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A Survey of Customs Administration Perceptions on Illegal Wildlife Trade

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Abstract

The scourge of illegal wildlife trade has increasingly become a global concern. Customs administrations, as the gatekeepers of borders, are well-positioned to analyze, detect and deter illegal wildlife trade. To garner a better picture on this subject and better support the coordination of international enforcement operations, the World Customs Organization (WCO) conducted a survey on the perceptions of Customs administrations regarding illegal wildlife trade. The survey's overarching objective was to glean the general perception of Customs rather than the patterns related to CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) enforcement. The survey's core findings include that surveyed Customs still place wildlife smuggling below more traditional priorities such as tax evasion; surveyed Customs rely on ordinary checks at borders rather than investigations; and Customs' cooperation with other agencies focuses on general information exchange rather than sharing intelligence or conducting joint investigations. About 60 percent of the surveyed Customs have uploaded their CITES violation cases in the WCO Customs Enforcement Network (CEN) database. A slight majority of surveyed Customs maintain CITES violation detection statistics. Most Customs indicated their support for the WCO to continue promoting information sharing and the coordination of joint investigations.

Key words

Customs, illegal wildlife trade

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1. Background

Illegal wildlife trade was a concern to many in the global community long before 80 parties signed Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in 1973 (Ayling, 2013). Nevertheless, the over-exploitation of wildlife, including through international trade, has primarily been vocalized by ecologists and conservation agencies. Recently, law enforcement agencies began giving heightened attention to crime against wildlife (Wellsmith, 2011; Wright, 2011) with recognition that it is as serious a crime as drug trafficking (Scanlon, 2013).

Despite the increasing attention of law enforcement agencies, research on illegal wildlife trade has been limited (Rosen and Smith, 2010; Schneider, 2008) and little is known about it (Rosen and Smith, 2010). Estimations about the magnitude of wildlife crime are done by rule of thumb. Many experts contend that to better protect wildlife a reliable monitoring system should be established to capture the extent and analyze patterns of illegal wildlife trade (Phelps et al., 2010).

Unlike some other law enforcement authorities, Customs administrations are well-positioned to analyze, detect and deter illegal wildlife trade that crosses borders. As the only intergovernmental organization regarding Customs matters, the WCO has long had a close working relationship with the CITES Secretariat and has raised awareness of the scourge of illegal wildlife trade. In addition, the WCO trains Customs officers on how to detect and deter CITES violations.

To help combat illegal wildlife trade, the WCO coordinated several international enforcement operations, such as GAPIN in 2010 and HOPE in 2012. The WCO's Customs Enforcement Network (CEN) database contains detailed information of CITES violation cases submitted by Customs administrations (WCO, 2013; WCO, 2011).

In an effort to augment the limited knowledge regarding this topic, raise awareness, and ultimately to improve the performance of Customs enforcement, the WCO sought to gather information on the global Customs community's perceptions and capacities to fight against the illegal trade. Thus, the WCO conducted in September 2013 a survey of member Customs administration on illegal wildlife trade.

2. Method and data

The main objective of the survey was to analyze perceptions of Customs administrations on illegal wildlife trade and their competency to fight against it. The survey focused on Customs administrations' perceptions on the level of seriousness in their jurisdictions, their enforcement activities including cooperation with other authorities, and CITES violation detection statistics. The survey asked Customs administrations 27 questions via a self-administered questionnaire.

The survey analysis was broken down by the WCO's six geographic regions: Middle East and North of Africa (MENA); West and Central Africa (WCA); East and Southern Africa (ESA); Americas and Caribbean (AMS); Europe (EUR); and Asia Pacific (AP). Out of 179 members, 114 Customs administrations (63.7%) have responded to the survey. The highest response rates were the EUR and ESA regions.

Table 1: Response rates by regions

	MENA	WCA	ESA	AMS	EUR	AP
Number of responses	10	10	16	17	41	20
Response rate (%)	58.8	43.5	66.7	54.8	80.4	60.6

3. Perceptions on illegal wildlife trade

The WCO asked member Customs administrations about their perceptions on the seriousness of illegal wildlife trade in their jurisdictions. The question was designed to obtain information on how seriously Customs administrations think of wildlife crime in each trade domain (export, import, transit). The higher the “score,” the higher the perception of seriousness.

The survey results indicate that Customs administrations of MENA and AMS regions perceive illegal wildlife trade activities as more serious than the Customs administrations in the other regions. ESA region Customs administrations perceive that illegal exports are more serious than illegal imports. EUR region Customs administrations perceive that illegal imports are more serious than illegal exports.

