



REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Request for Information No.	72048623R00002
Anticipated Activity Title	USAID/RDMA Counter-Wildlife Trafficking Activity
Issued by	USAID/Regional Development Mission for Asia (USAID/RDMA)
Release Date	November 7, 2022
Response Due Date & Time	November 21, 2022, 5:00 PM local Bangkok time
Response Email	schussananalin@usaid.gov

The United States Agency for International Development, Regional Development Mission for Asia (USAID/RDMA) is gathering feedback to inform the early design of an anticipated activity with the preliminary title: **USAID/RDMA Counter-Wildlife Trafficking Activity**. This anticipated activity seeks to conserve biodiversity and strengthen rules-based order by building on the long history of USAID/RDMA in countering wildlife trafficking (CWT) through partnerships with regional organizations, governments, the private sector, and civil society.

A draft Statement of Objectives of the activity and a list of questions are detailed in the sections that follow. Responses to this Request for Information (RFI) are voluntary and respondents are welcome to address any or all the questions listed as well as provide any additional relevant information.

This RFI is issued solely for information, research, and planning purposes. Issuance of this RFI neither obligates the U.S. Government (USG) to issue a solicitation, funding opportunity or award nor commits the USG to pay for any costs incurred or information resulting from this request. Respondents remain solely responsible for all expenses associated with responding to this RFI. Respondents are advised that USAID is under no obligation to provide feedback to respondents with respect to any information submitted. Responses to this notice will not be considered responses to a solicitation.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS:

All responses must be submitted electronically to Suthicha Chussananalin, Acquisition and Assistance Specialist, at schussananalin@usaid.gov. Responses to this RFI will be accepted through the date and time indicated on the cover sheet.

The submitted response should include:

Reference number: 72048623R00002, USAID/RDMA Counter-Wildlife Trafficking Activity

[Date]

Name/Email Affiliation/Organization

Respondents may attach any documents that support responses to the above questions. File size must not exceed 25 megabytes.

You will only receive an electronic confirmation acknowledging receipt of your response but will not receive individualized feedback on any suggestions. No basis for the claims against the U.S. Government shall arise as a result of a response to this RFI or from the Government's use of such information. Specific questions about this RFI should be directed only to the Response Email address as listed on the cover sheet.

Thank you for your interest in USAID/RDMA programming efforts. We look forward to hearing from you.

Best Regards,

/s/

Craig Smith
Regional Contracting Officer
Regional Office of Acquisition and Assistance, USAID/RDMA

FAR 52.215-3 Request for Information or Solicitation for Planning Purposes (Oct 1997)

- a) The Government does not intend to award a contract on the basis of this solicitation or to otherwise pay for the information solicited except as an allowable cost under other contracts as provided in subsection [31.205-18](#), Bid and proposal costs, of the Federal Acquisition Regulation.
- b) Although "proposal" and "offeror" are used in this Request for Information, your response will be treated as information only. It shall not be used as a proposal.
- c) This solicitation is issued for the purpose of: "Requesting Comments and feedbacks" to the draft Statement of Objective of a new activity.

(End of provision)

DRAFT STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES (SOO)

TITLE OF ACTIVITY - USAID/RDMA Counter-Wildlife Trafficking Activity

PURPOSE

The purpose of the new USAID/RDMA counter-wildlife trafficking activity, hereafter referred to as the “Activity,” will be to conserve biodiversity and strengthen rules-based order by building on the long history of USAID Regional Development Mission for Asia (RDMA) in countering wildlife trafficking (CWT) through partnerships with regional organizations, governments, the private sector, and civil society. The Activity delivers on USAID/RDMA’s Regional Development Cooperation Strategy under Regional Development Objective 3’s Intermediate Result 3.2 “Transnational environmental crime reduced” as well as Regional Development Objective 1, Intermediate Result 1.1 “Support for regional civil society networks strengthened.” The Activity is also designed to support USAID policies on biodiversity, gender, indigenous peoples, and youth as well as priorities on local capacity development, private sector engagement, and climate change. The Activity will:

