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Regional Training of Trainers to the Law Enforcement Agencies

Two Regional Training of Trainers (ToT) were organized by SAWEN in collaboration with WCCB India and in coordination with TRAFFIC and WWF, with the financial support from INL, USA. The first ToT was held from 21 to 30 November 2023 and second was from 11 to 19 December 2023 in Dehradun and New Delhi, India. The ToT aimed to build the capacity of the wildlife law enforcement agencies and enhance cooperation and collaboration among South Asian countries to disrupt and deter wildlife trafficking in

(Continued in page 2)

Editorial Note: This bulletin contains wildlife crime related news compiled from various online sources. The news contents are not verified by SAWEN Secretariat and hence the Secretariat is not responsible for any inaccuracies. Please contribute to the bulletin by sharing wildlife crime news or any other reports pertaining to wildlife crime from your country.

SAWEN UPDATES

Regional Workshop on Countering Wildlife Crime in South Asia

27 to 29 December 2023

South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN) in collaboration with WWF Nepal, WWF Bhutan, TRAFFIC India along with financial support from Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), USA organized three days' workshop from 27 to 29 December 2023 in Dhulikhel, Nepal. It aimed to enhance the capacity of law enforcement agencies on wildlife crime justice system in South Asia and beyond.



More than 15 judges and prosecutors from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka attended the workshop. The sessions covered regional wildlife crime scenarios, legal frameworks, policy and legal cooperation in the ASEAN region, CITES implementation in South Asia, and key aspects of the UNTOC. In addition, environmental justice and harmonization and standardization of laws/policies; money laundering linking with wildlife crime were also discussed.

Source: [Judicial authorities of Five SAWEN member countries met in a regional workshop](#)



Webinar on Efforts of Frontline Staff in Fight against Wildlife Crime

05 September 2023

A webinar on 'Efforts of frontline staff in fight against Wildlife Crime' was organized on 05 September 2023 by SAWEN in collaboration with TRAFFIC and WWF, with the financial support from INL, USA. A total of 72 participants attended the webinar. It brought together international experts and rangers to discuss the role of frontline staff in combating Wildlife Crime.

Regional Training of Trainers(Continued from page 1)

the region. A total of 68 wildlife law enforcement officials participated in the trainings, with 34 officials attending in each event. Participants represented various departments, including forest/wildlife, police, and paramilitary forces from five SAWEN member countries: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. The ToT focused on wider aspects of wildlife crime and its control, including introduction of new tools and technologies for identification and detection, laws and policies and support for effective prosecution.



Fourth Training to NID officials on Wildlife Law Enforcement

24 to 27 September 2023

A training on “Wildlife Law Enforcement” was organized to the officials of National Investigation Department (NID) Nepal from 24 to 27 September 2023 in Kathmandu, Nepal. The major objective of the training was to equip the officials with the knowledge of biodiversity conservation, illegal wildlife trade, wildlife crime control efforts, institutional arrangements, interagency cooperation in wildlife crime control, prevalent modus operandi, wildlife parts and products identification, efforts of Nepal Army, Nepal Police, NID, INTERPOL, interrelationship between money laundering and wildlife crime and so on. A total of 25 participants from the Kathmandu Valley and neighboring districts attended the programme.

Source: [Fourth Training to NID officials on Wildlife law enforcement \(sawen.org\)](https://sawen.org/fourth-training-to-nid-officials-on-wildlife-law-enforcement)

Trans-border Wildlife Crime

EXOTIC SNAKES RESCUED AT CHHATRAPATI SHIVAJI MAHARAJ AIRPORT

MUMBAI- INDIA, 23 December 2023: The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) officials apprehended an operative arriving from Bangkok with nine pythons and two corn snakes at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport.

EXOTIC FISH SEIZED AT ASSAM

DIBRUGARH-INDIA, 22 December 2023: The Forest Department officials seized 500 Channa Barca and arrested two individuals at Dibrugarh Airport. The duo had planned to smuggle the fish to the countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, China and Japan.

BANGLADESHI NATIONAL ARRESTED WITH 296 STAR TORTOISES IN WEST BENGAL

KOLKATA-INDIA, 09 December 2023: The Border Security Force (BSF) has thwarted a cross-border wildlife smuggling attempt by arresting a Bangladeshi national and rescuing 296 Indian Star tortoises which were being smuggled to Bangladesh.



