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CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

**PROGRAMME TO COMBAT THE
ILLEGAL KILLING, TRAPPING AND TRADE IN WILD BIRDS**



INTERPOL

*Document prepared by
The INTERPOL Environmental Crime Programme*

Programme to combat the Illegal killing, trapping and trade in wild birds

Concept Note

From

INTERPOL Environmental Crime Programme

To

Secretariat of the Bern Convention / Council of Europe



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| | | |
|----------|--|----------|
| 1 | Introduction | 4 |
| | 1.1 INTERPOL Environmental Crime Programme | 4 |
| | 1.2 Back ground | 4 |
| | 1.3 Project summary..... | 4 |
| | 1.4 Intelligence led policing | 5 |
| 2 | Project details | 5 |
| | 2.1 Aims | 5 |
| | 2.2 Objectives..... | 5 |
| 3 | Scope and methodology..... | 6 |
| | 3.1 Enforcement and Legal Aspects..... | 6 |
| | 3.2 Biological and Institutional Aspects..... | 6 |
| | 3.3 Awareness Aspects..... | 7 |
| 4 | Deliverables | 7 |
| 5 | Project resources | 7 |
| | 5.1 Duration | 8 |
| | 5.2 Cost | 8 |

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTERPOL Environmental Crime Programme

INTERPOL is the world's largest international police organisation, with 190 member countries that facilitate cross-border police cooperation support and assist or organisation and authorities whose mission it is to prevent or combat international crime. The mission of INTERPOL Environmental Crime Programme is to support INTERPOL member countries in the effective enforcement of national and international environmental laws and treaties.

INTERPOL currently has a number of initiatives on the focused on the biodiversity crime, with particular attention to wildlife and CITES species. INTERPOL is interested in expanding its work in this area particularly by supporting authorities to increase their capacity to enforce relevant environmental regulations.

The biodiversity projects of INTERPOL Environmental Crime Programme are designed to support countries in their governance and rule of law with respect to illegal trans-boundary trafficking of flora and fauna. This work is supported by officers based at the INTERPOL General Secretariat in France and is supported by the Biodiversity Working Group comprising of INTERPOL environmental experts from member countries and the Environmental Security analysis group.

1.2 Background

In May 2013 the 2nd conference on the illegal killing, trapping, and trade of wild birds and 4th meeting of the group of experts on the conservation of birds was held in Tunis in the framework of the Council of Europe/Convention on Migratory Species "Week on the Conservation of Wild Birds". The purpose of the meeting was to monitor the implementation by the parties of recommendations arising from the conference of 2011 and to identify the main remaining challenges and to suggest priority actions to be implemented in order to combat the illegal killing, trapping, and trade wild birds.

The meetings are organised in the framework of the 2013 Programme of Activities of the Bern Convention, in co-operation with the Ministry of Equipment and Environment of Tunisia and the Secretariat of the Council of Europe convened the meetings.

Resulting from this meeting the partners have developed an action plan which seeks to engage further with the law enforcement community, to increase capacity in enforcement of environmental crime as it relates to the illegal killing, trapping and trade birds, and to create an environmental enforcement network to facilitate the sharing of information and experience.

INTERPOL Environmental Crime Programme wish to work closely with the project Members to achieve these goals and propose cooperation in the area of environmental law enforcement actions to support this ambitious and courageous project.

1.3 Project summary

INTERPOL expertise lies in the ability to engage with the environmental law enforcement community in relation to

- Establishments of environmental networks
- Improvement of communications
- coordination of operations
- Training and capacity building

The illegal killing, trapping and trade birds project is complementary to the objectives and priorities of the INTERPOL Environmental Crime Programme. Project CAGE (2012) was the first Operation to directly target the illegal trade in Wild Birds on a globally. This operation involved 32 countries and resulted in 3846 arrests, and seizures of 2270 birds. The experience gained from this operation has resulted in an increase in capability and capacity of the law enforcement network and increased the ability to address crimes involving wild birds.

Cooperation with the illegal killing, trapping and trade birds project would afford INTERPOL the opportunity to build on this experience and expand the knowledge base for the benefit of the European environmental enforcement community.