- **Support regional civil society organizations and platforms** that implement initiatives or social movements to counter wildlife trafficking and other wildlife crime through advocacy, social mobilization, and behavior change campaigns using a Social and Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) approach that emphasize the inclusion of historically underrepresented groups, such as women, indigenous peoples, youth, and communities of faith.
- **Strengthen the rule of law** by working with law enforcement, judicial, and policy professionals in the criminal justice system to further institutionalize the competencies necessary to effectively decrease wildlife trafficking and other wildlife crime through support to the region’s criminal justice sector training institutes and their alumni associations to incentivize professional networks that can share best practices and increase conviction rates in wildlife prosecutions.
- **Cultivate the growth of constituencies for collective action** to support conservation and counter-wildlife trafficking efforts spanning civil society, government agencies, the private sector, and their development partners to build multi-stakeholder regional coalitions that can assume leadership for regional knowledge sharing, consensus building, planning for common action, and implementation of coordinated efforts to reduce wildlife crime.

BACKGROUND

USAID/RDMA has made considerable investments to counter wildlife trafficking over the past 17 years, notably:

- Association of Southeast Asian Nations-Wildlife Enforcement Network Support Program (ASEAN-WEN), 2006-2011, \$8 million
- Asia’s Regional Response to Endangered Species Trafficking (USAID ARREST), 2011-2016, \$13 million
- USAID Wildlife Asia, 2016-2022, \$25 million
- USAID Reducing Demand for Wildlife, 2021-2023, \$4 million

In the final years of USAID Wildlife Asia, USAID/RDMA honed its engagement strategy for the next generation of CWT programming and commissioned USAID/Washington's Measuring Impact 2 Activity to perform an assessment to provide answers to a number of critical questions about the efficacy of programmatic approaches employed and identify knowledge gaps to build the evidence base required to design and implement effective CWT programs in the rapidly evolving landscape of wildlife crime priority actions and partnership opportunities in Southeast Asia. This assessment was completed in September 2020 and its findings led USAID/RDMA to design the 15-month USAID Reducing Demand for Wildlife Activity, which has focused on two critical action areas: 1) implementing and analyzing the next generation of social and behavior change communication (SBCC) campaigns; and 2) performing [a number of assessments](#) to fill in CWT knowledge gaps through the following: A Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Analysis, a Civil Society and Social Inclusion Assessment, a Political Economy Analysis focused on regional aspects of CWT, a One Health Landscape Assessment for Southeast Asia, and a meta-analysis of USAID/RDMA's experience with SBCC wildlife campaigns in the People's Republic of China (PRC), Vietnam, and Thailand. During this period, USAID/RDMA also worked closely with Interagency, host government, NGO, and other partners to identify next steps in improving the criminal justice system for wildlife crime prosecutions across the region and building inclusive constituencies for positive change.

Over the last few years, the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated a number of challenges facing effective CWT actions in the region as well as reducing a number of gains that had been made. The shift to online illegal wildlife trade that had been occurring before the COVID-19 pandemic was accelerated due to the closure of wildlife markets and general economic lockdowns across the region. While tracking of wildlife crime indicated a reduction in sales during the pandemic period, law enforcement efforts were greatly curtailed as well, which may have undermined arrests and prosecutions for wildlife crimes that did occur during that time. Governments in the PRC and Southeast Asia also were able to use the COVID-19 emergency to further clamp down on civil society, a worrying trend that was already in evidence before the pandemic began. Finally, as the world enters the post-pandemic period, the focus in Southeast Asia and the PRC is squarely on economic recovery, which could, at least over the short-term, reduce attention and funding for CWT in the coming years.