EXOTIC SPECIES SEIZED AT COIMBATORE AIRPORT

COIMBATORE- INDIA, 10 November 2023: The Customs officials seized exotic species including Terantulas, Albino red eared slider, Red -eared slider, African spurred tortoise, and Royal python at Coimbatore International Airport. Preliminary inquiry revealed that three passengers smuggled the exotic species from Singapore to Tamil Nadu for illegal pet trade.

EXOTIC ANIMALS SEIZED, ONE ARRESTED

CHENNAI- INDIA, 06 November 2023: The Customs officials arrested a passenger arriving from Bangkok and seized two live Ball Pythons, one dead Golden-Handed Tamarin, two dead Common Marmosets, and 26 Woodland Dormice, of which 11 were alive and 15 were dead, at Chennai Airport.

FOUR ARRESTED WITH 1.5 LAKH PEACOCK FEATHERS

DELHI- INDIA, 18 October 2023: The Customs officials apprehended four Bangkok-bound passengers and seized 1.5 lakh peacock tail feathers, weighing 125 kgs at the Indira Gandhi International Airport.

**CRITICALLY ENDANGERED ORANGUTAN SMUGGLED FROM MYANMAR RESCUED IN AIZAWL**

MIZORAM- INDIA, 12 October 2023: The Customs officials intercepted a vehicle allegedly coming from Myanmar and rescued a critically endangered baby Orangutan at Seling village of Aizawl.

TWO RARE SQUIRRELS SEIZED AT TRICHY AIRPORT

MIZORAM- INDIA, 12 October 2023: The Customs officials seized two Malayan giant squirrels from a passenger arriving from Kuala Lumpur at the Trichy Airport.

**BALL PYTHONS, BLACK SQUIRREL SEIZED AT CHENNAI AIRPORT**

CHENNAI- INDIA, 14 September 2023: Customs sleuths at Chennai airport seized ball pythons and a black squirrel from a passenger arriving from Bangkok, Thailand. On September 4, customs officers seized 11 ball pythons and a northern white-lipped python from an Indian passenger.

**78 EXOTIC SPECIES SEIZED AT KEMPEGOWDA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**

BENGALURU- INDIA, 08 September 2023: The Customs authorities confiscated 55 Ball pythons, 17 King Cobras and six dead Capuchin monkeys that were smuggled on a flight from Thailand at the Kempegowda International Airport.

National News

INDIA

NEW SNAKE VENOM RACKET BUSTED

KOLKATA, 31 December 2023: The Forest Department and Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) officials seized huge quantities of snake venom and arrested four persons from Asansol.

THREE BOOKED FOR POACHING DEER

HOSHIARPUR, 26 December 2023: The police booked three men for allegedly poaching a deer at Hajipur village of Punjab. The trio allegedly hunted a deer with dogs.

DRI RESCUES 436 BABY INDIAN TENT TURTLES IN LUCKNOW

DELHI, 12 December 2023: The DRI officials seized 436 baby Indian Tent Turtles from a person illegally transporting them interstate.

**WILDLIFE SOS SEIZED A LEOPARD CUB IN GUJARAT RAID**

GUJARAT, 12 December 2023: The Wildlife SOS-GSPCA, Gujarat Forest Department and WCCB officials rescued a leopard cub during a raid in Jadhavia village, Gujarat.

RED SANDERS SMUGGLERS HELD

TIRUPATI, 09 December 2023: Red Sanders Anti-Smuggling Task Force (RSASTF) seized ten red sanders logs and arrested ten smugglers in Bhakrapet range of Tirupati.

SMUGGLERS HELD, 15 RED SANDERS LOGS RECOVERED

TIRUPATI, 21 November 2023: The RSASTF officials seized 15 red sanders logs and arrested 31 smugglers in Santhathalpadu in Prakasam district.

FIVE POACHERS HELD IN KALI TIGER RESERVE

KARNATAKA, 11 November 2023: The Kali Tiger Reserve (KTR) officials arrested five habitual wildlife offenders and recovered four claws of leopards, meat of sambar deer, pelts of two monitor lizards, beak of stork-billed kingfisher along with country-made gun, ammunition, snares and country bombs, at Shivapur village.

