



**SOUTH ASIA WILDLIFE
ENFORCEMENT NETWORK (SAWEN)**

RETROSPECTIVE REPORT / **2011-2014**

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SAWEN Secretariat

Forestry Complex

Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Building

Babar Mahal, Kathmandu, Nepal

Tel. +977-01-4228835

Fax: +977-01-4228835 | P.O. Box: 19716, Kathmandu, Nepal

Email: info@sawen.org

Website: www.sawen.org

Cover Photo: NTNC

Design & Production by: Ultimate Marketing (P.) Ltd
+977-1-4352223/4385610 | info@marketingultimate.com



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The background of the entire page is a close-up photograph of a beach. In the foreground, there is a large pile of seashells of various shapes and sizes, including scallops and nautilus shells. To the left, there is a piece of white, branching coral. The background shows more shells and a hint of the ocean. The overall tone is warm and natural.

FOREWORD >>

Almost every day, we are witnessing wildlife being unlawfully exploited and traded trans-nationally evading our law enforcement in South Asia and elsewhere. This unprecedented scale of wildlife crime demands highly prioritized, collaborative, and coordinated enforcement response at the national and international level. In view of this, South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN) was launched in 2011 to promote regional coordination among the South Asian nations. It is encouraging to see SAWEN gaining a momentum as an intergovernmental organization in the fight against wildlife crime in the region.

SAWEN is firmly committed to making South Asia a safe home for its wildlife by ensuring effective law enforcement at the national and regional level. The increasingly sophisticated and organized wildlife crime, however, continues to outrun the efforts made by the enforcement communities. The levels of commitment and support from all the member countries and enforcement communities so far raise the hope that collectively we can reverse the trend. All we need is more committed, coordinated, and

targeted efforts. SAWEN will continue to enhance such efforts and provide a common platform for the member countries and all enforcement communities to work together to curb wildlife crime.

I am grateful to the commitment and the role played by the SAWEN member countries in strengthening the organization and enhancing regional cooperation for wildlife law enforcement. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the financial and technical support provided by all partner and donor organizations to strengthen SAWEN, enhance the capacity of member countries and organize meeting and other events from the very beginning of SAWEN. I highly appreciate the hard work of the SAWEN Secretariat team in planning and conducting the activities. I wholeheartedly extend my sincere thanks to Dr. Siddhartha Bajra Bajracharya, Dr. Maheshwar Dhakal, Mr. Sujhav Pun, Mr. Ujjwal Meghi and Mr. Pradeep Bhattarai for bringing out the report in its present form.

Tika Ram Adhikari

Chief Enforcement Coordinator



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THE WAY FORWARD





ABBREVIATIONS/ ACRONYMS >>

ASEAN-WEN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations-Wildlife Enforcement Network
CBI	Central Bureau of Investigation
CEC	Chief Enforcement Coordinator
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CoP	Conference of Parties
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DNPWC	Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation
EC	Executive Committee
ENS	Environmental Security Sub-Directorate
GTF	Global Tiger Forum
ICCWC	International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime
IDA	International Development Association
IDF	Institutional Development Fund
INTERPOL	International Criminal Police Organization
LATF	Lusaka Agreement Task Force
NCB	National Central Bureau
NTCA	National Tiger Conservation Authority
NTNC	National Trust for Nature Conservation
PCU	Project Coordination Unit
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SACEP	South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme
SAWEN	South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network
SAWTI	South Asia Wildlife Trade Initiative
SRCWP	Strengthening Regional Cooperation for Wildlife Protection in Asia Project
TRAFFIC	Trade Record and Analysis of Flora and Fauna in Commerce
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	The World Bank
WCCB	Wildlife Crime Control Bureau
WCD-MIS	Wildlife Crime Database Management Information System
WCO	World Customs Organization
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

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INTRODUCTION >>

This retrospective report 2011-2014 presents the highlights of the activities and achievements of South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN) since its launch in 2011. During the time, SAWEN primarily focused on its institutionalization and promotion at the regional and global levels. Its emphasis has been on enhancing communication with the member countries, building partnership with various organizations, and enhancing the capacities of wildlife law enforcement agencies across the region.

The report is organized in nine sections. The first section presents the perspective by providing a glimpse of the wildlife crime scenario at the global level and in South Asia and the major challenges in wildlife crime in the region. Overall, the report highlights the development process of SAWEN as an intergovernmental organization of South Asia.



The subsequent sections present the key activities and achievements broadly themed under institutionalization; capacity building; information sharing; resource mobilization; cooperation, collaboration, and coordination; meetings and consultations; and the way forward.