Table 2: Perception on the seriousness of illegal wildlife trade by regions

	Poaching	Illegal export	Illegal import	Illegal transit
MENA	3.1	3.3	3.3	2.7
WCA	3.1	2.9	2.6	2.4
ESA	2.9	2.9	2.1	2.6
AMS	3.2	3.1	3.1	2.8
EUR	2.3	2.6	3.0	2.7
AP	2.3	2.8	2.6	2.5

* 4: very serious, 3: somewhat serious, 2: not serious, 1: not an issue

To compare the extent that Customs administrations prioritize combating illegal wildlife trade with other crimes, the survey asked Customs administrations to rank the major Customs enforcement targets in order of importance. In aggregating this question’s answers, the higher the number of each enforcement target, the higher the priority.

Five regions (MENA being the exception) rated tax evasion as the most important enforcement target. Each region, however, reflected a slightly different weight on tax evasion. The WCA, AMS, and ESA regions placed a higher importance on tax evasion than the EUR and AP regions. The importance of illegal wildlife trade is relatively low across the regions. Among the seven regions, ESA region Customs administrations placed higher priority on illegal wildlife trade than the other region Customs administrations. Twenty Customs administrations (11 members from the EUR region) did not place any priority among the enforcement targets and treat them equally even from the strategic viewpoint.

Table 3: Priority of the enforcement targets by regions

	Tax evasion	Wildlife	Money laundering	Counterfeit goods	Drugs	Tobaccos	Weapons
MENA	6.0	2.0	3.9	5.4	6.9	5.4	5.9
WCA	7.9	3.8	4.2	4.3	6.0	4.0	4.8
ESA	7.9	4.4	3.1	4.5	5.8	4.9	3.8
AMS	7.4	2.6	3.4	4.9	5.8	4.3	4.6
EUR	6.6	3.2	3.3	4.7	6.4	6.1	4.0
AP	6.8	3.9	4.0	3.5	6.2	4.1	4.9

* 8: the most important target, 1: the least important target

Although many Customs administrations placed a lower priority on combating illegal wildlife trade, they do include it in their strategic plans. This probably reflects the growing concern of Customs administrations on illegal wildlife trade. The proportion of AMS region Customs administrations including it in their strategic plans is greater than that of the other region Customs administrations.

Table 4: Inclusion of combating illegal wildlife trade in Customs' strategic plans (%)

MENA	WCA	ESA	AMS	EUR	AP
40.0	60.0	56.3	62.5	61.0	55.0

4. CITES enforcement of Customs Administrations

Customs administration approaches to protect wildlife and tackle illegal wildlife trade activities are encapsulated in Customs enforcement. Customs enforcement forces are deployed in various formats and fashions by countries. This survey, considering the level of intensity of Customs enforcement, categorized Customs enforcement forces into the following three types: (1) regular check-ups; (2) general investigations dealing with various targets together; and (3) special investigations focusing on a particular target.

This author presumes that Customs administrations with special investigation units tailored to wildlife smuggling have more interest in combating it than those relying on basic regular check-ups at borders. Table 5 shows that most Customs administrations across regions rely on regular check-ups at borders in combating illegal wildlife trade activities. Even if they mobilize their investigation forces in order to tackle illegal wildlife trade, they tend to use their general investigation forces rather than establish special investigation units. AP region Customs administrations use special investigation units more than the other regions Customs administrations.

Table 5: The types of CITES enforcement activities of Customs administrations (%)

	Regular check-ups only	General investigation	Special Investigation
MENA	100	-	-
WCA	90.0	10.0	-
ESA	81.3	6.3	6.3
AMS	82.4	17.6	-
EUR	75.6	14.6	7.3
AP	60.0	25.0	15.0

In the course of CITES enforcement, Customs administrations have different levels of enforcement power. This survey arranged Customs enforcement power in order of the depth of intervention as the following four types: (1) detention; (2) seizure; (3) fine; and (4) investigation. Since investigation power impacts enforcement targets more deeply than detention, Customs administrations with investigation power can be interpreted as having more authority to act against wildlife smuggling than those with detention power only.

Most Customs administrations detain specimens of endangered wildlife after detection. Some Customs administrations simply hand over the specimens to competent authorities without seizures or imposition of fines. The survey results show that a considerable number of Customs administrations do not have authority to conduct investigations of CITES cases nor impose fines on CITES violations. The proportion of EUR region Customs administrations with investigation and fine imposition powers is higher than those of the other region Customs administrations.

Table 6: CITES enforcement competence (%)

	Detention	Seizure	Fine	Investigation
MENA	100	30.0	10.0	20.0
WCA	80.0	50.0	40.0	30.0
ESA	100	68.8	43.8	56.3
AMS	94.1	35.3	41.2	29.4
EUR	90.2	80.5	51.2	63.4
AP	95.0	70.0	35.0	70.0

What makes Customs administrations distinctive from other law enforcement authorities is to use canines actively as a vital enforcement tool. Customs administrations tend to deploy canine units to detect stashed goods in luggage and concealed goods inside clothes. Compared to those for the detection of illegal drugs, a small number of Customs administrations have canine units for the detection of wildlife smuggling. EUR region Customs administrations have canine units tailored to the detection of wildlife specimens more than the other regions Customs administrations. Regarding the use of special equipment for the detection of wildlife specimens, several Customs administrations answered that they use X-ray scanners. Given that X-ray scanners are used to detect various illegal items, such as drugs, guns, knives, and bulk cash, it can be inferred that X-ray scanners are also used to detect wildlife smuggling activities across Customs administrations.