Throughout its engagement on CWT, USAID/RDMA has worked alongside a wide array of organizations. These have included government authorities, civil society organizations, private sector actors, and donor partners. Together we have bent the curve on illegal wildlife trade in tangible ways, producing joint successes and more collaborative engagement, which are summarized [here](#). The current operating context can be characterized as follows:

- A wide array of government actors are supporting law enforcement and judicial authorities to counter wildlife trafficking and wildlife crime in diverse ways¹.
- Regional organizations and regional networks are growing in strength and confidence (the Association of Southeast Asian Nations [ASEAN] Working Group on CITES & Wildlife Enforcement, ASEANAPOL [the Chiefs of Police of the ASEAN member states], Asian Judges Network on Environment, etc.).

¹ The U.S. government supports the region's law enforcement agencies and judicial authorities through USAID, the Department of the Interior (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service), the Department of State (Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs [OES] and Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs [INL], including their International Law Enforcement Academy [ILEA] in Bangkok), the Department of Justice, and the Department of Homeland Security. There has been and continues to be effective collaboration and joint action by U.S. agencies, in large part guided by the Eliminate, Neutralize, and Disrupt (END) Wildlife Trafficking Act of 2016.

- CWT programs in USAID’s bilateral missions in the region (e.g., Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Burma) are providing additional opportunities to align regional actions with individual country priorities and initiatives, and conversely, for RDMA to foster regional partnership and dialogue to address common issues affecting individual countries.
- Demonstrable strengthening of national and regional policies and legislation, as illustrated by the best-in-class framework from the [Africa-Asia Pacific Wildlife Symposium on Strengthening Legal Frameworks to Combat Wildlife Crime](#) hosted by the World Bank’s Global Wildlife Program in 2018, [Thailand’s Wildlife Conservation and Protection Act](#) of 2019, the most recent National Ivory Action Plan (NIAP) for [Laos](#) and the latest Post-NIAP Progress Report for [Thailand](#).
- Notable success working alongside local partners to apply lessons from SBCC campaigns directed at wildlife consumers. While SBCC approaches for CWT are still in their early stages and there is still much to learn, systematic evaluations both before and after the campaigns have shown the benefits of a structured, evidence-based response to demand for wildlife and wildlife products.

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE

While USAID/RDMA and its partners have a strong history of reducing illegal wildlife trade in the region, there are a number of actions that are needed to build on these successes, respond to emerging challenges, and further strengthen the partnerships and regional ownership needed to most effectively respond to this issue. First, there is a growing consensus that the conservation community’s traditional focus on a regulatory and enforcement approach to wildlife trafficking has led to a somewhat narrow focus on government actors. Civil society and the private sector have important roles to play as well, notably in building constituencies to reduce demand for illegal wildlife and to mobilize for environmental justice and needed reforms. USAID/RDMA’s exploration of social behavior change communication (SBCC) techniques under the USAID Wildlife Asia and USAID Reducing Demand for Wildlife activities has provided concrete examples of how civil society, at times in partnership with the private sector, can effectively advocate for change, mobilize social movements, and conduct behavior change campaigns. In the PRC, for example, civil society organizations joined with some of the PRC’s biggest technology companies to distribute demand-reduction messages in a way that was targeted yet also massive in scale. In Thailand, civil society joined with a regional network of faith leaders to deliver messages of environmental justice to consumers of illegal wildlife.

Given the disturbing trend of closing civic space across this region, investing in the institutional capacity of regional civil society organizations can help them serve as regional platforms for local organizations to come together, share information, make their voices heard, ensure inclusion of historically marginalized groups in decision making, learn new techniques, and mobilize for change. Their efforts should contribute to converting users of illegal wildlife, changing social norms and attitudes to reduce wildlife crime, and proactively working to ensure appropriate actions on the part of governments and others responsible for ending these illegal actions. Effective, inclusive social mobilization, reporting, and advocacy should engender greater political will and accountability from leaders and other change agents across the region.