[ABOVE] Indian Pangolin rescued in India
© Rajesh Kumar Mohapatra



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BACKGROUND >>

**WILDLIFE CRIME: A SERIOUS
THREAT TO BIODIVERSITY**

The unprecedented surge in poaching and illegal trade in wildlife over the past decade has aggravated the plight of numerous wildlife species on earth which are already under constant pressure of shrinking habitat, unsustainable exploitation, and conflict with humans. Enhanced communication and transportation offered by today's globalization has proven to be deadly to wildlife as shown by the increasingly transnational linkages in poaching and illegal trade. On an average, 35,000 elephants have been killed annually from 2010 in Africa¹ to meet ivory demand in

the global black market. South Africa lost 1,200 rhinos in 2014 to poaching² for their horns which have a high demand, mostly in few Asian countries. The tiger number has plummeted to below 3,500 globally³ and poaching remains the most immediate threat to these big cats⁴. Similarly, the cases of seizures of wildlife and wildlife parts across the globe show an alarmingly high level of poaching and trade in some lesser known species such as pangolins and turtles. For instance, a recent study reveals that pangolin is the most illegally traded species on earth⁵. Illegal logging, poaching, and trade in many plant species as well as illegal fishing are equally serious.

Enhanced communication and transportation offered by today's globalization has proven to be deadly to these wildlife as shown by the increasingly transnational linkages in poaching and illegal trade.

¹ Wittemyer et al. 2014. "Illegal killing for ivory drives global decline in African elephants",

Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America, Vol. 111, No. 36.

² <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2015/01/150122-rhino-poaching-south-africa-conservation-science/> (accessed on January 7, 2015)

³ *Global Tiger Recovery Program 2010-2022*, Global Tiger Initiative Secretariat.

⁴ Chapron et al. 2008. "The impact of tigers of poaching versus prey depletion", *Journal of applied ecology*, No. 45, pp 1667-1674. *British Ecological Society*.

⁵ <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/the-most-illegally-traded-animal-in-the-world-is-one-youve-never-heard-of-9192791.html> based on Zhao-Min Zhou, Youbing Zhou, Chris Newman, and David W Macdonald 2014. Scaling up pangolin protection in China. *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment* 12: 97-98./ (accessed on January 7, 2015)



[ABOVE] One horned rhino poached in Chitwan National Park, Nepal
 © DNPWC

Escalating demand and increasing involvement of highly sophisticated and organized criminal syndicates coupled with inadequate law enforcement responses make the wildlife crime a lucrative transnational business. As estimated by the Global Financial Integrity⁶, the worth of such illegal activities ranges between USD \$7.8 to \$10 billion annually (excluding illegal fishing and timber). As an organized crime, there is an increasing recognition that wildlife crime has its connection with other forms of common crimes such as corruption, money laundering, arms, drugs, and human trafficking.

This burgeoning crime is accelerating the rate at which the rare and endangered wildlife species are going extinct. At the same time, it is rapidly undermining decades of investments and advances in conservation of biodiversity put in by governments and conservation organizations around the globe. Furthermore, with the high linkage to other common crimes and involvement of organized criminals, wildlife crime is becoming a threat to national and international security as well as a major disturbance in building a civilized society. Additionally, there is growing concern about the transmission of diseases with the trafficking of animals.

Wildlife crime has thus become a grave concern demanding more serious attention and concerted actions from the enforcement agencies and wider global community than ever before.

WILDLIFE CRIME IN SOUTH ASIA

Given that the South Asia region is home to diverse rare and endangered species having high illegal demand in the international market, poaching and illegal trade have been a constant and severe conservation threat in the region. More than 160 rhinos were poached in Nepal between 2000-2012⁷. During

⁶ Global Financial Integrity, 2011. *Transnational crime in the developing world*.

⁷ Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation, Nepal.

the same period, Kaziranga National Park in India alone lost 135 rhinos to poaching⁸. Poaching of Bengal tiger and trade in its parts in the region, which makes up more than half of the global tiger population, have been one of the most critical threats to the survival of this iconic species. Many plant species are equally threatened by illegal logging and smuggling. For example, the Andhra Pradesh Forest Department in India alone seized about 3,067 tonnes of red sanders during 2001-2007⁹. There is an alarmingly high level of poaching and illegal trade in many lesser known species such as pangolin, red panda, leopards, deer species, gecko, tortoises, and turtles. Similarly, cross-border trade in native live birds such as parakeets and falcons and live snakes is also rampant in the region.

Wildlife crime is gradually wiping out the species from their natural habitat to the point of no return, undermining the decades of conservation efforts and achievements made in South Asia. Meanwhile, this also compromises the means of livelihoods of people living adjacent to the habitats as most of these people in South Asia rely for their livelihood on the forest resources.

South Asia is mostly the source for wildlife products which are illegally transported to East Asia, South East Asia, Gulf, Europe, and North America using the land, air, and sea routes. The criminals were found to use bordering countries as trade transits mostly benefited by porous land borders and absence of law enforcement in remote and less accessible bordering areas. As revealed by recent cases of seizure of elephant ivories in Sri Lanka smuggled from Africa, South Asia is also used as global illegal trade transit for wildlife products.

South Asia is mostly the source for wildlife products which are illegally transported to East Asia, South East Asia, Gulf, Europe and North America using land, air, and sea routes.



⁸ Soud and Talukdar. 2013.: "Contemporary Crisis of Rhinoceros in Assam: A Critical Review", *Asian Journal of Conservation Biology*, July 2013. Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 82-83.