Table 7: Customs administrations with K-9 units against wildlife smuggling (%)

MENA	WCA	ESA	AMS	EUR	AP
10.0	-	12.5	5.9	29.3	10.0

As with any enforcement focus, the performance of Customs against illegal wildlife trade activities is influenced by how much Customs officers know about the subject. Knowledge and information about the CITES and illegal wildlife trade are transmitted by training programs provided by Customs administrations. Given that Customs officers at borders encounter a variety of illegal activities simultaneously, training programs for Customs officers have a tendency to cover all risks that Customs administrations should address. Customs officers will of course focus on the risks on which they have received specialized training. Most Customs administrations include wildlife smuggling in general training programs rather than specialized training. Whereas EUR region Customs recruits are more likely to be trained with special programs than the other region Customs recruits, ESA region Customs recruits are less likely to be trained with respect to illegal wildlife trade than the other region Customs recruits.

Table 8: The types of CITES enforcement training programs for recruits (%)

	Special training	Part of general training	No training provided
MENA	10.0	70.0	20.0
WCA	-	90.0	10.0
ESA	18.8	43.8	37.5
AMS	11.8	58.8	29.4
EUR	39.0	58.5	2.4
AP	25.0	55.0	15.0

Patterns and *modus operandi* of illegal wildlife trade smugglers adapt, responding to the changes in the demand for and supply of wildlife species and their products, and law enforcement activities. For more effective and efficient anti-smuggling, updated information and knowledge are essential. In order to update CITES violation techniques and the trend of illegal wildlife trade activities for Customs officers, most Customs administrations chose general refresher programs including wildlife protection rather than special refresher programs tailored for it. The proportion of no refresher program provided in AMS region Customs administrations is higher than those in the other region Customs administrations.

Table 9: CITES violation refresher programs provided by Customs administrations (%)

	No refresher program	General refresher program	Refresher program once a year	Refresher program once every two year	Occasional refresher program
MENA	10.0	40.0	10.0	-	40.0
WCA	30.0	70.0	-	-	-
ESA	25.0	37.5	-	-	31.3
AMS	29.4	47.1	17.6	-	5.9
EUR	4.9	34.1	29.3	-	29.3
AP	10.0	55.0	20.0	5.3	10.0

5. Cooperation with other competent authorities

Customs administrations are required to deal with all risks involved in commercial consignments and traveler luggage in the course of clearing them. Risks that flow through the cross-border trade system also require the involvement of other competent authorities. For instance, pharmaceutical products require intervention of health and drug authorities; fishery

authorities target risks associated with fishery products. As such, Customs administrations work with other competent authorities at borders in tackling illegal wild trade activities. Major authorities that Customs administrations cooperate with for anti-wildlife smuggling include the police, quarantine services, and wildlife protection authorities. Whereas MENA, WCA, and AP region Customs administrations look working closely with quarantine services and the police, AMS and EUR region Customs administrations cooperate with wildlife protection authorities more than with other authorities.

Table 10: Competent authorities that cooperate with Customs against wildlife smuggling (%)

	Border patrol	Military	Police	Quarantine	Wildlife protection	Other
Overall	31.6	12.3	47.4	48.2	52.6	2.6
MENA	40.0	30.0	40.0	60.0	40.0	-
WCA	30.0	20.0	70.0	70.0	60.0	-
ESA	25.0	18.8	81.3	31.3	68.8	6.3
AMS	29.4	17.6	47.1	58.8	82.4	5.9
EUR	31.7	-	29.3	34.1	41.5	-
AP	35.0	15.0	50.0	65.0	40.0	5.0

In cooperation with other competent authorities, the scope of the cooperation between Customs and other competent authorities differ by jurisdictions. When Customs administrations cooperate with other authorities in combating illegal wildlife trade, many of them cooperate with other competent authorities to the extent of general information exchange or intelligence exchange on request. Customs administration's joint investigations with other authorities do not permeate across regions.

Table 11: The scope of cooperation between Customs and other competent authorities (%)

	No cooperation	General information exchange	Intelligence exchange on request	Systematic intelligence exchange	Joint investigation
CITES authorities	15.2	44.6	17.9	0.9	21.4
Police	15.9	29.2	25.7	15.9	13.3
Other authorities	15.9	31.0	34.5	7.1	11.5
Foreign Customs	10.6	34.5	35.4	8.8	10.6
RILO	13.3	31.0	43.4	7.1	5.3

Despite geographical and jurisdictional disjunctions between Customs administrations, given the levels of non-cooperation in Table 11, Customs administrations usually pay attention to cooperation between Customs administrations more than that with domestic competent authorities in dealing with their enforcement targets. The WCO has been providing Customs administrations with various instruments and tools to support cooperation between them. In cooperation with foreign Customs to combat illegal wildlife trade, the same trend as that with other domestic competent authorities is observed. AP region Customs administrations appear to conduct joint investigations more than the other regions Customs administrations.