Second, there is a growing consensus that the existing training models for law enforcement agencies and judicial authorities, while useful when first developed 17 years ago, would benefit from more systematic institutionalization in regional and national training institutions. This would include engaging adult education specialists and subject matter experts to develop a comprehensive set of

curricula--embedded in existing courses--that provides training for entry-level law enforcement cadets, judicial specialists, and policy makers in addition to mid-career professionals and leaders. Wildlife crime prosecutions and counter wildlife trafficking efforts would then be more easily recognized as an important and needed discipline within the law enforcement and adjudication systems. It would also include developing stronger alumni cohorts from these institutions to document long-term impacts of training, provide feedback to improve training programs, and to help alumni collaborate more effectively in their local contexts to improve the interdiction and prosecution of wildlife crimes through their respective criminal justice systems as well as enhancing coordination between these law enforcement, judicial, and policymaking officials at the local, national, and regional levels.

The maturation of the region's approach to building the competency of law enforcement and judicial officials in counter wildlife trafficking has advanced in recent years. For example, there are occasional counter wildlife trafficking workshops at the U.S.-Thailand International Law Enforcement Academy led by professional trainers from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Glynco, Georgia. A counter wildlife trafficking module has been integrated into the curriculum of the Vietnam People's Police Academy in partnership with USAID Wildlife Asia. In addition, USAID Wildlife Asia worked with the Thailand Judicial Training Institute and the United Nations Environment Programme to develop an online course on how to prosecute environmental crimes, including wildlife trafficking². The USAID Reducing Opportunities for Unlawful Transport of Endangered Species (ROUTES) Partnership also developed a comprehensive set of role-based training materials for the airline and airport sector. The Wildlife Crime Leadership Initiative being rolled out in Vietnam and Indonesia through the U.S. State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) is taking a more thorough approach, with cohorts trained together over the course of a year or more, rather than only for one week.

Third, we can collectively achieve more effective and lasting results when government, civil society, the private sector, and development partners work together with common purpose. Collaborative engagement and partnerships require patience, trust, shared vision, and an appreciation of the different roles played by all actors along with effective structures to enable and sustain coordinated action. These are in the service of shifting power to local actors and fostering inclusion. Collective action engages a broad group of interconnected stakeholders, creates democratic structures for deliberation and decision-making, builds consensus, puts control and accountability in the hands of local actors, and helps establish local ownership over the development challenges posed by illegal wildlife trade.

USAID has a long history of involvement in this technical area and the flexibility to engage the U.S. Interagency and other partners to catalyze resources and provide expertise and funding to respond to needs and gaps to ensure that U.S. Government-funded CWT investments are more timely and effective. As needed, USAID can assume a leadership and facilitation role in working with other development partners and regional actors to align funding interests to incentivize collective action by the larger conservation community. Importantly, USAID can play a convening role, or serve as a

² The U.S. Department of Interior's International Technical Assistance Program has taken this approach even further in Central and South America, with university certificate courses and other instructional materials for members of the judiciary.

liaison among U.S. government agencies, partner governments, and the conservation community to drive collective action.

THEORY OF CHANGE

Using the Conservation Standards, USAID/RDMA developed a Theory of Change (ToC) based on a problem analysis for transnational wildlife crime in the region. The ToC presents causal linkages and results expected within and among strategic approaches selected to address key drivers and threats to achieve the Activity Purpose.

An illustrative, simplified situation model for the Activity depicting threats, drivers, and potential solutions is shown [here](#). In narrative form the ToC can be stated as follows:

- IF regional civil society actors are empowered in an equitable manner to act as change agents to effectively transform attitudes and behaviors to reduce wildlife trafficking and other wildlife crime, and
- IF the law enforcement and adjudication systems across the region operate with shared vision and institutionalize counter wildlife trafficking and wildlife crime within regional training institutes and their respective professional networks, and
- IF there is common agreement and action among regional actors in civil society, the private sector, and governments, including the donor community and the U.S. Interagency, to decrease wildlife trafficking and other wildlife crime,
- THEN our collective efforts to counter wildlife trafficking and other wildlife crime in Asia will be more effective, resulting in improved conservation of biodiversity.

