



UNITED KINGDOM

PARTY TO CITES (1976) | UNTOC (2006) | UNCAC (2006) MEMBER OF INTERPOL | WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANISATION | EUROPEAN COMMISSION ENFORCEMENT WORKING GROUP

TRANSIT
AT LEAST 455 kg
IVORY SEIZED
SINCE 2010
IVORY

TRANSIT
AT LEAST 22
RHINO HORNS
SEIZED SINCE 2010
RHINO

TRANSIT
2 TIGER SKINS,
HEAD, PAWS,
TEETH SEIZED
SINCE 2000
TIGER

POOR SENTENCING FAILURE TO REFLECT SEVERITY OF CRIME



FORENSIC ANALYSIS CARBON 14 DATING



UNITED KINGDOM | INVESTING IN ENFORCEMENT

KEY INDICATORS¹

INTERPOL National Central Bureau has officer(s) dedicated to investigating wildlife crime

Multi-agency enforcement mechanism established to investigate wildlife crime

Financial intelligence unit includes wildlife crime on their portfolios

Assets and proceeds of crime seized in relation to wildlife crime cases since 2014

DNA analysis used in wildlife crime investigations since 2014

Government monitoring of online wildlife trade

Part of bilateral or multilateral agreements that specifically tackle transnational wildlife crime²

Participated in INTERPOL operations on wildlife crime since 2014

Participated in regional/international enforcement operations on wildlife crime since 2014³

Applied or declared intention to apply ICCWC Wildlife and Forest Crime Analytic Toolkit

- The UK is a leader in **intelligence-led policing** and the National Intelligence Model for policing is applied to combat wildlife crime in the UK. The NWCU prepares strategic and tactical assessments, while the UK Tasking and Coordinating Group—a high level group of senior Government and law enforcement agency officials—sets the strategic priorities. A number of agencies cooperate on implementation of these priorities.
- The UK's **National Crime Agency's** National Strategic Assessment includes wildlife crime.
- **London's Metropolitan Police has a dedicated Wildlife Crime Unit (WCU)**, with two officers trained in forensics and other techniques. The WCU shares information with other agencies including UK Border Force, INTERPOL and the NWCU.

- All police forces in the UK have a **Wildlife Crime Officer** but this is rarely a full-time position and WCOs are required to fit wildlife crime work around other duties.
- Border Force officials address illegal trade in CITES-listed species, whether detected as part of a targeted operation or in the course of targeting other contraband trafficking. A specialist **CITES Enforcement Team at Heathrow Airport** provides support to enforcement agencies across the country in CITES enforcement matters and detection of wildlife items.

- The **Partnership for Action against Wildlife Crime (PAW-UK)** comprises representatives from enforcement agencies, Government bodies and NGOs, and provides a platform for collaboration.

- The **Inter-Ministerial Group on International Animal Welfare** nominally oversees policy relating to the wildlife trade. As of January 2016 the Group had not reconvened and membership had not been finalised.
- The **EU-TWIX database tool** enables real-time exchange of information on wildlife crime among 34 European countries, including EU member states. The UK contributes data to EU-TWIX and participates in Europol and Eurojust.
- The UK has a **DNA database of all rhino horn** in the country and was used in a 2010 conviction that traced seized horn to an animal which died of natural causes in Colchester Zoo.
- Metropolitan Police and researchers at London's King's College and UCL have developed a technique to **recover fingerprints** from ivory.

BEST PRACTICE

The UK Government has dedicated £9.8m to date through its **Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund** to support 34 projects worldwide reflecting commitments made in the 2014 London Declaration. Projects supported include demand-reduction programmes in China and Vietnam, support for an ivory stockpile inventory system in Malawi, development of a legislative handbook for prosecutors in Malawi and law enforcement capacity-building projects in countries including China, Kenya, Malawi and Uganda.

CASE FILES

In 2015, a joint operation by Cumbria Police and NWCU recovered ivory offered on eBay which when radio carbon-dated was found to not be a legal antique. The suspect was convicted, sentence to imprisonment and ordered to pay costs for ivory testing.

MAIN OBSERVATIONS

- The **UK National Wildlife Crime Unit (NWCU)** is a full-time agency focused on obtaining intelligence relating to wildlife crime, including online wildlife trade, and collaborating with enforcement agencies on key threats. Continued funding for the NWCU was only confirmed at the last minute in March 2016.

UNITED KINGDOM | ENSURING EFFECTIVE LEGAL DETERRENTS

KEY INDICATORS¹

Legislation treats wildlife crime as a 'serious crime' as per UNTOC, ie, the maximum sanction applicable is not less than 4 years

Sentencing guidelines for wildlife crime have been disseminated

Known convictions for wildlife crime since 2014

Charges brought under ancillary legislation such as anti-money laundering laws in wildlife crime cases since 2014

Has anti-corruption unit

Known convictions for corruption related to illegal wildlife trade cases since 2014

81/100 TI Corruption Perceptions Index 2015

MAIN OBSERVATIONS

- Following the June 2016 referendum to leave the EU, there is **great uncertainty** surrounding UK wildlife legislation, much of which derives from EU law. The UK Government should ensure existing legislation is maintained and strengthened where possible in the withdrawal

process and that participation in information-sharing and collaborative platforms continue.