Table 12: The scope of cooperation with foreign Customs administrations (%)

	No cooperation	General information exchange	Intelligence exchange on request	Systematic intelligence exchange	Joint investigation
MENA	30.0	50.0	20.0	-	-
WCA	30.0	30.0	40.0	-	-
ESA	-	31.3	56.3	-	12.5
AMS	-	37.5	25.0	25.0	12.5
EUR	12.2	31.7	34.1	12.2	9.8
AP	5.0	35.0	35.0	5.0	20.0

Among various types of cooperation with other competent authorities, the most active form is joint investigation because joint investigation is usually based on intensive information exchange and sharing. Thus, joint investigations whereby Customs and other authorities work together can be more effective than solo Customs investigations.

The survey asked Customs administrations how they have carried out joint investigations; the results suggest that joint investigations to tackle illegal wildlife trade activities are not particularly popular. AMS region Customs administrations have more permanent joint investigation units than the other regions Customs administrations.

Table 13: Joint investigation of Customs with other competent authorities (%)

	Permanent unit	Joint investigation in 2013	Joint investigation in 2012	Joint investigation some years ago	No joint investigation ever
MENA	-	-	10.0	10.0	80.0
WCA	-	10.0	-	40.0	50.0
ESA	6.3	31.3	6.3	12.5	43.8
AMS	35.3	-	11.8	-	52.9
EUR	24.4	17.1	9.8	9.8	39.0
AP	30.0	20.0	5.0	20.0	25.0

In conducting joint investigations with other authorities, Customs administrations tend to work with the police and wildlife protection authorities more than the other authorities. That may be because the police usually have the broadest and strongest investigation powers and the wildlife protection authorities are the most competent authorities in tackling wildlife crime. The major partner of Customs' joint investigation in WCA region is wildlife protection authorities. In the AMS region Customs conduct joint investigation with border patrol authorities as much as wildlife protection authorities.

Table 14: Competent authorities conducting joint investigations with Customs (%)

	Border patrol	Military	Police	Quarantine	Wildlife protection	Other
MENA	-	-	50.0	-	100	-
WCA	-	-	20.0	40.0	60.0	-
ESA	22.2	22.2	77.8	11.1	77.8	-
AMS	62.5	25.0	37.5	25.0	75.0	12.5
EUR	4.0	4.0	64.0	20.0	44.0	12.0
AP	33.3	6.7	66.7	53.3	46.7	-

In order to identify ways to facilitate cooperation with other competent authorities, the survey asked Customs administrations about the most challenging factors for cooperation with other competent authorities. Most Customs administrations across regions listed lack of legal basis, communication channel, and limited resources as the most significant challenges. A considerable number of EUR region Customs administrations answer that they face few challenges.

Table 15: Challenging factors in cooperation with other authorities (%)

	No challenge	Legal basis	Communication channel	Mutual trust	Resources	Incentive	Other
MENA	10.0	30.0	40.0	-	20.0	-	-
WCA	20.0	30.0	20.0	10.0	20.0	-	-
ESA	-	14.3	35.7	7.1	42.9	-	-
AMS	12.5	25.0	37.5	-	25.0	-	-
EUR	25.0	22.5	12.5	-	30.0	7.5	2.5
AP	15.0	25.0	35.0	1.8	20.0	-	5.0

It appears that a lack of a legal basis is one of the primary causes of impeding cooperation with other competent authorities. However, the extent of legal basis required for close cooperation with other competent authorities, such as intelligence-sharing and joint investigation, varies. Many Customs administrations need at least MOUs to exchange intelligence. Exchange of intelligence with foreign Customs administrations needs a stronger basis than that with other national authorities. The survey shows that the AP and AMS region Customs administrations cooperate well with other authorities on the basis of human network, compared with the other regions Customs administrations.

Table 16: bases for close cooperation with other authorities (%)

	Legal basis		MOU		Human network	
	National authorities	Foreign Customs	National authorities	Foreign Customs	National authorities	Foreign Customs
MENA	70.0	70.0	20.0	30.0	10.0	-
WCA	10.0	18.2	70.0	63.6	20.0	18.2
ESA	40.0	31.3	40.0	50.0	20.0	18.8
AMS	33.3	43.8	33.3	37.5	33.3	18.8
EUR	56.1	69.2	29.3	17.9	14.6	12.8
AP	25.0	35.0	25.0	45.0	50.0	20.0

Compared to in other risk areas, a number of NGOs operate to protect wildlife. Many such NGOs help or seek to help law enforcement authorities on wildlife protection. Many Customs administrations, however, have limited or no relationships with NGOs. The survey results indicate that the WCA region Customs administrations have more extensive relationships with NGOs than the other region Customs administrations. AP region Customs administrations seem to receive more technical assistance from NGOs than the other regions Customs administrations.