PLACE OF PERFORMANCE

The Activity's geographic scope is defined as regional in nature, covering all ASEAN member states as well as the People's Republic of China (PRC).

ACTIVITY FUNDING

The total amount of the contract (including costs and fee) is anticipated to be within a range of \$15 million to \$25 million, subject to the availability of funds.

ACTIVITY GOAL

The goal of the Activity is to conserve and reduce threats to biodiversity from wildlife trafficking and other wildlife crime in Asia by strengthening civil society, rules-based governance, and collective action to encourage the growth of regional constituencies for the conservation of nature and wildlife.

ACTIVITY OBJECTIVES

Objective 1: Capacity of regional civil society actors to equitably and effectively counter wildlife trafficking and other wildlife crime is enhanced

In keeping with the Activity's Theory of Change, to be effective and sustainable over the long term, actions to counter wildlife trafficking and other wildlife crime must be undertaken in a whole-of-

society manner. This will require an equitable approach that ensures that civil society has an equal voice vis-a-vis other stakeholders, particularly government actors. In the past, USAID/RDMA emphasized government action and, to a lesser degree, the engagement of the private sector (e.g., the shipping industry or the financial sector) in responding to wildlife crime. We have reached an inflection point in our CWT efforts where we need to more fully involve civil society, foster leaders, support visionaries, and encourage citizen action to bring about greater change. Such action focusing on civil society will be nurtured and reinforced through regional platforms established by existing regional organizations and networks, which may find inspiration in models such as USAID Mekong for the Future, the Indigenous Peoples Alliance for Rights and Development, and Youth Engaged in Wetlands. While it is understood that civil society routinely engages and works on these issues in partnership with governments, multilateral organizations, and other authorities in the region, civil society (often via investigative journalism products) can also provide a more dispassionate review of the effectiveness of governmental action and recommend needed changes in policy and approaches to further CWT objectives.

The regional platforms supported by this Activity will enable local organizations to come together, share information, ensure respectful dialogue, and facilitate collaboration. An emphasis will be placed on making sure these platforms promote investments in the institutional capacity of regional organizations, enterprises, and networks, and provide seed funding to mobilize action. It is anticipated that this objective will further USAID/RDMA's exploration of the three SBCC pillars of advocacy, social mobilization, and behavior change communication and provide essential lessons learned to inform future movements of this nature.

USAID/RDMA's efforts with behavior change communication campaigns will continue under this new activity, focused on highly tailored approaches to reduce demand from targeted consumers and users and will represent one aspect of an overall civil society mobilization approach to respond to illegal wildlife trade. Next generation SBCC campaigns will build on the experience of prior campaigns and incorporate relevant issues that can further drive behavior change, such as the threat of wildlife trafficking on zoonotic disease transmission. Experiences and best practices gleaned from these campaigns will be adapted for broader use as appropriate under this objective.

USAID/RDMA is particularly interested in reaching historically underrepresented groups such as women, indigenous peoples, youth, and communities of faith and empowering them as agents of change. Initial reviews of how to best support such groups in deploying their unique perspectives and skill sets to counter wildlife trafficking and wildlife crime can be found in two reports produced by USAID Reducing Demand for Wildlife: a [Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Analysis](#) and a [Civil Society and Social Inclusion Assessment](#). As documented in these two reports, case studies are currently few in number and there as yet have been no attempts at higher-level analysis. Therefore, more information gathering, analysis, and dialogue will need to be done before the design and implementation of regional-level interventions.

The offeror will analyze constraints and opportunities and develop strategies and approaches to achieve the following expected results:

1. Regional civil society organizations and/or networks are organized as advocates to reduce consumer demand for wildlife products, hold government and other responsible actors accountable, and catalyze positive social change for people and wildlife.