1.4 Intelligence led policing

Intelligence-led policing is built on the concept of using information and analysis to provide decision-advantage to environmental law enforcement agencies across all facets of strategic, tactical, and operational decision making. From an INTERPOL Environmental Crime Programme perspective, the greatest opportunity to impact on environmental crime is within the scope of operational intelligence. This includes the development of actionable intelligence assessments and collaboration opportunities based on the information flows from member countries involved in INTERPOL Environmental Crime Programme operations.

The intelligence-led policing model is based on the concept of ‘direction’ defining the intelligence question and subsequent collection and analysis efforts being determined by this. The concept implies a continuum of analysis informing decision-making and new information feeding back into the cycle to continue to inform the analysis.



Diagram: Intelligence-led policing model

Member countries and INTERPOL Environmental Crime Programme collaborate in all aspects of the intelligence cycle within the Intelligence-led policing model. Member countries contribute to the direction of the intelligence process by identifying where their intelligence needs are. The INTERPOL Environmental Crime Programme, together with member countries, collects information in-line with the determined intelligence priorities. The cycle continues whereby member countries operationalize the INTERPOL Environmental crime programme intelligence advice and report outcomes back to Environmental crime programme to continue the ongoing process of improving information sharing and analysis on environmental crime issues.

2. PROJECT DETAILS

In partnership with the Bern Convention Secretariat, the Council of Europe Members, IGOs, NGOs INTERPOL Environmental Crime Programme would contribute to improving communications and data analysis, enhance networking between the partners, operational support, and support capacity building through training and guidance.

2.1 Aims

The aim of this project is to provide specialist enforcement support to the project partners in their work on the elimination of illegal killing, trapping, and trade of wild birds and enforcement of environmental legislation.

2.2 Objectives

INTERPOL Environmental Crime Programme shall provide support to this initiative through:

- promoting risk analysis and the development of measures to enhance the enforcement of environmental law especially in relation to wild birds and their habitats, as well as a common understanding in relation to illegal killing, trapping and trade wild birds. This should include an interdependency analysis of Environmental law enforcement on a multi-sectorial level;
- enhancing communication and supporting Member States and partners in order to strengthen cooperation between the public and the private sector;
- improving international cooperation and the cross-border networking between the stakeholders at European level in order to enhance capabilities in case of events requiring mutual assistance at EU level;
- improving information management with regard to Environmental law and crimes involving illegal killing, trapping and trade wild birds. This actions shall include the development of tools and standard operations procedures to improve exchange of information between partners;
- establishing training and capacity building with a view to increasing the awareness of the stakeholders of environmental crime in Europe with respect to the illegal killing, trapping and trade birds and increasing knowledge of the Member States' enforcement capabilities specific to environmental crime; and
- coordination and support of Member States during operations regarding illegal killing, trapping and trade wild birds.

3. SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

The project will comprise a number of dimensions:

- Enforcement and legal aspects
- Collation Biological and Institutional Aspects
- Awareness Aspects

Through this INTERPOL shall work with the partners to develop of a culture of trust and cooperation.

3.1 Enforcement and Legal Aspects

INTERPOL Environmental Crime Programme wishes to support efforts that will result in the preservation of wild birds and their habitats and valuing of biodiversity in Europe. The successful application of the enforcement and legal aspects are critical to ensure success of this of this project.

INTERPOL Environmental Crime Programme shall provide support in the enforcement and legal aspects of this project through engagement with the relevant national bodies and responsible agencies. The initial steps in this process will be to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the existing systems and to gather experience of environmental crime involving illegal killing, trapping and trade wild birds and their habitats in Europe.

The tasks under the enforcement and legal aspects shall lead to the development of a common framework for the effective protection of wild birds and their habitats. This shall be achieved through engagement with the partners to improve the capability of member states to combat environmental crime and develop of instruments, strategies and activities specific to the protection of wild birds.

Environmental crime data indicates that organised criminal networks maybe involved in the illegal killing, trapping and trade of flora and fauna. The analysis of all crime data and comparison to other datasets will explore this relationship with respect to environmental crime involving wild birds and their habitats.

3.2 Biological and Institutional Aspects

The biological and institutional aspects address all levels of the enforcement chain and the activities under this aspect shall include the development of methods, techniques and instruments for operational or training use in this particular field.