Table 17: Relationships between Customs and NGOs for wildlife protection (%)

	No relationship	Communication	Assistance	Enforcement
MENA	70.0	10.0	20.0	-
WCA	30.0	40.0	20.0	10.0
ESA	68.8	25.0	6.3	-
AMS	62.5	31.3	6.3	-
EUR	35.0	47.5	15.0	2.5
AP	35.0	35.0	30.0	-

6. Information of CITES violation

The WCO's CEN database contains information on illegal trade cases including CITES violations submitted by Customs administrations. The survey results reflect that slightly more than 60 percent of Customs administrations submit their CITES cases to the CEN. The WCO is working with Members to increase the volume of submissions especially in order to obtain a better picture of CITES related data worldwide

Table 18: Loading CITES violation cases on CEN database (%)

	MENA	WCA	ESA	AMS	EUR	AP	Overall
All	30.0	50.0	50.0	20.0	53.7	21.1	40.4
Some	10.0	-	14.3	-	26.8	36.8	19.3
None	60.0	50.0	35.7	80.0	19.5	42.1	40.4

Survey respondents also provided information on any challenges they face in submitting data to the CEN; the results are reflected in Table 19.

Table 19: Challenges in using CEN database (%)

	No challenge	No info about CEN	Technical problem	Little incentive	Limited resources	No detailed data	Too complicate
Overall	35.8	10.1	2.8	5.5	14.7	26.6	2.8
MENA	22.2	33.3	-	-	-	34.4	-
WCA	20.0	-	10.0	-	30.0	40.0	-
ESA	25.0	12.5	6.3	12.5	12.5	25.0	6.3
AMS	26.7	13.3	-	-	-	46.7	6.7
EUR	59.0	5.1	-	7.7	15.4	10.3	2.6
AP	20.0	10.0	5.0	5.0	25.0	30.0	-

To supplement the CEN information, this survey collected CITES violation statistics from Customs administrations. Interestingly, many Customs administrations have not produced CITES violation detection / seizures statistics. Although this limits potential analysis, CITES violation detection statistics are useful to research the prioritization that Customs administrations place on tackling illegal wildlife trade activities in their jurisdictions. CITES violation statistics are available in about 53 percent of Customs administrations. More EUR and AP region Customs administrations maintain CITES violation statistics than the other regions.

Table 20: CITES violation detected by Customs administrations

	MENA	WCA	ESA	AMS	EUR	AP
Availability of CITES violation statistics (%)	30.0	40.0	25.0	29.4	75.6	65.0
Average number of items detected	13	234.5	54.8	469.0	16,383.5	53,612.6

It may be difficult for Customs to share detailed information of CITES violations with other Customs administrations for political and administrative reasons. However, for the purpose of drawing a general picture of CITES violation trends, it would be beneficial to share aggregate-level of CITES violation statistics with other Customs administration via the WCO. Regarding the question of willingness to share their CITES violation statistics with other Customs administrations, most Customs administrations have shared their CITES violation detection statistics or are willing to share them with other Customs administrations.

Table 21: Sharing CITES violation statistics with foreign Customs (%)

	Already sharing	Not sharing but willing to share	Not willing to share
MENA	12.5	87.5	-
WCA	28.6	71.4	-
ESA	50.0	50.0	-
AMS	40.0	60.0	-
EUR	56.4	38.5	5.1
AP	36.8	63.2	-

The main reasons that Customs administrations that have not shared their CITES violation statistics with foreign Customs administrations is mainly attributable to no data available and no requests from foreign Customs administrations.

Table 22: Challenges in sharing CITES violation statistics with foreign Customs (%)

	No data	Prohibition by law	Limited resources	Afraid of reflecting prevalence	No request	Afraid of reflecting performance
Overall	32.5	2.5	11.3	2.5	48.8	2.5
MENA	25.0	12.5	25.0	-	37.5	-
WCA	37.5	-	12.5	-	37.5	12.5
ESA	60.0	-	10.0	10.0	20.0	-
AMS	61.5	-	-	-	38.5	-
EUR	9.1	-	13.6	-	77.3	-
AP	26.3	5.3	10.5	5.3	47.4	5.3

7. Conclusion

Customs administrations are well-positioned to fight against illegal wildlife trade. Due to their traditional tasks and missions, however, Customs administrations' priority to the fight against wildlife crime is lower than for other types of smuggling. Most Customs administrations, however, share the notion that illegal wildlife trade is a global concern against which the global Customs community should strongly contribute. Thus, most Customs administrations across all six WCO regions hope to tackle illegal wildlife trade activities more actively. None indicated they want to deemphasize combating illegal wildlife trade.

