK	204
Indonesia	0	US	289
Ireland	4	Vietnam	0
Kenya	0		

<b>Table 2 – Selected Countries Correlated to Wildlife Trafficking in the World News</b>			
<b>Country</b>	<b>Number of Articles</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Number of Articles</b>
Australia	190	Malaysia	207
Botswana	17	Mexico	49
Brazil	58	Nepal	104
Cambodia	88	New Zealand	38
Cameroon	46	Singapore	119
China	395	South Africa	133
Congo	52	Tanzania	35
India	224	Thailand	275
Indonesia	187	Vietnam	170
Kenya	69		