- A November 2015 report by the **UK Law Commission** recommended a new Wildlife Bill to replace 'overly complicated, frequently contradictory and unduly prescriptive current legislation on wildlife crime'. No Government response has yet been forthcoming.
- Under the UK Control of Trade (Enforcement) Regulations 1997, **prosecution** for wildlife trade is dependent on what seller's claim a product to be. A recent case saw a seller prosecuted for selling tiger claws, although the claws in question were found to be another species.
- **Scotland has appointed dedicated specialist wildlife crime prosecutors** to work with police investigators from an early stage to ensure cases are well prepared and presented. In 2012, the UK Parliament Environment Audit Committee encouraged a similar approach across the rest of the UK.

BEST PRACTICE

In January 2016, the Proceeds of Crime Act was used for the first time in a wildlife crime case in London,

when a defendant was required to forfeit the proceeds of crime alongside his conviction for illegally importing and selling on eBay parts of primates and leopards from Indonesia. This set a positive precedent, as a POCA order for £5,737 was made in March 2016 against a company for destroying a bat roost.

CHALLENGE

Sentencing for wildlife crimes is often relatively lenient in the UK and does not reflect the severity of the crime. For example, in March 2015 a jeweller was ordered to carry out 120 hours of community service after being convicted of selling jewellery containing tiger parts; a Norwich company was fined £2,000 in August 2016 after four tiger paws and a tail were found in a parcel bound for Shanghai. Custodial sentences are sometimes handed out, such as two 12-month sentences in December 2015 for smuggling San Salvador rock iguanas. A review of wildlife trafficking prosecutions between 1986 and 2015 indicates an increase in the percentage of cases that result in imprisonment or community penalty. A review of the Control of Trade in Endangered Species Regulations, which would provide sentencing guidelines for wildlife crimes, has been delayed. Sensitisation of prosecutors and the judiciary is urgently required to ensure consistently deterrent sentences.

UNITED KINGDOM | ERADICATING DEMAND

KEY INDICATORS¹

Prohibits trade in elephant ivory

Prohibits trade in parts/products of Asian big cats

Stockpiled ivory has been inventoried

Destroyed ivory stockpile since 2014

Destroyed other wildlife stockpiles since 2014

No known incidents of thefts of government-owned wildlife stocks

Government-led initiatives to reduce demand for wildlife products implemented since 2014

MAIN OBSERVATIONS

- With nearly £300,000 provided by the **UK Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund**, a partnership of NGOs and PSI Vietnam launched a ground-breaking targeted demand-reduction initiative called the 'Chi Campaign' in 2014, targeting the main consumer group for rhino horn – middle class aspirational men – with advertisements strategically placed around business hubs.

- The UK issues **no export permits** for unworked ivory, tiger skin or rhino horn of any age.
- In October 2014, the UK introduced **stricter controls** on the re-export of rhino horn items, issuing permits only for art works involved in cultural exchanges between institutions such as museums; as 'part of a family relocation or as part of a bequest'; or 'part of a bona fide research project'. These controls have now been adopted across the EU.
- The **United for Wildlife Transport Task Force** was formed in August 2014, bringing together representatives of NGOs, government and transport companies. The UKFCO is a member of the Task Force. In March 2016, the Buckingham Palace Declaration was signed by 40 organisations, including airlines, shipping companies, and port operators. The Declaration lists 11 commitments to facilitate better information sharing and thus enable stronger enforcement against the wildlife trade in the transport sector.
- The Metropolitan Police launched '**Wildlife Donation Month**' in 2014 which resulted in the public handing in items including unworked ivory and a rhino horn.
- In 2013, a seized elephant tusk lent by UK Border Force to a wildlife park for educational purposes was **stolen**.
- The UK is a signatory to the **Elephant Protection Initiative (EPI)** which includes a commitment to close domestic ivory markets and commit to a minimum 10-year moratorium on all international ivory trade.

CHALLENGE

The sale of all unworked ivory, rhino and tiger products, and any worked items that derive from or have been modified since 1947, is prohibited in the UK. Trade in pre-1947 worked ivory is allowed. TRAFFIC reported (Aug 2016) that in 2004 buyers of antique ivory at London's markets were dominated by American and European tourists, in 2016 buyers of ivory are largely travellers/citizens from mainland China, Japan and Hong Kong. This is a serious concern. China is the world's largest destination for ivory and the Government of China has committed to closing its own domestic ivory market; it appears the UK ivory market could be stimulating further demand among Chinese consumers. Recent investigations conducted by the BBC found the legal trade in ivory in the UK provides avenues for laundering illegal ivory. Despite repeated commitments to close its domestic ivory markets, the UK has yet to do so.