Successful Wildlife Crime Prosecution in Europe
LIFE19 GIE/BG/000846 SWIPE Project

13th Meeting of the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Biodiversity

11–12 April 2022, ONLINE MEETING

Cristian-Remus Papp
WWF Romania
Wildlife and Landscapes National Manager
What is wildlife crime?
Successful Wildlife Crime Prosecution in Europe

Project overview

THIS PROJECT IS FUNDED BY THE EU'S LIFE PROGRAMME
Main threats to LCs in the Carpathians (questionnaire, 2016)
MAIN ISSUES
Successful Wildlife Crime Prosecution in Europe
Territorial scope (11 countries):

- EU countries - Romania, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria, Croatia, Spain, Italy
- Non-EU - Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine

https://stopwildlifecrime.eu/
Successful Wildlife Crime Prosecution in Europe

MAIN INFORMATION

Project length: 01/09/2020 - 31/08/2023

Leading partner: WWF Bulgaria


Total budget: aprox. 4.5 million Euro
OBJECTIVES

SWiPE aims to discourage and ultimately reduce illegally killed European wildlife, supporting the recovery of threatened European biodiversity and the health of ecosystems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue 1: Data Availability &amp; Sharing</th>
<th>Issue 2: Knowledge &amp; Capacity</th>
<th>Issue 3: Co-operation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 1 delivers a robust and reliable evidence base on European Wildlife Crime in 11 target countries creating a critical improvement in access to information, enabling comparison of data across Europe. (Actions B1-B4).</td>
<td>Objective 2 ensures that by 2023, significantly increased awareness, knowledge and capacity of 300 wildlife crime professionals (prosecutors and experts from enforcement agencies) in 11 target countries, is underpinned by a supportive policy environment, and results in better national and cross-border governance in relation to WLC investigation and prosecution. (Actions B5-B8).</td>
<td>Objective 3 Efficient communication of project actions and outputs promotes engagement of 10 million European citizens and key target technical audiences, supporting pan-European replication. (Actions B9, D1-D2).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- B1-B3: Baseline data (National and European)
- B4: Wildlife Crime Portal
- B5: European Workshop
- B6: National training x 11
- B7: Advocacy
- B8: Eight pilot cases

- B9: Replication & Transfer
- D1: Public Awareness & Dissemination
- D2: Networking and Dissemination to Expert Audiences
AREAS COVERED BY SWiPE

Lack of awareness among all actors about seriousness and impact of WLC

Low political attention

Incomplete legislative framework

Low public perception

Low priority of WLC for judiciary

Lack of expert knowledge around WLC legislation and links to other forms crime (prosecutors/judiciary)

Lack of cooperation among national authorities (e.g. between judicial and monitoring authorities)

Gaps in data availability and sharing: data split between different authorities & countries and not compiled systematically

Lack of specialised training

Inadequate fines/ sentences

Low probability of conviction

Low probability of prosecution

Low rate of detection & investigation

Low & inadequate fines/ sentences

Low perceived risk for offenders

Excuses available for offenders

High rewards for offenders

Provocation through human-wildlife conflict

Low effort required for offenders

Illegal trade

Illegal taking from the wild (killing/trapping)

Drivers

Conservation targets

Fig. B2.2 Problem Tree - SWiPE
Areas directly addressed by SWiPE are in “bold”

Endangered European species listed under BnD, CITES, or national jurisdiction

Endangered global species impacted by wildlife trade through into Europe

Contributing factors

General enabling factors: lack of resources for law enforcement agencies, corruption...
PROJECT ACTIONS

- Common methodology for data collection
- Data collection in 11 countries
- European Summary Report
- Online LIFE SWiPE Wildlife Crime Information Portal
- European Workshop
- National level trainings
- Policy-advocacy actions
- Implementation of pilot cases

Timeline:
- October 2021
- April
- July
- October 2022
- April
- July
- October
- 2023
- April
- July
TARGET AUDIENCES & STAKEHOLDERS

Primary target audience, with the highest relevance for addressing the problem being: 170 national and regional prosecutors, 220 national and regional enforcement officials and 210 individuals from national CSOs, other WLC experts, staff of national ministries, judges or judicial academies together.

Secondary target audiences have been selected for their potential to support and advocate for increased action, and include 10 mio European citizens and policy makers and decision makers.

Stakeholders - entities that have an active interest in (or are affected by) the issue targeted by the project, including European strategic cooperation partners and the ones participating actively in the project reference panel (ENPE, UNEP, OCLAESP (French Gendarmerie), EUFJE, Birdlife).
EXPECTED RESULTS (I/II)

Overall Expected Result: The number of investigated and reported wildlife crime cases proceeding to trial has increased by at least 25% due to improved expertise as well as better interagency and cross-border cooperation of responsible authorities.

Expected Result 1: At least 50 European actors in the WLC prosecution chain, including prosecutors, enforcement agencies and NGOs representing 11 focal countries reaffirm commitment to strategic cooperation.

Expected Result 2: In order to establish a baseline and inform policy advocacy, intelligence on WLC from 11 countries has been gathered and analysed in participatory manner, delivering facts on the number and type of investigations and prosecutions, reasons for non-prosecution, and gaps in current practices. – Results until 2022 – 11 data bases with WLC cases with more then 4800 WLC cases (not public yet), the European report is under development
EXPECTED RESULTS (II/II)

Expected Result 3: An effective Europe-wide internet-based information portal has been set up, facilitating the sharing of information, being visited annually by minimum 1000 representatives of investigation and prosecution agencies and other specialists on WLC, and whose maintenance is ensured for at least 5 years after project end. - https://stopwildlifecrime.eu

Expected Result 4: Out of 600 experts trained, 300 prosecutors and representatives of enforcement agencies in 11 countries have significantly increasing their level of knowledge and understanding of the impact of WLC on protected species populations, its links to other criminal activities, and ways of successfully fighting it. – European workshop based on European report findings under preparation (end of June 2022)

Expected Result 5: 10 Million citizens reached, and 25 exemplary cases of verdicts have been communicated to the general public in order to change the sense of impunity and low risk. – media reach more then 179 000 000 people

Expected Result 6: Effective project management, supported by robust monitoring and evaluation ensures delivery of objectives and sustainability of project outcomes.
Distribution of the no. of cases taken to the Court/county

[2015-2020 data]

606 cases in total (3 for bears, 1 for lynx)

from 300 + courts and other institutions

606 cases in total (3 for bears, 1 for lynx)

from 300 + courts and other institutions
Distribution of the no. of cases that were not taken to the Court/county (investigation closed)
REPLICABILITY AND CONTINUATION

The consortium builds on the results of previous projects and designs interventions. As part of a global network, with excellent coverage across the EU, FFI, WWF and TRAFFIC partners can guarantee extension beyond target countries.

The project’s Expert Reference Panel will further support replication through their existing networks, activities, and events.

At the end of the project a 25% increase in cases proceeding to trial in 11 focal countries compared to the baseline value of 2021 is expected. The increase can go up to 35% during the first three years after the project ended.

A self-sustaining loop with more cases will create more learning opportunities and continue to increase capacities and cooperation of enforcement officials and prosecutors even after the project ended.
Thank you!