FIVE MEN CAUGHT RED HANDED

BENGALURU, 08 November 2023: The Vyalikaval police arrested five people and seized 12 staghorn ferns, two red sand boas, and an elephant tusk at Ballari road near Guttahalli.

RED SANDERS SEIZED

TIRUPATI, 07 November 2023: The Naidupet sub-divisional police seized red sanders logs weighing 5,388 kg and arrested five smugglers at Andhra border check post.

WILDLIFE BODY PARTS SEIZED

DHUBRI, 03 November 2023: The WCCB and Forest Department officials seized 43 pangolin scales, four-inch pieces of leopard skin, monitor lizard skin, rhesus macaque skin, 25 sticks of peacock feathers, 17 sticks of eagle feathers, a bundle of sea fan, a barking deer forehead bearing a single horn and a segment of deerskin, during a raid in Dhubri.

STF TO PROBE ACTORS, CELEBRITIES OWNING WILDLIFE ARTEFACTS

KARNATAKA, 26 October 2023: The STF has been established to investigate complaints regarding celebrities possessing wildlife artifacts after a famous reality show actor was seen wearing a pendant with tiger claw. Activists have been demanding the government to take action against other celebrities wearing similar artefacts.

330 KG SEA CUCUMBER, 594 KG RAW TURMERIC SEIZED IN GULF OF MANNAR

RAMANATHAPURAM, 25 October 2023: The officials from the Indian Coast Guard and the customs department arrested four men from the Mandabam area who were allegedly in possession of 330 kg of sea cucumber and 594 kg of raw turmeric. Additionally, eight Sri Lankan nationals were arrested for allegedly arriving in the Gulf of Mannar to purchase the contraband.

**RED SANDERS SMUGGLERS ARRESTED**

TIRUPATI, 18 October 2023: The RSASTF officials seized six red sanders logs and arrested eight smugglers in Proddatur area of Kadapa. In another incident on 14 October, the RSASTF officials arrested 15 smugglers and seized 40 red sanders logs, two cars, a mini-truck, and two motorcycles in three separate operations.

**'OPERATION KACHCHHAP' RESCUED 955 LIVE BABY GANGETIC TURTLES, APPREHENDED SIX**

DELHI, 01 October 2023: The DRI officials executed a multicity operation named "Kachchhap" apprehending six individuals and rescuing 955 live baby Gangetic turtles of various species in Nagpur, Bhopal and Chennai. The rescued turtles included Indian Tent Turtle, Indian Flapshell Turtle, Crown River Turtle, Black Spotted/Pond Turtle, and Brown Roofed Turtle.

LIVE PANGOLIN RESCUED

ODISHA, 30 September 2023: The STF and Forest Division officials conducted a raid near Bidighat Chhaka under Deogon police station in Bolangir district resulting in the rescue of a live pangolin and arresting a resident of Bolangir.

FIVE SMUGGLERS ARRESTED

TIRUPATI, 27 September 2023: The RSASTF officials seized 20 red sanders logs and apprehended five smugglers at Sundupalli mandal of Annamayya district.

ENDANGERED WILD TURTLES RECOVERED FROM TRAIN IN ASSAM

ASSAM, 26 September 2023: The Railway Protection Force (RPF) and Assam's Criminal Investigation Bureau rescued 74 endangered wild turtles and arrested two individuals from Sealdah-Agartala Kanchanjunga Express. The smugglers boarded the train in Karimganj and were suspected to have travelled from Mizoram.

LEOPARD SKIN SMUGGLER ARRESTED IN NAINITAL

NAINITAL, 15 September 2023: The Mukhani police arrested a person in possession of two leopard skins. The accused confessed to killing the leopards, drying their skin in secret and bringing them to Haldwani.

FOREST DEPARTMENT TO SEIZE ANIMALS KEPT IN ILLEGAL ACTIVITY AT KATRAJ ZOO

PUNE, 15 September 2023: The Forest Department officials registered an offence against the director of Katraj Zoo for the mismanagement of wild animals where several protected animals are kept in illegal captivity.