2. Measurable reductions in consumer demand for selected illegal wildlife products, including online trade, are achieved through coordinated local and regional, scalable SBCC techniques that are tested and analyzed to improve their effectiveness.
3. Historically underrepresented groups such as women, indigenous peoples, youth, and communities of faith are more capable of deploying their unique perspectives and skill sets to reduce demand for wildlife products and counter wildlife crime.

Objective 2: Shared approach to counter wildlife trafficking and other wildlife crime institutionalized by regional law enforcement, judicial, and policy-making bodies

Discrete, donor-funded law enforcement or judicial training workshops only meet short-term capacity needs. Halting wildlife crime in Asia will require a sustained effort and the full array of competencies developed for other categories of organized transnational crime, such as drugs, arms, and human trafficking. There is a need to go beyond the prior focus on traditional wildlife enforcement partners (rangers, environment police, departments of natural resources, etc.) and to mainstream wildlife crime into the responsibilities and capacities of the region's police, intelligence, and security forces (e.g., ASEANAPOL). Police academies, regional training centers, and institutions that are responsible for training law enforcement and judicial officers in the ASEAN region must incorporate wildlife crime as one in a series of essential competencies for law enforcement and judicial cadets/trainees.

Parallel to broadly distributed competency training in trafficking, whether wildlife or otherwise, for all entry level officers and with touch points across the career lifecycle, this activity will develop and foster the implementation of an approach whereby a network of professionals in wildlife crime, with in-depth training and continuing education, is created and operational.

Both prior USAID projects and on-going, non-USAID capacity-building efforts provide a strong set of relationships, best practices, and a unique understanding of the capacity needs in the region that can be built upon. In order to be most effective our efforts will need to go beyond training itself to encompass removing barriers and collaboratively establishing the structure and conditions that will allow capacity building efforts to be institutionalized in the region's governmental structures for long-term sustainability, including with robust financing from local sources (i.e., national governments).

The offeror will analyze constraints and opportunities and develop strategies and approaches to achieve the following expected results:

1. A wide, diverse set of law enforcement, judicial, and other governmental bodies develops a common strategy on training and coordination to counter wildlife trafficking and other wildlife crime throughout the region.
2. A standardized regional approach to training and coordination of law enforcement and the judiciary on wildlife crime is developed and institutionalized by regional organizations in association with national training bodies.
3. A sustainable network of professionals that understands and respects the need to reduce wildlife crime is organized to provide support, guidance, and training to fellow law enforcement and judiciary professionals to implement this strategy and approach.

Objective 3: Collective action at the regional level among civil society, government, private sector, and development partners to counter wildlife trafficking and other wildlife crime is improved

USAID has the resources to support regional CWT coordination between and among 1) regional platforms within ASEAN, 2) regionally-oriented development and donor partners from non-governmental, multilateral and bilateral organizations, and 3) U.S. Government agencies in Asia, to more efficiently and effectively deploy the multitudinous CWT investments being made in the region. The U.S. Government is guided by the Eliminate, Neutralize, and Disrupt (END) Wildlife Trafficking Act, and will recognize the diverse views and methods of ASEAN member state governments.

In order to further improve coordination and make the most efficient use of the assistance provided by the U.S. Government and other development partners to combat illegal wildlife trade, this Activity will foster self-sustaining movements, led by civil society, government, and the private sector, which act in concert to change the social norms that currently allow for unabated wildlife trafficking and environmental destruction. Regional organizations and regional networks will amplify the voices of civil society in CWT and environmental governance supported under Objective 1 and criminal justice sector partners supported under Objective 2. In order to foster these movements, USAID/RDMA will provide support to regional organizations and networks and encourage other donor partners to join USAID in these efforts as well so that these regional groups can better assist both regional and local grassroots movements to grow and sustain themselves in the future.

