



Consider including some or all of these FAQs on your organization's website or intranet, and link the keywords in your internal search function.

## Have questions about wildlife trafficking? Looking for reliable answers?

### WHAT IS WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING?

Wildlife trafficking is the illegal, cross-border transportation of plants or animals. The gathering (by hunting, harvesting or poaching), transportation and distribution of wildlife and wildlife parts or products is regulated for several reasons: a) for the health and safety of either or both wildlife and humans (spread of disease and introduction of non-native species can have serious consequences), and; b) to prevent over-harvesting or poaching of wild animals and plants because the survival of many species is threatened by international trade.

The illegal wildlife trade is big business: it is the fourth largest criminal market behind narcotics, counterfeit goods and human trafficking, and ahead of the illegal arms trade. It is estimated to be worth between US\$9-20 billion a year.<sup>1</sup> It is widespread and takes place on every urbanized continent of the world. In addition to being a serious conservation problem, with many species being driven to extinction to supply the trade, wildlife trafficking is serious organized crime. It threatens border control, introduces and perpetuates corruption, strips value from legitimate enterprise and government income, and undermines health, safety and security wherever it is present.

### HOW DOES WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING AFFECT THE AVIATION INDUSTRY?

Since wildlife traffickers seek to move wildlife as efficiently as possible, aviation is widely targeted and exploited. Traffickers smuggle illegal wildlife through cargo and passenger flights. Each successful smuggling attempt puts the aviation sector at risk of: a) reputational risk from negative press and negative reports; b) legal risk of liabilities from lacking due diligence; c) economic risk when legal and safety issues result in financial loss, and; d) health and safety risks since trafficked wildlife can carry diseases, be poisonous or otherwise dangerous (for example, it could bite or scratch) or it could escape and create passenger panic.

Aviation companies that take steps to address wildlife trafficking will see opportunities for: a) market leadership; b) enhanced reputation; c) good relations with regulatory authorities and other stakeholders; d) mitigation and minimization of liability.



## WHERE CAN I GET STATISTICS ABOUT WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING?

The trends, transit routes, and operations of wildlife trafficking are difficult to track. Seizure data, however, provides a window into trafficking activity. Visit [www.routespartnership.org](http://www.routespartnership.org) for a range of statistical references from quick reference factsheets to two substantial reports, one published in 2017 and one in 2018 based on an analysis of seizure data from 2007-2017.

## WHAT KINDS OF WILDLIFE ARE TRAFFICKED?

Ivory, reptiles, birds and rhino horn together represent 66% of trafficked wildlife products.<sup>2</sup> Marine products and mammals, including pangolin (believed to be the world's most trafficked mammal), account for a further 15% of known trafficked wildlife and wildlife products.<sup>3</sup> In order of number of recorded air seizures between 2009 and 2017, **ivory** is the highest, followed by reptiles, birds, mammals, rhino horn, pangolin and marine products.<sup>4</sup> Species trafficked vary based on location; however, the most common categories of trafficked wildlife include:

- **Live wildlife** for the illegal pet trade. This is most commonly reptiles and birds (including eggs);
- **Wildlife parts** for medicine, decoration, or jewelry. This is most commonly reptiles and mammals, for example: elephant ivory, rhino horn, pangolin scales, and the skin of a range of different species, and;
- **Live or processed wildlife** for human food consumption. This is most commonly live reptiles, such as turtles, tortoises, lizards and some mammals such as pangolin, as well as small mammals and reptiles in the form of crudely processed meat.

For more statistics, please visit [www.routespartnership.org](http://www.routespartnership.org) for materials ranging from quick reference factsheets to two substantial reports, one published in 2017 and one in 2018 based on an analysis of seizure data from 2007-2017.