⁹ Bhagyaraj, A. and D.V. Ramana, 2013. "Status of red sanders in business", *Indian Journal of Applied Research*, Vol 3, no. 7.

[ABOVE] Red Sanders seized in Nepal
© Pradeep Bhattarai



The weak legal framework, in the mean time, reflects the lack of strong political will in combating wildlife crime in the region.

MAJOR CHALLENGES IN CURBING WILDLIFE CRIME IN SOUTH ASIA

The current scale and nature of wildlife crime demands intensified enforcement actions with renewed priority, advanced techniques, and enhanced national and trans-national cooperation and collaboration. The South Asian countries are facing challenges in responding to the crime. The key ones among them are highlighted below.

WEAK AND INCONSISTENT LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Wildlife crime, in most South Asian countries, faces low levels of punishments. The existing legal provisions do not address the current severity of wildlife crime and urgency to control it. The mostly weak legal provision has thus not been able to serve as a strong deterrent to wildlife crime and makes it a relatively low-risk criminal activity.

The legal framework for combating wildlife crime among the SAWEN member countries varies widely. Such discrepancy in legal provisions impedes cross-border cooperation between the bordering countries and ultimately, regional level cooperation.

The weak legal framework, in the mean time, reflects lack of strong political will in combating wildlife crime in

the region. Low priority given by the governments to wildlife crime, rapid changes in administrative set-ups, and preserving institutional memory are other challenges.

LACK OF INTER-AGENCY COORDINATION

Controlling wildlife crime entails good coordination among a wide range of enforcement agencies within and outside the country. Most of the South Asian countries face the lack of inter-agency coordination. However, India, Nepal, and Bangladesh have created a platform for inter-agency coordination such as the Wildlife Crime Control Bureaus or Units.

INADEQUATE CAPACITY

Effective law enforcement always requires science based evidence and intelligence. However, inadequate capacity of law enforcement agencies as a result of limited resources (human, financial), inadequate skills to deal with increasingly complex wildlife crime, lack of knowledge on wildlife crime, and lack of techniques and tools for identifying contraband hinder effective enforcement response. Furthermore, lack of infrastructures such as well equipped forensic labs, proper quarantine facilities, and rescue centers for relocation and rehabilitation of confiscated animals/plants also significantly impede law enforcement.

COMMUNICATION AND INTELLIGENCE GAP

With the growing complexity in wildlife crime, there is a need for intelligence-led enforcement efforts to effectively and efficiently control crime and to respond proactively. But, there is a significant gap in information and intelligence gathering and sharing among the agencies within and among the countries in South Asia. This gap is accentuated by lack of bilateral and multilateral information/intelligence sharing mechanisms and protocols for information sharing and retribution of contraband.

In addition, there is no regional scale analysis on identification of

smuggling route; political economic analysis of wildlife crime; supply demand analysis of wildlife and their products, and root cause assessment of the wildlife crime to address the changing nature of wildlife crime in the South Asia region.

POROUS BORDER AND REMOTENESS

The wildlife smugglers mostly take advantage of the porous borders between the countries for transnational smuggling of wildlife and their products. Wildlife crime is mostly active in remote parts of the countries where the presence of enforcement agencies is weak.

[BELOW] Tiger skin with bone
confiscated in Nepal
© Ritesh Basnet





[ABOVE] Participants of the first regional workshop on the South Asia Wildlife Trade Initiative (SAWTI)
© SAWEN Secretariat

EVOLUTION OF SAWEN

The concept of establishment of SAWEN was realized through various initiatives in the past.

Wildlife crime and the need for enforcement at the regional level to address the growing transnational wildlife trade was recognized in the South Asia Wildlife Trade Diagnostic and Law Enforcement Workshop¹⁰ held in Kathmandu on April 26-30, 2004. After this, the First Regional Workshop on the South Asia Wildlife Trade Initiative (SAWTI), held from January 31 to February 1, 2008 in Kathmandu, highlighted the regional wildlife crime issues envisioning a regional coordination body for South Asia in combating wildlife crime.¹¹

A major milestone toward the establishment of SAWEN was marked during the 11th Meeting of the Governing Council of the South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP), held in May 2008 in Jaipur, India. This ministerial meeting announced support for the formation of SAWEN through the “Jaipur Declaration”. The declaration urged the establishment of a South Asia Expert Group on Illegal Wildlife Trade consisting of relevant technical representatives from the eight South Asian countries. The group was envisioned to provide a platform for experts from the region to work together in developing a South Asia Regional Strategic Plan on Illegal Wildlife Trade and a detailed work program for implementing the plan.

During the Kathmandu Global Tiger Workshop held in October 2009, representatives from South Asia’s tiger range countries (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal) recognized the need for intensifying regional cooperation in combating wildlife crime by creating a regional body and agreed to move forward in materializing it¹². South Asia’s initiative to create SAWEN was also discussed at a workshop session during the 1st Asian Ministerial Conference on Tiger Conservation, held in Hua Hin, Thailand in January 2010. This push for regional networking was appreciated

¹⁰ “The Jaipur Declaration”, 11th meeting of the governing council of SACEP, Jaipur, India, 22 May 2008.

