



U.S. DEPARTMENT
OF THE INTERIOR
INTERNATIONAL TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



DOI-ITAP

Success Story

EAST AFRICA

Wildlife Officials Exchange: Increasing international collaboration to address wildlife crime



Top left: West Sacramento Evidence Facility tour; Bottom left: Wildlife Officials Exchange in Colorado; Middle: Poaching suspect after illegal deer kill in Missouri; Right: Maryland and Maine WOE pairs with New York Fish and Wildlife Police on the Hudson River.

Program Background: In partnership with the U.S. State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), the Department of the Interior's International Technical Assistance Program (DOI-ITAP) facilitates job-shadowing exchanges between U.S. and overseas law enforcement personnel who have participated in qualifying conservation law enforcement leadership programs.

Program Goal: Increase international collaboration and individual capacity to address wildlife crime by strengthening global law enforcement relationships to combat wildlife trafficking through relationship building, shared understanding and the application of adaptive leadership.

Phase I: Five (5) former ICCA graduates from Sub-Saharan Africa were paired with five (5) NACLEC graduates to participate in a 1-week adaptive leadership training at NCTC and a 2-week job shadowing experience at U.S. state-level law enforcement duty stations. Phase II will host a reciprocal trip in April for the U.S. counterpart to shadow their foreign counterpart.

Main results of DOI support during Phase I

- Training in adaptive leadership to enable participants to diagnosis challenges and provide practical tools and techniques for leading change;
- Individual capacity building on the identification of wildlife crimes; conducting law enforcement patrols; terrestrial wildlife and stream surveys; evidence collecting and inventorying; and wildlife forensics;
- The development of a cross-regional network of wildlife officials;
- Wildlife trafficking enforcement operations and wildlife inspections;
- Meetings with magistrates to review wildlife law, prosecutions, and criminal justice; and,
- Continued sharing of information and coordination between pairs and as peers.

While in Colorado, Area 14 Wildlife Manager Frank McGee worked with Louretha Tsuseb, Chief Wildlife Inspector in Namibia, on addressing the adaptive challenge of gathering information from regions on the number of wildlife crimes while collaborating on wildlife challenges in Namibia and Colorado. Main outcomes of

Colorado Area Wildlife Manager, Frank McGee on a boat patrol with Louretha Tsuseb, Chief Wildlife Inspector in Namibia.



Illegal Hunting: Poachers may look different, but the techniques are the same

Challenges are not localized but span international borders; it is important to learn from the challenges of illegal hunting in the United States and in Africa. This was accomplished in Missouri during the exchange of a Chief Inspector from the Namibian Police Force and the Missouri Department of Conservation's Protection District Supervisor. With the help of the African Wildlife Official, the team discovered illegal baiting of deer after a registered bow hunter attempted to lure the officials away from the kill site, resulting in the arrest and fine of a bow hunter. The African Wildlife Official stated, "it's the same thing back home, just different lies".

The role of conservation agencies in the United States, and the balance between legal and illegal hunting. In Maine, with Lieutenant Adam Gromely, the Head of Wildlife Crimes Investigation Unit in Malawi, Mr. Zidana learned about trapping in the United States, why it is allowed, and what an illegal trap looks like. While on patrol in Maine, wardens, along with the Malawi participant, discovered an illegal trapping incident, resulting in the issuance of two tickets, and thereby saving an incidental catch of an endangered species, the Canada Lynx. As a result of our locating the trap, wardens are conducting further investigations. This provided valuable lessons learned on of how wardens and wildlife officials in the United States continue to investigate illegal occurrences of trapping until an outcome is achieved.

Miles Zidana, Head of Wildlife Crimes Investigation Unit in Malawi, alongside Maine Game Warden during a patrol for illegal trapping.



Broadening the regional connection and understanding of wildlife trade

One of the primary goals of the program is to **broaden the regional connection and understanding of wildlife trade and trafficking**, both among the African and United States counterparts. The Maryland Natural Resources Police hosted Chief Nicholas Van Neel of the district anti-poaching unit in Botswana to learn about our efforts to protect Maryland's resources. With Mr. Van Neel's assistance, Special Services Operations Bureau Chief, Rob Kersey, was able to locate the destination of the illegal clam trade originating from Maryland but entering the market in New York.

To demonstrate the United States' technical capacity building for illegal wildlife trade and trafficking, the Maine and Maryland peer exchanges visited John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York to learn how illegal wildlife enters the United States. Working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Inspectors stationed at JFK, the teams conducted wildlife inspections uncovering the illegal possession of ivory, fish eggs, and taxidermy butterflies.

Conducting wildlife inspections at John F. Kennedy International Airport.



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