## WHICH AIRPORTS/REGIONS HAVE THE MOST WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING?

Wildlife trafficking is taking place on every urbanized continent in the world but some regions see more seizures than others. For example, ivory is more frequently transported from African countries to Asian countries via Europe or the Middle East; birds from South America to Europe; and reptiles from Central America to the United States, giving rise to global hotspots. The top ten countries by number of air trafficking incidences 2009-2017 are (in order 1-10): China, Thailand, UAE, Vietnam, Indonesia, Kenya, India, South Africa, Malaysia, USA.<sup>5</sup> Please note that seizure data is vulnerable to bias. For example, wildlife seizures are more likely to occur in jurisdictions where enforcement officials are aware of and trained to look for wildlife trafficking, which may lead to the perception that trafficking is worse in these areas. These patterns can also change rapidly according to changing trends in trade of different species. For additional information, please read the latest reports at [www.routespartnership.org](http://www.routespartnership.org).

## WHAT ARE THE HEALTH RISKS FROM TRAFFICKED WILDLIFE?

The illicit trade in live animals presents serious potential health risks to humans. Birds can carry over 60 diseases that are transferable to humans, including Salmonellosis, *E. coli*, avian tuberculosis, and multiple bird flu virus strains. The World Health Organization lists the mortality rate of one strain, H5N1, in the region of 60%.<sup>6</sup> Wildlife traffickers do not conform to the paperwork and procedures necessary to ensure the health of their cargo nor the protection of those who may come into contact with it. Smuggled wildlife may escape on board flights posing a health and safety risk and disruption to passengers and crew. It can even impact the weight and balance of an aircraft if multiple passengers panic and move suddenly. Baggage inspectors or handlers may be injured by live wildlife improperly caged or contained, and trafficked wildlife that does not go through quarantine risks spreading serious diseases rapidly from continent to continent.

## WHAT ARE THE SECURITY RISKS FROM WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING?

Wildlife trafficking is a global, organized crime. Traffickers, once they have established safe routes and a network of known and trusted corrupt officials (within governments and the private sector), will utilize the same channels for other forms of trafficking. This increases border security risks. Any form of organized crime destabilizes good governance which ultimately has a detrimental effect on legal and enforcement systems.

## WHAT ARE THE FINANCIAL RISKS TO AVIATION FROM WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING?

Direct causes of revenue losses from wildlife trafficking include:

- Aircraft grounded/prevented from departing upon detection of illegal wildlife;
- Potential legal liability if passengers or staff suffer harm from escaped wildlife;
- Reputational damage resulting from negative media coverage if wildlife is discovered after passing through screening controls;
- Cost to the company to repatriate wildlife to origin.

Indirect causes of revenue losses include:

- Loss of legitimate revenue from the transport of legal wildlife and wildlife products, and;
- Declining numbers of wildlife tourists as passengers, if populations of many iconic species continue to be killed by poachers for illegal trade.

## WHAT DO I DO IF I SUSPECT WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING?

Report it to another member of your staff first, usually your supervisor, if you suspect wildlife is being trafficked. If that isn't an option for you for any reason, officials from customs, local police, national police and international police can field your report, anonymously if you request.

## HOW CAN I HELP PREVENT WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING?

The aviation industry is at the frontline of wildlife trafficking. According to recent analysis of seizure data, there are nearly 20,000 illegal wildlife seizures a year.<sup>7</sup> The ability of the aviation industry to detect and report wildlife trafficking is critical. Companies can raise awareness, train staff and incorporate references to wildlife trafficking into company policies and protocols. The ROUTES Partnership can help with this, visit [www.routespartnership.org](http://www.routespartnership.org).

## WHAT IS ROUTES?

The **USAID Reducing Opportunities for Unlawful Transport of Endangered Species (ROUTES) Partnership** brings together transport and logistics companies, government agencies, development groups, law enforcement, and conservation organizations and donors to disrupt wildlife trafficking, by reducing the use of legal transportation supply chains, and forms a key element of the concerted international response to addressing wildlife poaching and associated criminal activities worldwide. The ROUTES Partnership provides resources and guidance for aviation companies to take action against wildlife trafficking. Companies do not need to become a partner to have access to the resources and guidance.