¹¹ Workshop Report; First Regional Workshop on the South Asia Wildlife Trade Initiative (SAWTI), 31 January–1st February, 2008, Government of Nepal, SACEP, TRAFFIC, and WWF.

¹² “Kathmandu Recommendation”; Kathmandu Global Tiger Workshop, 27-30 October, 2009.

by all tiger range countries and the international community engaged in tiger conservation.

Building on these important precedents, the initiative to establish SAWEN gained momentum in May 17-19, 2010 during the First Meeting of the South Asia Experts Group on Illegal Wildlife Trade, held in Kathmandu. The meeting agreed to a 'Road Map' for operationalising and rolling-out SAWEN. The 'Road Map' sketched out the structure of SAWEN and elements of regional work program with the government of Nepal volunteering to coordinate a Road Map leading to the establishment of SAWEN Secretariat in Kathmandu¹³.



SAWEN was formally launched during the second meeting of the South Asia Experts Group on Illegal Wildlife Trade held on January 29-30, 2011 in Paro, Bhutan. The meeting agreed to an action-oriented work plan, establishment of SAWEN Secretariat to be hosted by the Government of Nepal, governance and operational structure of SAWEN, and the need for strategic collaboration on communications and fund-raising. The meeting also agreed that the Director General of the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC), Nepal would serve as the Chief Enforcement Coordinator (CEC) of SAWEN until further provision is made¹⁴.

The First Meeting of SAWEN held in Sri Lanka in June 3-6, 2012 and the Second Meeting held in Nepal in August 26-29, 2014 further institutionalized SAWEN by developing and agreeing on the SAWEN Statute and developing detailed action plans.

These developments eventually helped to establish SAWEN as an intergovernmental support body of the South Asian Countries. SAWEN is represented by the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the People's Republic of Bangladesh, the Kingdom of Bhutan, the Republic of India, the Republic of Maldives, Nepal, the Islamic Republic

[ABOVE] Participants at the opening of the First Meeting of the South Asia Expert Group on Illegal Wildlife
© SAWEN Secretariat

SAWEN was formally launched during the second meeting of the South Asia Experts Group on Illegal Wildlife Trade held on January 29-30, 2011 in Paro, Bhutan.

¹³ Meeting report; First meeting of South Asia Experts Group on Illegal Wildlife Trade, 17-19 May, 2010, Kathmandu.

¹⁴ Meeting Report; Second Meeting of the South Asia Experts Group on Illegal Wildlife Trade held on January 29-30, 2011, Paro, Bhutan.



[LEFT] Participants of the Second Meeting of the South Asia Expert Group Illegal Wildlife Trade

© SAWEN Secretariat

» OBJECTIVES

- ▶ To take initiatives for bringing harmonization and standardization in the laws and policies of the member countries concerning conservation of wild fauna and flora;
- ▶ To document the trends in poaching and illegal wildlife trade, and the related threats to natural biodiversity within and across countries in the region;
- ▶ To strengthen institutional responses to combat wildlife crime by promoting partnership with relevant institutions for research and information sharing, training and capacity building, and technical support; and
- ▶ To encourage member countries to prepare and implement their National Action Plans to combat wildlife crime and collaborate toward effective implementation of the plans.

of Pakistan, and the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka. The primary aim is to promote regional cooperation to respond to escalating wildlife crime and increasing the transnational linkages. It focuses on the harmonization of policies and laws, strengthening institutional capacity, sharing of knowledge, experiences and technologies among the member countries, and promoting collaboration with national, regional and international partners to enhance wildlife law enforcement in the region.

GOAL OF SAWEN

Strengthening wildlife law enforcement to combat wildlife crime through communication, coordination, collaboration, capacity building, and cooperation.

3

INSTITUTIONALIZATION >>

Since its launch in 2011, SAWEN has focused its activities on establishing itself as a fully operating intergovernmental organization through the following activities.

ESTABLISHMENT OF SAWEN SECRETARIAT

The SAWEN Secretariat was established on April 20, 2011 in Kathmandu, Nepal. Office space has been provided by the DNPWC. Office materials and staff have been arranged through 'Strengthening Regional Cooperation for Wildlife Protection in Asia Project (SRCWP)' with the financial assistance of The World Bank managed through the National Trust for Nature Conservation-Project Coordination Unit (PCU-NTNC).

SAWEN now has a fully operating Secretariat under the direct supervision of CEC and the SAWEN Principal Focal Person of Nepal and is facilitated by PCU-NTNC. To provide support in strengthening SAWEN, a consultant from International Criminal Police Organization-Environmental Security

Sub-Directorate (INTERPOL-ENS) under the project Predator is also working for the Secretariat.

NOMINATION OF FOCAL PERSONS

As per the provision made by SAWEN, each member country has nominated a principal focal person to support in operations of SAWEN. The principal focal person is responsible for coordinating with the Secretariat and stakeholders in the respective country as well as other principal focal persons from the member countries. The focal persons are the government officials from wildlife law enforcement agencies, including forest and wildlife protection, police, and customs.