RED SANDERS LOGS SEIZED, SEVEN ARRESTED

TIRUPATI, 14 September 2023: The Renigunta sub-division police arrested seven smugglers and confiscated 405 red sanders logs weighing 4,365 kg in Tirupati.

ODISHA MAN SENT TO JAIL FOR SMUGGLING LEOPARD SKIN

ODISHA, 09 September 2023: A court in Boudh district has sentenced a man to three years' rigorous imprisonment and imposed a penalty of ₹10,000 on him under the Wildlife Protection Act in a case of smuggling leopard skin. According to the investigating officer of the case, this is the first time a person in Odisha has been given the maximum term permissible in a case of wildlife crime.

RHINO HORN AND OTHER ANIMAL PARTS SEIZED

ASSAM, 08 September 2023: A major operation at Manas National Park resulted in a seizure of antlers, tusks, animal bones, rhino horn and arrest of five poachers.

LIVE PANGOLIN SEIZED

BHUBANESWAR, 08 September 2023: The STF officials arrested two wildlife criminals and recovered a live pangolin from their possession at Koraput.

WILDLIFE SMUGGLERS ARRESTED WITH 500 PARROTS OF RESTRICTED SPECIES

PRAYAGRAJ, 07 September 2023: The STF officials arrested three persons attempting to smuggle 500 parrots of restricted species from Prayagraj to West Bengal.

THREE ARRESTED WITH TIGER BONES

UTTARAKHAND, 07 September 2023: The team of STF, WCCB and the Terai Central Forest Division officials arrested three wildlife smugglers bound to Rudrapur and seized two tiger hides along with 35 kg of tiger bones at Bajpur in Udham Singh Nagar.

71 KG OF SEA CUCUMBER SEIZED

TAMIL NADU, 06 September 2023: The Indian Coast Guard officials seized approximately 71 kg of banned sea cucumber in Uchipuli sea shore area of Mandapam.

**AMBERGRIS SEIZED**

PUNE, 04 September 2023: Police seized Ambergris weighing 5.24 kg and arrested a suspect from Deccan Gymkhana area. The key market for ambergris is believed to be in Middle East countries, European and South East Asian countries.

37 KG OF SEA CUCUMBER SEIZED

MADURAI, 03 September 2023: The forest department officials seized 37 kg of Sea Cucumbers and arrested a 23-year-old in Thoppukadu village of Ramanathapuram.

**NEPAL****TWO PERSON NABBED WITH PANGOLIN SCALES**

SANKHUWASABHA, 29 December 2023: The District Police official arrested two persons with 200 kg of pangolin scales from the Makalu Barun National Park area.

RHINO POACHERS ARRESTED

CHITWAN, 30 November 2023: The joint team of Park Administration, Nepal Army, Central Investigation Bureau of Nepal Police arrested eight individuals involved in killing of two rhinos inside the Chitwan National Park. Two rhinos were found dead on November 16.

THREE POACHERS ARRESTED AT DHORPATAN HUNTING RESERVE

BAGLUNG, 26 November 2023: The reserve officials arrested three poachers with two muskets, one binocular, and 102 sets of animal traps from the Barse block of Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve.

FOUR ARRESTED AT BARDIYA

BARDIYA, 13 November 2023: The park officials arrested four people with 40 kg of venison, two deer horns and other items at Bardiya National Park.

FOUR HELD WITH RHINO HORNS

KATHMANDU, 03 September 2023: The CIB officials apprehended four individuals and seized rhino horns from their possession.

**PAKISTAN****FOUR BOOKED FOR KILLING BLIND DOLPHIN**

NAWABSHAH, 28 November 2023: The Sindh Wildlife Department booked four individuals for killing a blind dolphin near Mithani of Naushahro Feroze.

**SRI LANKA****14 INDIAN FISHERMAN ARRESTED OVER ALLEGED POACHING**

COLOMBO, 18 December 2023: The Sri Lanka Navy arrested 14 Indian Fishermen and seized their trawler for allegedly poaching from the coast of Karaingar in the northern Jaffna peninsula.