The offeror will analyze constraints and opportunities and develop strategies and approaches to achieve the following expected results:

1. Open and equitable access to information that is leading to more inclusive regional dialogues and agreement on coordinated CWT actions.
2. A diverse and self-sustaining movement that is aligned, organized, incentivized, and taking collective action to counter wildlife trafficking and other wildlife crime in the region.

ALIGNMENT WITH USAID/RDMA'S REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION STRATEGY AND OTHER U.S. GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

USAID/RDMA Regional Development Cooperation Strategy: In addition to delivering on the two regional development objectives mentioned earlier, this Activity will advance key principles underpinning the RDCS, namely working in partnership with regional institutions that have roles in reducing illegal wildlife trade; providing opportunities for regional programming to amplify and augment the CWT efforts of USAID bilateral missions in Southeast Asia; and elevating the role of Thailand as a regional leader and potential donor in reducing wildlife trafficking.

USAID Biodiversity Policy: This policy builds on the Agency's long history of conserving biodiversity as a global biological heritage for future generations and stresses the essential role of healthy natural systems in advancing resilient societies and ending extreme poverty. The USAID Biodiversity Policy provides a blueprint for how the Agency will work to achieve its vision of conserving biodiversity for sustainable, resilient development. In addition, the Policy deepens the

Agency's appreciation of the intrinsic value of biodiversity while also recognizing that durable development gains are not possible unless these systems are valued, safeguarded, and improved.

United States Eliminate, Neutralize, and Disrupt (END) Wildlife Trafficking Act of 2016: This U.S. law addresses illicit wildlife trade and the U.S. Government's global response to end it. Through this act, USAID and other U.S. Government agencies, e.g. the Departments of State, Interior, Justice, Commerce, and others, collaborate to strengthen law enforcement, reduce demand, and build international cooperation and commitment as a means to reduce opportunities and incentives for wildlife poachers, traffickers, and sellers to engage in wildlife crime. The 2017 Presidential Executive Order on Enforcing Federal Laws with Respect to Transnational Criminal Organizations and Preventing International Trafficking also supports this goal.

Indo-Pacific Strategy: Given strong U.S. commitment to the Indo-Pacific region, the U.S. Government developed this strategy to define U.S. objectives in the region that lead to a free and open, connected, prosperous, secure, and resilient Indo-Pacific. USAID's counter-wildlife activities support all these objectives, particularly in increasing secure and free and open governance in the region. Through strengthening the Natural Resources Safeguards and Security component of the Indo-Pacific Strategy, the following three high-level outcomes will be achieved: (1) laws, policies, regulatory frameworks and standards will be fully implemented and/or strongly enforced; (2) conservation and sustainable practices, business, trade, and investment of natural resources will be implemented; and (3) transnational environmental crimes related to unsustainable practices, uses, or consumption of natural resources will be reduced.

U.S. National Security Strategy: The recently released National Security Strategy re-emphasizes U.S. goals for the region as stated in the Indo-Pacific Strategy. This activity will specifically contribute to U.S. Government efforts to protect sea, air, and space through CWT support that helps governments and other stakeholders in the region to better secure wildlife resources as a means to improve political, economic, and social stability. In addition, U.S. investment in CWT in Asia will directly support democratic institutions and civil society to combat transnational organized crime, curb corruption, reduce pandemic threats, and build engagement with Asian partners as well as seek out opportunities to engage with development and donor partners in the region to decrease illegal wildlife trade.

CROSS-CUTTING REQUIREMENTS

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI): The Activity's interventions will have a greater impact on reducing wildlife trafficking if the approach is sensitive to building upon and deepening the understanding of the illegal wildlife trade as a social issue which needs to be understood through a gender and inclusive development lens. The Activity must ensure that relevant USAID policies and strategies—including the Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy, the Promoting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Policy, and the Youth in Development Policy—are incorporated and applied during implementation of the activity as stated in ADS 205. The actions and approaches selected to respond to these concerns will be included in a Gender and Inclusive Development Action Plan after award.