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

With the aim of institutionalization of SAWEN, a Statute was drafted. The first draft of the Statute was discussed in the First Meeting of SAWEN on June 3-6, 2012 in Negombo, Sri Lanka. After incorporating the inputs from the First Meeting, the Secretariat shared the

SAWEN now has a fully operating Secretariat under the direct supervision of CEC and the SAWEN Principal Focal Person of Nepal and is facilitated by PCU-NTNC.

The structure of SAWEN, according to the agreed Statute, consists of General Assembly as an apex body of SAWEN comprising a minister of the

The Executive Committee (EC) consists of all the principal focal persons of the member countries. The secretary of the concerned ministry of the incumbent SAWEN Chairperson shall be the Chair of EC. The SAWEN Secretariat will be headed by the Secretary General to perform the day-to-day activities in coordination with the principal focal persons and assisted by the Support Staff.

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graph TD; GA[General Assembly] --> EC[Executive Committee]; EC --> SS[SAWEN Secretariat]; EC --> SG[Secretary General]; SG --> SS[Support Staff]; SG --> FP[Focal Point]; FP --> A[Afghanistan]; FP --> B[Bangladesh]; FP --> BU[Bhutan]; FP --> I[India]; FP --> M[Maldives]; FP --> N[Nepal]; FP --> P[Pakistan]; FP --> SL[Sri Lanka];
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The organizational chart illustrates the structure of the South Asian Women's Empowerment Network (SAWEN). At the top is the General Assembly, which oversees the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee is responsible for the SAWEN Secretariat and the Secretary General. The Secretary General is supported by Support Staff and oversees the Focal Point. The Focal Point is connected to eight member states: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

An action plan has been developed for the next five years to implement the activities through the Secretariat. The actions are based on the gaps in addressing growing wildlife crime trends in South Asia which are identified through a series of consultative meetings represented by the delegates of the member countries, wildlife crime experts and partner organizations. The actions are outlined on the basis of four thematic areas: enforcement response, addressing gaps, building partnership, and planning and meetings.

4

CAPACITY BUILDING >>

One of the core objectives of SAWEN is to enhance the capacity of its member countries in order to make them more effective in responding to the growing wildlife crime. SAWEN has been conducting activities focusing on enhancing the capacity of enforcement officers and their enforcement agencies and combining such capacities for broader and targeted regional response to the crime.

OVER 70 WILDLIFE
ENFORCEMENT
OFFICERS HAVE BEEN
TRAINED

**TRAINING ON STRENGTHENING
WILDLIFE LAW ENFORCEMENT**

The SAWEN Secretariat, in coordination with the Trade Records and Analysis of Flora and Fauna in Commerce (TRAFFIC)-India and with support from the Global Tiger Forum (GTF), the University of Forensic Sciences, Gujarat, and the Forest Department of Gujarat, organized a training on Strengthening Wildlife Law Enforcement for Wildlife Protection in South Asia at the University of Forensic Sciences, Gujarat, India on July 11-15, 2011. It was the first training organized by SAWEN. Fourteen

senior government officials, working in the field of wildlife conservation and enforcement from the SAWEN member countries benefited from this training.

The training was organized with the prime objectives of generating a comprehensive understanding of wildlife crime, as well as use of modern technologies and forensic techniques in combating the wildlife crime, and to strengthen regional collaboration among the various wildlife law enforcement agencies across the region.



[ABOVE] Participants during opening of the training on Strengthening wildlife Law Enforcement for Wildlife Protection © SAWEN Secretariat

The international training was focused on various approaches to information collection, evaluation and its process as well as intelligence sharing and management, and acquainting with the emerging prospects of environmental crime.

TRAINING ON ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT INTELLIGENCE AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

The SAWEN Secretariat, in collaboration with the Government of Nepal; INTERPOL; the United States Agency for International Development (USAID); NTNC; WWF Nepal; Smithsonian Institution; and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) conducted a five-day International Training on Environmental Enforcement Intelligence and Information Management Course in Dhulikhel, Nepal, on December 17-21, 2012. The training was designed to assist front-line law enforcers, who, in the course of their work, may be required to gather, evaluate, structure,

and analyze information or work on the basis of intelligence created through this process.

The training was focused on various approaches to information collection, evaluation and its process as well as intelligence sharing and management, and acquainting with the emerging prospects of environmental crime.

Twenty-eight participants from eleven countries—Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Indonesia, Maldives, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka—participated in the training representing different wildlife law enforcement agencies including police, customs, and wildlife and environment protection.



[ABOVE] Participants of Training on environmental enforcement information and Intelligence management
© SAWEN Secretariat

TRAINING ON INFORMATION AND INTELLIGENCE MANAGEMENT

The SAWEN Secretariat, in collaboration with NTNC and with support from the Smithsonian Institution, conducted a three-day training on wildlife crime Information and Intelligence Management for field officers working in various law enforcement agencies on July 22-24, 2013 in Kathmandu. Twenty-seven individuals from eight different law enforcement agencies of Nepal benefited from the training. The participants of the International Training on Environmental Enforcement Intelligence and Information Management served as resource persons for this training.