Table 23: Customs' near-future responses to illegal wildlife trade (%)

	Wishing more active response	Keeping the current stance	Lowering priority
MENA	77.8	22.2	-
WCA	100	-	-
ESA	85.7	14.3	-
AMS	64.7	35.3	-
EUR	58.5	41.5	-
AP	63.2	36.8	-

In addressing this global concern, as an intergovernmental organization regarding Customs matters, the WCO's role is crucial to rally Customs enforcement and wield it effectively and efficiently. Many Customs administrations expect the WCO to coordinate joint investigations as well as information sharing among member Customs rather than focus on information sharing.

Table 24: Customs administrations' expectation toward the WCO (%)

	Information sharing	Coordinating joint investigations	Lowering priority
MENA	66.7	33.3	-
WCA	40.0	60.0	-
ESA	18.8	81.3	-
AMS	7.1	92.9	-
EUR	36.8	55.3	7.9
AP	15.0	85.0	-

Annex I: Participating Customs administrations

Middle East and North Africa Region

Algeria	Egypt	Iraq	Jordan
Kuwait	Lebanon	Morocco	Qatar
Sudan	Syria		

West and Central Africa Region

Burkina Faso	Cameroon	DR Congo	Ghana
Guinea	Liberia	Nigeria	Sao Tome and Principe
Sierra Leone	Togo		

East and Southern Africa Region

Angola	Botswana	Burundi	Kenya
Lesotho	Madagascar	Malawi	Mauritius
Mozambique	Seychelles	South Africa	Swaziland
Tanzania	Uganda	Zambia	Zimbabwe

America Region

Argentina	Brazil	Chile	Colombia
Costa Rica	Dominican Republic	Ecuador	Guatemala
Guyana	Haiti	Jamaica	Mexico
Panama	Paraguay	Peru	Uruguay
Venezuela			

European Region

Albania	Austria	Azerbaijan	Belarus
Bosnia and Herzegovina		Bulgaria	Croatia
Cyprus	Czech Republic	Denmark	Estonia
Finland	France	Georgia	Germany
Greece	Hungary	Ireland	Israel
Italy	Latvia	Lithuania	Luxembourg
Malta	Moldova	Montenegro	Netherlands
Norway	Poland	Portugal	Romania
Russia	Serbia	Slovakia	Slovenia
Spain	Sweden	Switzerland	Turkey
United Kingdom	Uzbekistan		

Asian Pacific Region

Afghanistan	Australia	Brunei Darussalam	China
Fiji	Hong Kong, China	India	Indonesia
Japan	Korea	Macau, China	Malaysia
Maldives	Mongolia	New Zealand	Sri Lanka
Thailand	Timor-Leste	Tonga	Vietnam

Appendix II: The survey questionnaire

Dear WCO Member,

The World Customs Organization (WCO) is conducting a research project on the illicit trade in wildlife (wild animals and plants), and CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora). With respect to the illicit wildlife trade, this survey seeks information on WCO Members' perspectives, data collection and submission, and capacity building needs. There are no right or wrong answers to this questionnaire. Each response will be valuable to the WCO in terms of further developing the global Customs community's fight against the illicit wildlife trade.

If you have any questions on how to complete the questionnaire, please contact Mr. Chang-Ryung HAN of the WCO Research and Strategies Unit by email (chang-ryung.han@wcoomd.org) or by phone (+32 2 209 9242). It would be highly appreciated if you could send us your response to the survey by **1 December 2013**.

Section 1: Customs' activities to combat the illicit wildlife trade at the border

1. What is your WCO Member name?
(Your answer here: _____)

2. Customs deals with many enforcement targets simultaneously, and may have different enforcement priorities. Please **place your Customs administration's major enforcement targets in priority order**, giving the highest number (8) to the most important target, and the lowest number (1) to the least important target.
 - Evasion of Customs duty and other taxes ()
 - Illicit trade in wildlife ()
 - Money laundering ()
 - Smuggling of counterfeit goods ()
 - Smuggling of illegal drugs ()
 - Smuggling of tobacco goods ()
 - Smuggling of weapons ()
 - Other (Specify) ()

3. Is combating the illicit trade in wildlife included in your Customs administration's **strategic plan for this year**?
(1) Yes (2) No

4. The **degree of trafficking in wildlife** varies from Member to Member. How serious is this problem in your country or jurisdiction? Please place an (x) in the box that best represents the level of each criminal activity.

	4.1 Poaching or illicit flora collection*	4.2 Illicit export of wildlife	4.3 Illicit import of wildlife	4.4 Illicit transit of wildlife
(1) Not an issue				
(2) Not serious				
(3) Somewhat serious				
(4) Very serious				
(5) Don't know				

* Although Customs is not responsible for regulating poaching or illicit flora collection, perceptual information is helpful in interpreting the situation regarding the illicit wildlife trade.

