

Counter Wildlife Trafficking



The illegal wildlife trade (IWT), valued at \$7-23 billion annually, poses one of the most urgent threats to African wildlife. AWF's counter wildlife trafficking (CWT) programs work in synergy to support Africa's wildlife authorities in this tough and ever-changing fight. We focus on detecting and deterring wildlife crime, and we provide tools and training to support investigations and the successful prosecution of traffickers. In addition, we address cybercrime, including the online illegal trade.

Canine Teams Curb Wildlife Crime

Highly skilled canines and their handlers detect and deter wildlife crimes in two forms. Detection-dog teams are essential in curbing the flow of ivory, rhino horn, and other illegal wildlife products through smuggling centers. Seizures of wildlife contraband happen regularly, disrupting trafficking routes and applying pressure on poaching syndicates and local perpetrators. Tracking-dog teams patrol areas and sniff out kill sites to learn scents and trail perpetrators even to their doorsteps. These units have impressive track records. For example, since canine teams began operating in Manyara Ranch and Serengeti National Park in 2020, they've made over 100 finds, resulting in multiple arrests.

Canine teams currently work in Botswana, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Uganda. AWF trains the dogs and their handlers, an elite group selected from ranger forces, and provides technical and financial support once the units are deployed. But the program in any given country—the dogs, the work, the successes—belongs to the wildlife authorities, which sends a message that fighting wildlife crime is a government mission and priority.

CWT Canine Units



What We Are Building Capacity For

- ▶ Detect illegal wildlife products at airports and other Hotspots.
- ▶ Track and deter poachers in the field.
- ▶ Investigate and successfully prosecute wildlife crime.
- ▶ Address cyber-enabled wildlife crime.

To Date

Uncovered 441 caches that led to the arrest of 507 suspects. The finds have included:

- **4,632+ kilograms** of elephant ivory
- **22 kilograms** of rhino horn
- **4,585 kilograms** of pangolin scales
- **70** lion teeth
- **220+** lion claws
- **111+** hippo teeth
- **7** live pangolins

Wildlife Judicial and Prosecutorial Assistance Program

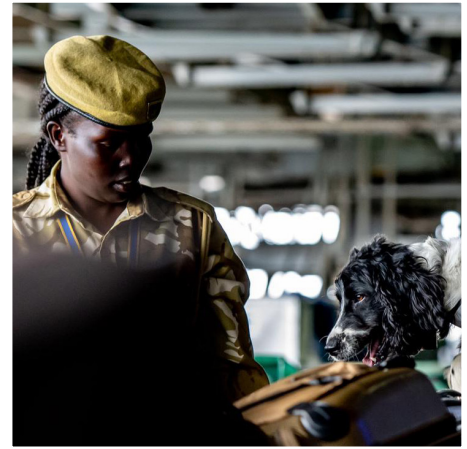
AWF's Wildlife Judicial and Prosecutorial Assistance Program:

1) sensitizes prosecutors and other justice professionals to the importance of wildlife-crime prosecution, and 2) builds capacity in the investigation and prosecution of wildlife crime. Workshops familiarize participants with the laws on the books and emphasize the costs of wildlife crime to ecosystems and the human communities dependent on those ecosystems. They also cover how prosecutors can add teeth where laws are weak—for example, by making other applicable criminal charges such as customs or tax law violations. Workshops for officers on the ground cover topics including principles of investigation and the role of an investigator, taking witness statements, case management, evidence handling and storage, preparing witnesses for trial, and compelling witness attendance.

Court Monitoring: AWF places court monitors in high-priority districts to address logistical and other challenges that can hinder the progress of a case. Our court-monitoring program is among the most extensive in Africa, with operations in the Tsavo-Mkomazi cross-border region (Kenya-Tanzania), the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Ethiopia. We address a variety of needs, such as witnesses' transportation costs or a lack of technical know-how regarding chain-of-evidence integrity. Court monitors also support witnesses, usually rangers, to be effective witnesses on the stand.

Wildlife Cybercrime Investigation

AWF builds the capacity of our partners to disrupt illegal online trade and investigate cybercrime. We've established relationships with a dozen government and private sector organizations to facilitate this work. Some partners we support, such as wildlife authorities; others are service providers with tools that benefit law enforcers. For example, we work with a private-tech company to advance partner agencies' capacities in mobile forensics. We also have relationships with Interpol in Kenya and Uganda, which benefits those respective countries when they have investigations that lead overseas. Over time and with increased illegal transactions online, our trainings have evolved to emphasize the importance of collecting mobile phone evidence. In 2021, we opened a digital forensics lab at AWF headquarters, which is at the disposal of law enforcers needing to conduct forensic analysis on digital devices.



To Date

We've trained **3,224 officials**—judges, prosecutors, customs officers, anti-corruption officers, rangers, park managers, and others—from **18 countries**.

Five Animal Freedoms

Upon receiving AWF-trained canines, our wildlife-authority partners commit to providing Five Animal Freedoms:

- ▶ **Freedom from hunger and thirst**—ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigor.
- ▶ **Freedom from discomfort**—shelter and a comfortable resting area.
- ▶ **Freedom from pain, injury, and disease**—rapid diagnosis and treatment.
- ▶ **Freedom to express normal behavior**—sufficient space, proper facilities, and company of other dogs.
- ▶ **Freedom from fear and distress**—conditions and treatment that avoid mental suffering.