Local Capacity Strengthening (LCS): This activity will work closely with a number of partners engaged regionally in advancing civil society's role in CWT, improving the performance of criminal justice systems for wildlife crime prosecutions, and building multi-stakeholder constituencies to

ensure collective and coordinated response to counter wildlife trafficking in Asia. Specifically, this Activity will adhere to and promote the goals of the Agency's Local Capacity Strengthening Policy in terms of building upon the existing strengths of actors and systems based in the Asia region, responding to dynamic regional priorities, and making local capacity strengthening an intentional outcome with well-defined goals and targets for success. The actions and approaches selected to respond to these concerns will be included in a LCS Action Plan after award.

Private Sector Engagement (PSE): As stated in USAID's Private Sector Engagement Policy, USAID aims to harness the power of enterprise-driven development. Building on existing private sector partnerships, particularly in the financial, digital, and transportation sectors, the Activity will engage the private sector to both promote private sector leadership and commitments to reducing demand for endangered and illegal wildlife as well as leverage private sector support for and engagement with the Activity's SBCC campaigns, associated civil society-led activities, and broader collective action efforts. The actions and approaches selected to respond to these concerns will be included in a PSE Action Plan after award.

Climate Change and Resilience: This activity will support the goals of the USAID Climate Strategy 2022-2030, including making contributions to the extent feasible to programmatic objectives in climate adaptation, mitigation of emissions, and related transformational systems change to address climate risks and opportunities as well as operational objectives to reduce climate impacts associated with the Activity's day-to-day implementation. In support of these objectives, climate risk management (CRM) is required for all programmatic activities. CRM is the process of using climate information to assess and address the risk that climate change poses to USAID activities and then building in flexibility to adjust and adapt to changing climatic conditions to achieve intended objectives. Initial assessment by USAID has determined that this Activity involves low climate risk, however, any proposal should include language summarizing any foreseen climate risks and a top-line approach to managing those risks over the life of the activity, which will be further developed after award in a Climate Change Action Plan.

MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND LEARNING (MEL) / COLLABORATING, LEARNING, AND ADAPTING (CLA)

The Activity will make the best use of the latest principles in monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) as well as collaborating, learning, and adapting (CLA) in order to set and achieve targets, fulfill objectives, and demonstrate outcomes of development efforts undertaken as part of this award. Collaborative learning efforts are a key component of the Activity.

- End of Draft Statement of Objective -

RFI QUESTIONS

All organizations and firms are strongly encouraged to provide information and comments by the closing date and time noted on the cover page. Responses should not exceed 5 pages. We would particularly value comments in response to the following questions:

1. Current efforts to reduce demand for illegal wildlife are based on approaches that were first developed over a decade ago. What lessons and best practices should be included in USAID/RDMA's future CWT programming to more effectively include civil society and historically underrepresented groups and improve their ability to participate and contribute to increased engagement and mutual accountability among and between stakeholders?
2. Over the past decade, law enforcement agencies and judicial institutions have assumed greater responsibility for countering wildlife trafficking. What is the most rational and efficient way to allocate responsibilities among the different agencies involved and build on initial steps to institutionalize CWT in regional law enforcement and judicial structures? How might USAID adapt its role in this regard?
3. There is a large community of actors involved in CWT, including donors and frontline implementers, particularly civil society organizations. How can this community best ensure that it is working from the same evidence base and is engaged in frank and constructive dialogue among its members and various subgroups to ensure that collective action is as impactful as possible? What would USAID's comparative advantages be in support of these efforts?
4. Given the strong focus on civil society strengthening, criminal justice sector capacity, and collective action under this Activity, where would a One Health approach best fit, if at all?
5. Do you think your organization will be interested in participating in the upcoming solicitation?

- End of RFI Questions -

[END OF REQUEST FOR INFORMATION]