The objectives were to improve the knowledge and skills on intelligence-led enforcement and information management and to develop a cooperation mechanism between relevant agencies.

[BELOW] Participants of Training on Information and Intelligence Management in wildlife crime
© SAWEN Secretariat





Snow Leopard
© DNPWC

5

INFORMATION SHARING >>

SAWEN recognizes that communication and information sharing is the key element in strengthening SAWEN and enhancing regional cooperation in combating wildlife crime. Hence, the Secretariat has been focusing on improving communication and information sharing among the member countries and the relevant law enforcement agencies within the countries. The Secretariat regularly communicates with the focal points in each member country for SAWEN operation, important information and intelligence exchange, and coordination. In addition, information and knowledge are shared through SAWEN website and publications.

SAWEN WEBSITE

The official website of SAWEN (www.sawen.org) was launched in June, 2013. Besides providing information about SAWEN and its functions, the website has been very effective in compiling and publicizing wildlife law enforcement activities conducted in the member countries and highlighting

ENHANCED COMMUNICATION AMONG THE MEMBER COUNTRIES AND WIDER ENFORCEMENT COMMUNITIES

the major global efforts in combating wildlife crime. SAWEN regularly upgrades its website to make it more dynamic, use-friendly, interactive, and informative portal for wildlife crime control initiatives in South Asia.

PUBLICATIONS

As a part of improving communication and sharing knowledge and information, the SAWEN Secretariat has



SAWEN recognizes that communication and information sharing is the key element in strengthening SAWEN and enhancing regional cooperation in combating wildlife crime.

been publishing various promotional materials (brochures, booklets), news bulletins, and reports.

The quarterly bulletin, launched in September, 2011, highlights the major wildlife law enforcement activities conducted by the member countries, focusing on trans-boundary cases and covers the important global wildlife crime issues and control initiatives. It also highlights the major activities conducted by the SAWEN Secretariat. So far, 12 volumes of the bulletin have been published and disseminated.

In addition, the Secretariat has published and disseminated:

- ▶ a report on the first meeting of the South Asia Experts Group on Illegal Wildlife Trade
- ▶ a report on the First Meeting of SAWEN
- ▶ a training report on Environment Crime Intelligence and Information Management Course
- ▶ the proceedings of the Second Annual Meeting of SAWEN.

Digital copies of these publications can be downloaded from the SAWEN website.

WILDLIFE CRIME DATABASE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (WCD-MIS)

The SAWEN member countries are facing the problem of poor record keeping of wildlife crime and reporting. To improve data keeping and sharing among the enforcement agencies that can lead to a central database at the national level and then a regional database, development of WCD-MIS is underway. The MIS is planned to be piloted in Nepal and expanded to the member countries. The implementation of MIS will be helpful for the countries to efficiently collect and organize wildlife crime data, allow systematic analysis, share knowledge and intelligence to improve law enforcement.



6

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION >>

Many organizations have supported SAWEN financially and technically at various scales. The major supporting organizations so far are TRAFFIC, WWF, INTERPOL, the World Bank, GTF, USAID, DEFRA, Smithsonian Institution, and NTNC.

TRAFFIC and WWF (Nepal and Bhutan program) made a support in forging a foundation for SAWEN by funding to organize the first and the second meetings of the South Asia Experts Group on Illegal Wildlife Trade which led to the establishment of SAWEN. TRAFFIC also supported SAWEN in organizing the First and Second Meeting, and training on strengthening Wildlife Law Enforcement held in Gujarat, India.

INTERPOL provided major financial and technical support for organizing the Second Meeting of SAWEN in Kathmandu, and also in organizing an international training on 'Environmental Enforcement Information and

Intelligence Management Course' in Dhulikhel, Nepal. INTERPOL continues to be a major partner in strengthening SAWEN and its Secretariat.

The World Bank was one of the key partners in organizing the Second Meeting of SAWEN in Kathmandu. The Bank has provided long term support to strengthen SAWEN and its Secretariat through the following two projects managed by PCU-NTNC.

STRENGTHENING REGIONAL COOPERATION FOR WILDLIFE PROTECTION IN ASIA PROJECT

SAWEN has secured fund for the operation of its Secretariat through the SRCWP with the financial support of the World Bank under regional International Development Association (IDA). SRCWP has been providing financial and technical support to operate SAWEN Secretariat including operational costs, support for organizing events, and publications. The support will remain until the completion of the project.

Many organizations have supported SAWEN financially and technically at various scales. The major supporting organizations so far are TRAFFIC, WWF, INTERPOL, the World Bank, GTF, USAID, DEFRA, Smithsonian Institution, and NTNC.



[ABOVE] Turtles Seized in India
© Maharashtra & Uttar Pradesh Forest Department, Thane SPCA-Maharashtra, Turtle Survival Alliance-Lucknow, RAWW-Maharashtra

STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY OF SAWEN TO COMBAT WILDLIFE CRIME

Institutional Development Fund (IDF) of the World Bank (WB) has recently approved USD 0.4 million project entitled ‘Strengthening Institutional Capacity of SAWEN to Combat Wildlife Crime’. The project consists of three components with a project period of three years. The project components are outlined below.