The ambitions outlined under the biological and institutional aspects shall be achieved through a comprehensive data gathering and analysis. This shall include the improvement of capacity and the interoperability of the network of agencies that enforce environmental crime legislation in Europe and the Council of Europe Member States' risk assessment methodologies and practices.

3.3 Awareness Aspects

The awareness aspects of this project address the communication and dissemination of knowledge throughout the birdlife community.

The availability of information and the ability to access and disseminate this information is critical for this project. INTERPOL will use the experience gathered from international operations and biodiversity projects to facilitate the exchange and dissemination of information, experience and best practices between Member States, the environmental enforcement agencies and the project partners. This task shall include the creation of informal contact networks between authorities.

The platform to enable the exchange of information shall focus on facilitation of exchange of confidential information through a secure platform to law enforcement authorities, and the exchange of knowledge in relation to the protection of wild birds and their habitats to all the project partners.

INTERPOL uses a secure IT system, I24/7, to exchange information between Members via the INTERPOL National Central Bureau network in a secure and confidential manner. INTERPOL notices are used to share critical crime related information and to alert law enforcement in other countries of potential threats, or to ask for assistance in solving crimes.

INTERPOL Environmental Crime Programme is currently working with a third party (Compliance & Risk) and testing an IT system for a similar project and if this is successful we propose that a similar platform for exchange of information is promoted during this project. This would enhance the ability of the partners to cooperate using an internet based tool and build knowledge on the illegal killing, trapping and trade wild birds in Europe.

4. DELIVERABLES

INTERPOL Environmental Crime Programme shall work with the Secretariat and the programme partners to achieve the following results:

- the development of instruments, strategies and activities/measures in the field of the effective protection of the environment and in particular the protection of wild birds and their habitats;
- the development and improvement of the relationship between public authorities and private sector working in the area of protection of wild birds and their habitats and in so doing to cultivate a culture of trust and cooperation;
- the exchange and dissemination of information, experience and best practices between Member States and between the different organisations or bodies responsible for the protection of critical infrastructures;
- enhancement of the capacity of the law enforcement agencies through the development of methods, techniques and instruments for operational use in the area of enforcement of environmental legislation;
- the creation of informal contact networks between authorities and the facility to share best practices, and
- the development of operational plans, coordination of operations and operational reports.

5. PROJECT RESOURCES

INTERPOL Environmental Crime Programme is an externally funded organisation and the budget is external to the general budget of INTERPOL. As such all activities undertaken by INTERPOL Environmental Crime Programme are independently funded.

While it would be possible to cooperate with the project in areas where there is a cross-over to already funded actions, in order to fully participate and dedicate the time and energy that this initiative deserves it will be necessary to assign staff on a full time basis to this programme.

The activities under this action demand specialist skills and it is recommended to address this as a consortium in order to provide targeted skills in an effective and efficient way. In this way INTERPOL Environmental Crime Programme will work with the Environmental enforcement agencies and manage the secure exchange of confidential information. External partners will provide the IT infrastructure and legal expertise which underpins the network and enables the project partners to build an effective database, and communicate effectively with each other.

5.1 Duration

INTERPOL Environmental Crime Programme will work alongside the partners for the lifetime of the programme and work to achieve the objectives of the action plan drawn up during the Tunis conference (May 2013).

5.2 Cost

The effort and timing will be dependent on the actions and project plans of the project partners and a project plan will be developed to complement existing campaigns. Initially it is recommended that two project officers plus IT support are deployed from the start of the project to commence the data gathering, networking and operational actions.

Depending on the volume of data acquired the cost may increase if it is necessary to increase the capacity of the IT servers.

This may be adjusted, depending on the need once the programme has been developed. Where it is possible INTERPOL Environmental Crime Programme may attempt engage additional co-financing from other sources (i.e. LIFE+) to ensure appropriate resources dedicated to this project.

For example this may cover a project set up as follows:

| Item | Annual Cost |
|--|---------------------|
| Project Officer x 2 | € 200 000.00 |
| IT Support (50%) | € 45 000.00 |
| Assistant Officer (50%) | € 35 000.00 |
| Travel Costs | € 6 000.00 |
| Organisation Operating & Support Costs (20%) | € 57 000.00 |
| Total: | € 343 000.00 |