5. Please indicate which agencies are operative at the borders in combating the illicit wildlife trade in your country (or jurisdiction)? (Tick all that apply)
- (1) Border patrol agency, including coast guard
 - (2) Customs
 - (3) Military
 - (4) Police
 - (5) Quarantine agency
 - (6) Wildlife protection agency
 - (7) Other (Specify: _____).
6. How does your Customs administration **address** the illicit wildlife trade? (Tick one item only)
- (1) My administration relies on regular checks or inspections at borders.
 - (2) My administration has a general investigation unit that investigates illicit wildlife trading from time to time, as well as conducting regular checks or inspections at borders.
 - (3) My administration has a special investigation unit to target the illicit wildlife trade and conduct checks or inspections at borders.
 - (4) Other (Specify: _____).
7. When your Customs officers detect suspicious specimens of endangered wild fauna and flora, which of the **following actions** can they take? (Tick all that apply)
- (1) Detain the specimens and notify the competent authorities.
 - (2) Seize the specimens.
 - (3) Impose sanctions or fines.
 - (4) Investigate.
 - (5) Other (Specify: _____).
8. Has your Customs administration carried out **joint investigations on the illicit trade in wildlife with other law enforcement agencies**? (Tick one item only)
- (1) Yes, as part of a permanent joint investigation unit.
 - (2) Yes, this year, as part of a temporary joint investigation unit.
 - (3) Yes, last year, as part of a temporary joint investigation unit.
 - (4) Yes, some years ago, as part of a temporary joint investigation unit.
 - (5) No, my Customs administration has never participated in a joint investigation of this kind.
9. If your Customs administration has carried out a joint investigation with other law enforcement agencies during the past year, **which agencies** did it worked with? (Tick all that apply)
- (1) Border patrol agency, including coast guard
 - (2) Military
 - (3) Police
 - (4) Quarantine agency
 - (5) Wildlife protection agency
 - (6) Other (Specify: _____).
10. Does your Customs administration use a **canine (k-9) unit** to detect wildlife?
- (1) Yes
 - (2) No

11. If your Customs administration uses **any special equipment** to detect wildlife, please specify here.
12. Does your Customs administration provide **new recruits with a training programme on combating the illicit wildlife trade**, as part of the **regular training curriculum**? (Tick one item only)
- (1) Yes, new recruits receive special training on the illicit trade in wildlife.
 - (2) No, new recruits receive general training that covers several types of illicit trade, rather than dealing specifically with illicit wildlife.
 - (3) No, new recruits do not learn about the illicit wildlife trade as part of their regular training curriculum.
13. **How often** does your Customs administration provide officers with a **training programme** specialized in combating the illicit wildlife trade? (Tick one item only)
- (1) My administration does not have a training programme on the illicit wildlife trade.
 - (2) My administration provides general training that covers several types of illicit trade, rather than dealing specifically with the illicit wildlife trade.
 - (3) My administration provides its officers with a specific training programme on the illicit wildlife trade at least once a year.
 - (4) My administration provides its officers with a specific training programme on the illicit wildlife trade once every two years.
 - (5) My administration occasionally provides its officers with a specific training programme on the illicit wildlife trade.
14. How close is your Customs administration's **relationship with relevant organizations** involved in wildlife protection? Please place an (x) in the box that best represents the level of cooperation.

	14.1 CITES management authorities	14.2 Police	14.3 Other government agencies	14.4 Foreign Customs admins	14.5 RILO*
(1) No cooperation					
(2) Exchange general information					
(3) Share intelligence on request					
(4) Share intelligence regularly or systematically					
(5) Joint investigations					

* WCO Regional Intelligence Liaison Office

15. **What challenge most limits** your Customs administration in **cooperating** (e.g., by means of intelligence-sharing or joint investigations) **with other relevant authorities**, including foreign Customs administrations? (Tick one item only)
- (1) Lack of a legal basis
 - (2) Lack of a channel for communication
 - (3) Lack of mutual trust
 - (4) Lack of human and financial resources
 - (5) No incentive
 - (6) Other (Specify: _____).
16. Does your Customs administration need a legal basis to **cooperate** (e.g., by means of intelligence-sharing or joint investigations) **with other relevant authorities** involved in wildlife protection? (Tick one item only)
- (1) Yes, my administration must have a legal basis to cooperate with other relevant authorities, and does not do so without a legal basis.
 - (2) No, my administration does not necessarily need a legal basis to cooperate with other relevant authorities. However, a formal agreement of some kind between the two bodies, such as a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), is required.
 - (3) No, my administration does not necessarily need a legal basis to cooperate with other relevant authorities. It can do so on the basis of a human network, without an MOU.
17. Does your Customs administration need a legal basis to **cooperate** (e.g., by means of intelligence-sharing or joint investigations) **with foreign Customs administrations** to combat the illicit wildlife trade? (Tick one item only)
- (1) Yes, my administration must have a legal basis to cooperate with foreign Customs administrations, and does not do so without a legal basis.
 - (2) No, my administration does not necessarily need a legal basis to cooperate with foreign Customs administrations. A formal agreement of some kind between the two administrations, such as a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), is required.
 - (3) No, my administration does not necessarily need a legal basis to cooperate with foreign Customs administrations. It can do so on the basis of a human network, without an MOU.
18. Does your Customs administration **cooperate with non-governmental organizations (NGOs)** on wildlife issues? (Tick all that apply)
- (1) No.
 - (2) Yes, my administration communicates with NGOs.
 - (3) Yes, my administration receives capacity building, technical assistance or training from NGOs.
 - (4) Yes, my administration allows NGOs to participate in investigations, seizures and other law enforcement actions on the illicit wildlife trade.
 - (5) Other (Specify: _____).