In addition, GTF, USAID, DEFRA, Smithsonian Institution, and NTNC have supported SAWEN in organizing various trainings and other events. NTNC has been the coordinating agency for implementing the World Bank funded projects for SAWEN and also continuously providing technical support for the development of SAWEN.

While seeking opportunities of further financial resources from the above mentioned organizations, SAWEN is reaching out to other potential partners for fruitful collaboration. Recently, a proposal has been submitted to Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Fund under US Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) for a project titled “Trilateral Transborder Wildlife Interception”. The planned project will be jointly implemented by SAWEN, DNPWC and NTNC in collaboration with Wildlife Institute of India (WII), TRAFFIC, USFWS: Asia Attaché, and Office of Law Enforcement, US Embassy, Bangkok and US Embassy in Kathmandu. The SAWEN Secretariat will continue to explore collaboration with regional and international institutions in order to achieve its goal.

Components of the IDF project	Budget (USD)
Institutional development and capacity building	280,000.00
Regional communication and partnership enhancement	50,000.00
Enhancing enforcement response	70,000.00
Total	400,000.00

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COOPERATION, COLLABORATION, AND COORDINATION >>

The growing complexity with the increasing involvement of organized criminal syndicates, coupled with the highly transnational nature of criminal activities indicates that isolated efforts of countries or any organization cannot resolve the problem. With the aim to address this, SAWEN concept was emerged to provide a platform for multi-country and multi-agency collaboration and coordination to fight against wildlife crime in the region. Hence, it emphasizes coordination with the member countries, cooperation with national, regional, and international partners and collaboration with wildlife law enforcement communities.

SAWEN has been able to bring together the wildlife enforcement agencies from across the region and various international partner organization together in a single forum on different occasions through meetings and consultations. This has built a good relation for collaboration in devising actions and working collectively to implement them.

ONGOING PARTNERSHIP WITH VARIOUS GOVERNMENTAL, INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND NON- GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

One example of SAWEN's growing partnership with the international funding organizations is the fund SAWEN has received from the World Bank for its two projects: support for operationalizing the SAWEN Secretariat through the regional IDA project and 'Strengthening Institutional Capacity of SAWEN to Combat Wildlife Crime' through the IDF.

SAWEN has established specific collaborative relations with various



[ABOVE] Participants during the Second Annual Meeting of SAWEN
 ©SAWEN Secretariat

SAWEN has made specific collaborative relations with various international enforcement organizations as well as non-governmental organizations.

international enforcement organizations as well as non-governmental organizations. For example, as an intergovernmental law enforcement support organization, SAWEN has developed a strong partnership with the INTERPOL, specifically with its Project Predator under ENS, in strengthening regional law enforcement by capacity building, multi-agency collaboration, and conducting various investigative operations such as the Operation PREY.

SAWEN has also established a collaborative relationship with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations-Wildlife Enforcement Network (ASEAN-WEN) to work closely in information exchange, experience sharing, operational capacity building, and in conducting joint operations. As part of extending cooperation with the countries other than SAWEN members, China has been invited as an observer in SAWEN meetings.

Similarly, SAWEN has been closely working with the TRAFFIC, NTNC, and WWF Nepal. A whole range of supports has been provided by these organizations including for operating the Secretariat, organizing meetings, publications, and website hosting.

Through its various formal and informal meetings, consultations, and collaboration, SAWEN has built a very good relation with many other organizations including the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC), Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Secretariat, the Smithsonian Institution, GTF, USAID, and US Fish and Wildlife Service.

An example of collaboration was the Operation Cobra II. SAWEN collaborated with the World Customs Organization (WCO), CITES, INTERPOL, Lusaka Agreement Task Force (LATF), ASEAN-WEN for Operation Cobra II which was conducted from December 30, 2013 to January 26, 2014. The operation resulted in the seizure of 36 rhino horns, over 3 metric tons of elephant ivory, over 10,000 turtles, over 1,000 skins of protected species, over 10,000 European eels, and more than 200 metric tons of rosewood. Over 400 criminals were also arrested in Asia and Africa including trafficking kingpins during the operation.

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MEETINGS AND CONSULTATIONS >>

Since its establishment, the SAWEN Secretariat has organized various meetings and consultations aiming to strengthen the organization, extend its cooperation and partnership, and enhance wildlife law enforcement in the region.

THE FIRST MEETING

The First Meeting of SAWEN, organized on June 3-6, 2012 in Negombo, Sri Lanka, was attended by over 30 enforcement officials from all the eight member countries. Experts from INTERPOL, the World Customs Organization's Regional Intelligence Liaison Office for the Asia-Pacific, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the World Bank, ASEAN-WEN, GTF, SACEP, WWF, and TRAFFIC also participated in the meeting.

The meeting was focused on enhancing communication among the member countries, and discussing the draft SAWEN Statute, operational mechanisms, work plan, capacity building, and fund raising.