## WHAT RESOURCES DOES THE ROUTES PARTNERSHIP HAVE?

The ROUTES Partnership has many different types of resources:

- A counter wildlife trafficking communication toolkit for the aviation industry including original, customizable assets and content, such as posters, talking points, powerpoint slides and photos;
  - Customized staff training, specifically: four general awareness modules in powerpoint form, tailored for six geographic regions, with presenter's notes; six role-specific modules in powerpoint and e-module form; role-specific toolbox talks coming soon.
  - Ground-breaking and in-depth reports, factsheets and infographics of the latest trends in wildlife trafficking;
  - A wildlife conservation expert contact list, and;
  - Communications support to promote your efforts in the aviation industry to combat wildlife trafficking.
- Many ROUTES resources are available for free download on the ROUTES website, please visit [www.routespartnership.org](http://www.routespartnership.org)

## HOW DO I BECOME A ROUTES PARTNER?

We welcome new partners to work with to tackle wildlife trafficking. Please contact the ROUTES Partnership here: [www.routespartnership.org/contact](http://www.routespartnership.org/contact) to discuss how we could work together. There is no financial commitment to join the partnership; our priority lies on collaboration: providing guidance and working together to develop and pilot resources so that they are most relevant and helpful to the industry; supporting companies to achieve maximum impact with their actions. Please note that you do not need to become a ROUTES Partner in order to access the ROUTES resources and guidance.

## WHAT IS UNITED FOR WILDLIFE?

**United for Wildlife** was created by The Royal Foundation of The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and The Duke and Duchess of Sussex. Led by The Duke of Cambridge, the collaboration unites the world's leading wildlife charities under a common purpose: to create a global movement for change. In December 2014, United for Wildlife launched the Transport Taskforce to facilitate the transport sector examining its role in the illegal wildlife trade with the aim of subsequently identifying means by which the sector can break those trade chains. Many members of the transport industry have signed the **United for Wildlife Transport Taskforce Buckingham Palace Declaration** making a public commitment to stop wildlife trafficking. The Taskforce is supported by a Secretariat, which provides support to actions identified through the declaration. It also established an information sharing mechanism, identified as an important requirement by members of the Taskforce ([www.unitedforwildlife.org/custom/uploads/2016/03/01\\_UfW\\_Taskforce-Declaration\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.unitedforwildlife.org/custom/uploads/2016/03/01_UfW_Taskforce-Declaration_FINAL.pdf)).

United for Wildlife and the ROUTES Partnership are different but complementary programs. Both encourage and support companies to commit to and deliver actions to combat wildlife trafficking. Becoming a signatory to the Buckingham Palace Declaration and a member of the United for Wildlife Transport Taskforce shows your serious commitment to helping end wildlife trafficking and links you to an extensive network of companies from across the transport sector already working on this issue. The Secretariat of the Transport Taskforce and the ROUTES Partnership gives you the support and resources to help implement this commitment through identified actions.

## HOW DO I HELP CLIENTS/VENDORS ADDRESS WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING?

The ROUTES Partnership's *Counter Wildlife Trafficking Communications Toolkit for the Aviation Sector* is accessible at [www.routepartnership.org](http://www.routepartnership.org). It includes over 150 different assets and content designed to help raise awareness of wildlife trafficking in the aviation industry. Everything is free to download and free to use. Please share any of the toolkit's factsheets, infographics or images with colleagues, clients or vendors to raise awareness about the dangers and risks of wildlife trafficking in the aviation sector. Contact the ROUTES Partnership for more ideas that you can tailor to your unique situation such as developing zero-tolerance business policies and incorporating them into vendor/client contracts.

## CAN I PUBLICIZE MY ORGANIZATION'S INVOLVEMENT WITH ROUTES AND OUR EFFORTS TO COUNTER WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING?

Absolutely! Please use the free communications resources available at [www.routepartnership.org](http://www.routepartnership.org) and contact the ROUTES Partnership at [www.routepartnership.org/contact](http://www.routepartnership.org/contact) for more ideas and support.

Is your company doing what it can to stop wildlife trafficking?  
Let's work together to protect wildlife!

**ROUTES**  
Reducing Opportunities  
for Unlawful Transport of  
Endangered Species



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



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Innovation for peace

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**TRAFFIC**  
The wildlife trade monitoring network