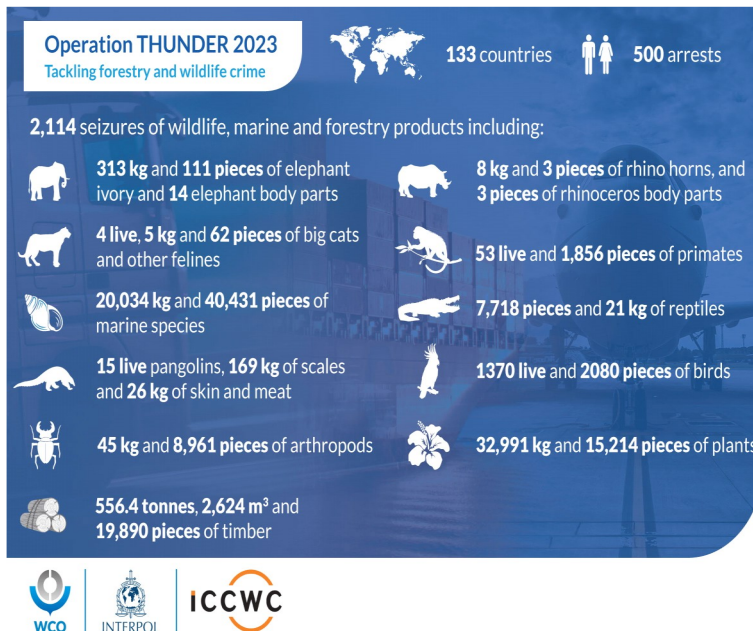
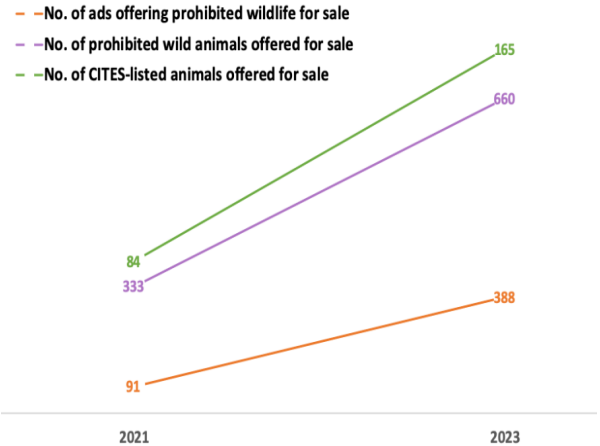
FOUR ARRESTED FOR POACHING SAMBHURS

COLOMBO, 25 September 2023: The Wildlife authorities nabbed four persons for killing four sambhurs and a mousedeer for meat in the Rantambe Sanctuary. Three 12 bore shotguns, two three-wheelers, two live cartridges and a torch was also seized from the poachers.

Global News

Illegal wildlife trade detected on Telegram doubled from 2021 to 2023

SINGAPORE, 31 December 2023: The demand for Indian star tortoises, Leopard tortoises, and scorpions has significantly increased on Telegram, with the number of banned wild animals for sale nearly doubling from 333 in 2021 to 660 in 2023. Additionally, the number of sellers offering prohibited wildlife rose sharply, from 66 in 2021 to 387 in 2023. The report by the Animal Concerns Research and Education Society (Acres) also reveals that CITES-listed wild animals for sale on Telegram nearly doubled, increasing from 84 in 2021 to 165 in 2023.

**2,114 seizures of endangered animals and timber in major international law enforcement operation**

A global operation, named Operation Thunder, led by INTERPOL and the World Customs Organization (WCO) from 02 to 27 October resulted in 2,114 seizures of endangered animals and timber. Police, customs, border control, environment, wildlife and forestry officials from 133 countries collaborated across borders, marking the highest participation rate in Operation Thunder since the annual law enforcement campaign was launched in 2017. Key seizures included ivory, rhino horns, big cat body parts, and timber, highlighting the ongoing threat posed by transnational organised crime groups involved in wildlife trafficking.

Nigeria destroys seized pangolin parts to deter wildlife trafficking

ABUJA, 17 October 2023: Nigeria has become a major transit hub for African pangolin scales and other wildlife products trafficked to Asia. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the seizures of pangolin scales, mainly sourced in Africa, increased tenfold between 2014 and 2018. Recently, Nigeria burned four tonnes of seized pangolin scales publicly to discourage illegal trafficking.

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