19. Do your Customs officers receive CITES-related **technical assistance** (e.g., identification of specimens) from relevant organizations? (Tick one item only)

- (1) They receive only limited technical assistance from relevant organizations, because my administration does not have close relationships with them.
- (2) They receive only limited technical assistance from relevant organizations, because those organizations themselves lack the necessary information to provide this support.
- (3) They receive limited technical assistance from relevant organizations, because our officers are knowledgeable and do not need such assistance.
- (4) They receive technical assistance from relevant organizations whenever they need it.
- (5) They are occasionally able to obtain technical assistance from relevant organizations.
- (6) Other (Specify: _____).

Section 2: Sharing of data on the illicit wildlife trade

20. Does your Customs administration **submit all CITES violation cases** that it processes (i.e., seizures) **to the WCO’s Customs Enforcement Network (CEN) database**? (Tick one item only)

- (1) Yes, all CITES violations are submitted to the CEN database.
- (2) No, only selected CITES violations are submitted to the CEN database.
- (3) No, CITES violation cases are not submitted to the CEN database.

21. **What challenge** limits your Customs administration in submitting cases involving illicit trade in wildlife to the WCO’s CEN database? (Tick one item only)

- (1) My administration does not have information about the CEN database.
- (2) My administration has technical problems in accessing the CEN database.
- (3) There is little incentive for my administration to submit cases to the CEN database.
- (4) My administration has limited resources for submitting cases to the CEN database.
- (5) My administration does not possess the detailed information required for inclusion in the CEN database.
- (6) The CEN database is too complicated to use.
- (7) Other (Specify: _____).

22. If your Customs administration maintains **annual aggregate detection (or seizure) data** on the illicit wildlife trade separately from its data on other kinds of illicit trade (e.g., smuggling in drugs and counterfeit goods), please complete the following table*.

Period: January 2012-December 2012

	Wildlife and wildlife products		Plants and plant products	
	Piece or Item	Weight (gram)	Piece or Item	Weight (gram)
Airport				
Seaport				
Inland border				
Domestic market				
Total				

* Provide annual aggregate data only please. Details of species, departure country, transport mode, etc., are not required. Where no data is available, please leave the relevant box blank.

23. Is your Customs administration **willing to share** the above annual aggregate data with other Customs administrations? (Tick one item only)

- (1) My administration is already sharing this data with other administrations.
- (2) My administration has never shared this data with other administrations, but is willing to do so.
- (3) My administration has never shared this data with other administrations, and will not do so.

24. [This question is only for Customs administrations that **are not already sharing** their annual aggregate data with other Customs administrations.] Why **has** your Customs administration **not shared** its annual aggregate data with other Customs administrations? (Tick all that apply)

- (1) No annual aggregate data on the detection of illicit trade in wildlife is available.
- (2) Domestic laws and regulations prohibit the sharing of such data with other administrations.
- (3) Human, financial, and institutional resources are too limited.
- (4) My administration has not received any requests from other Customs administrations.
- (5) The annual aggregate data reveal the prevalence of the illicit wildlife trade in my country.
- (6) The annual aggregate data reflect on my Customs administration's performance in combating illicit wildlife trade.
- (7) Other (Specify: _____).

25. How would your Customs administration evaluate its current level of **response** to the illicit wildlife trade? (Tick one item only)

- (1) My administration wishes to tackle the illicit wildlife trade more actively.
- (2) My administration wishes to maintain its current level of response to the illicit wildlife trade.
- (3) My administration wishes to reduce its efforts to combat the illicit wildlife trade.

26. What does your Customs administration think the **WCO should do** with respect to combating the illicit wildlife trade? (Tick one item only)

- (1) The WCO should focus on the coordination of information sharing among Customs administrations.
- (2) The WCO should be more actively involved in coordinating not only information sharing among Customs administrations, but also joint enforcement operations.
- (3) The WCO should give lower priority to the illicit wildlife trade.
- (4) Other (Specify: _____).

27. Please provide any **additional information** about your Customs administration's contribution to combating the illicit wildlife trade that you deem to be useful for the purposes of this survey.

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