[ABOVE] Inauguration of the First Meeting of SAWEN by Hon. Anura Priyadarshana Yapa, Sri Lanka's Minister of Environment
©SAWEN Secretariat

THE SECOND MEETING

The SAWEN Secretariat, in collaboration with Government of Nepal and with financial support from INTERPOL, TRAFFIC, the World Bank, NTNC, and WWF Nepal organized the Second Annual Meeting of SAWEN on August 26-29, 2014 focusing on stocktaking of progress made by the member



countries in combating wildlife crime and finalizing the SAWEN Statute and action plan. The meeting was fruitful in sharing experiences, discussing common issues, reviewing performances, enhancing regional collaboration, and promoting partnership with various organizations in fighting against the wildlife crime.

Delegates from the SAWEN member countries discussed, finalized, and agreed on the SAWEN Statute and decided to get it endorsed from their governments. The meeting also discussed the activities that SAWEN intends to take up in the next five years.

[BELOW] Inauguration of the Second Annual Meeting of SAWEN by Hon. Mahesh Acharya, Nepal's minister of Forest and Soil Conservation

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Twenty-Seven delegates from SAWEN member countries and more than 20 wildlife crime experts and officials from ASEAN-WEN, CITES Secretariat, FREELAND, INTERPOL, NTNC, the World Bank, TRAFFIC, UNODC, USAID, US Embassy, WWF, China CITES Management Authority and the INTERPOL National Central Bureau (NCB) of China participated in the meeting.

SIDE EVENT AT CITES COP-16

The SAWEN Secretariat organized a side event during the CITES CoP-16 in Thailand on March 8, 2013. More than 80 officials representing SAWEN member countries, donor agencies, and I/NGOs from various countries across the world participated in the event. Major objective of the event was to share regional experiences of SAWEN and its activities that are aimed at combating wildlife crime in the region. It also aimed to enhance the cooperation and collaboration among various enforcement agencies and to discuss with member countries the way forward for strengthening SAWEN. TRAFFIC and WWF Nepal assisted the SAWEN Secretariat in organizing this event that also helped promote SAWEN to the representatives from North America, the European Union, Central America, Central Africa, and Asia.



[LEFT] Side event organized by the SAWEN Secretariat during CITES CoP-16
© SAWEN Secretariat

INTEGRATED INVESTIGATIVE CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND OPERATIONAL PLANNING

A meeting entitled 'Integrated Investigative Capacity Development and Operational Planning' was held on July 1-5, 2013 in New Delhi, India hosted by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), India. Senior delegates from various enforcement and intelligence agencies of eight SAWEN member countries participated in the meeting to work on scaling up law enforcement action to curb the growing illegal wildlife trade in the region.

A specialized training curriculum from INTERPOL-ENS was delivered, along with input from other experts and additional technical support from TRAFFIC, WCCB and the National Tiger Conservation

Authority (NTCA). The meeting discussed on the common challenges and best-practice approaches for collaborative action between agencies at the national and regional levels including intelligence led approaches. It helped to strengthen SAWEN as an institution by connecting national focal points and the SAWEN Secretariat with other government agency representatives. The event was financially supported by USAID through TRAFFIC and INTERPOL's Project Predator.

REGULAR MEETINGS AND CONSULTATIONS

The Secretariat frequently organizes consultation meetings with stakeholders to discuss the ways to enhance its various roles at the national and regional level and to boost multi-agency collaboration at SAWEN's level.

THE WAY FORWARD >>

Given the nature and scale of wildlife crime, the road ahead is challenging. The governments of the South Asian countries need to make concentrated and coordinated efforts to meet the challenge. In this regard, SAWEN is committed to working with the member countries in providing a platform for collaborative and coordinated actions and supporting such actions.

Our primary focus in the year 2015 is working to further institutionalize the organization by getting the SAWEN Statute endorsed from all the governments of the member countries and securing more funds for sustainably running concerted and focused activities. Our major activities at hand for the year is to implement the "Strengthening Institutional Capacity of SAWEN to Combat Wildlife Crime" project and organize the third meeting of SAWEN in Bangladesh.

Simultaneously, we emphasize improving communication among the countries for better coordination. We will continue enhancing the capacities of the frontline enforcement officers and agencies by providing training and promoting intelligence-led operations with the use of new technologies. We recognize that the policies and laws pertaining to wildlife crime control in the region are in general weak and inconsistent. Hence, we put stress in promoting stronger policies and laws and effective implementation and enforcement of those policies and laws.

We foresee reinforced collaboration in the coming days with our partner organizations in combating wildlife crime and expect to join hands with new partners and wider communities, including the business, and the civil society for the common cause of safeguarding our wildlife from the poachers and smugglers.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS >>



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Smithsonian Institution

TRAFFIC
the wildlife trade monitoring network



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SAWEN Secretariat

Forestry Complex

Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Building

Babar Mahal, Kathmandu, Nepal

Tel. +977-01-4228835

Fax: +977-01-4228835 | P.O. Box: 19716, Kathmandu, Nepal

Email: info@sawen.org

Website: www.sawen.org