

Illegal Wildlife Trafficking



What is Illegal Wildlife Trafficking (“IWT”)?

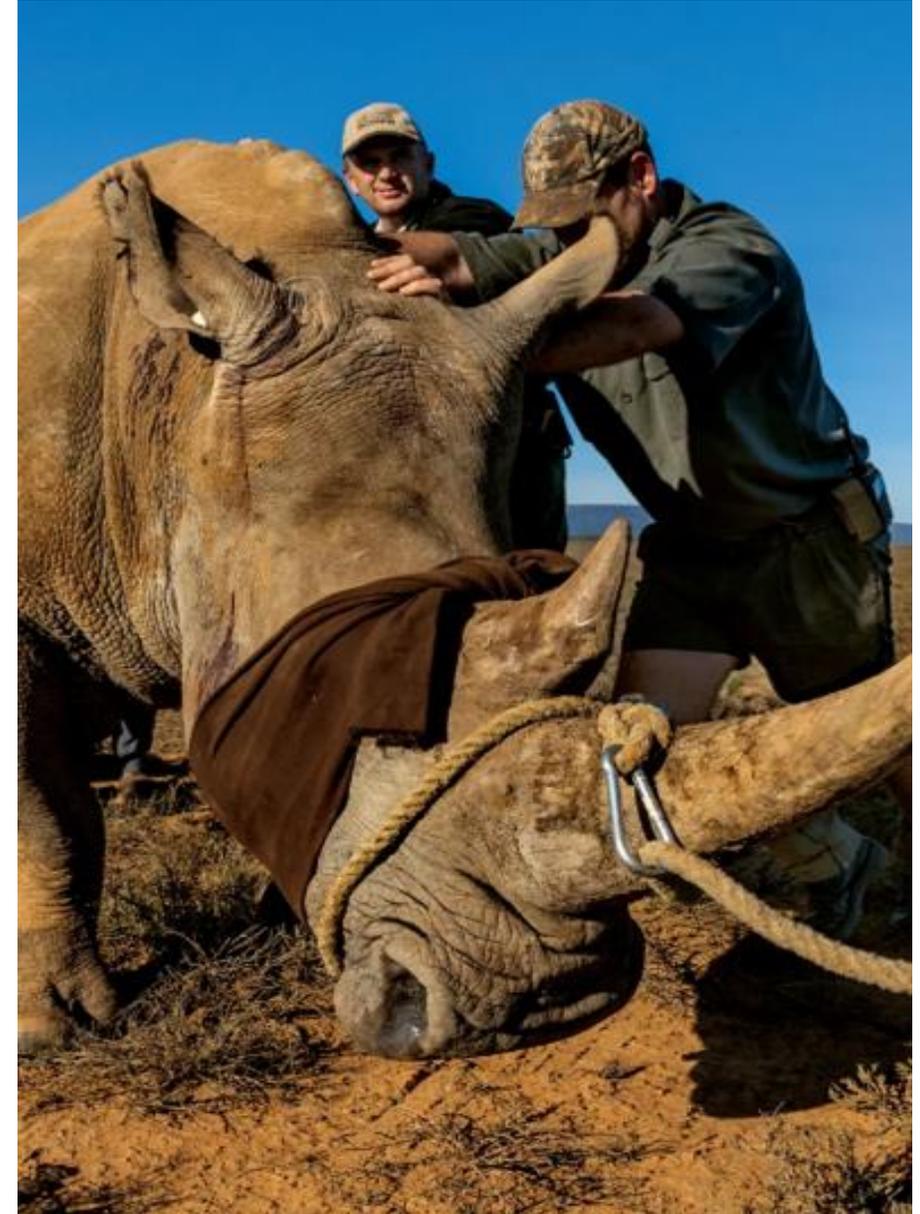
- ❑ The ***illegal poaching, smuggling and transport of a specific animal product or species by criminal groups or individuals for the purpose of financial profit or other material gain.*** It is often considered to be a low-risk, high-reward crime attractive to legitimate wildlife traders, opportunists and organized crime groups, including transnational organized criminal networks.
- ❑ Component of a broader set of Environmental Crime – fauna and flora crimes

7\$ - 23 \$
Billion /
Year
Globally

1,000
Rhino
horns
traded
yearly

100
Elephant
s killed
daily

GCC –
UAE and
Qatar



Why should we care?

- ❑ **Biodiversity Crisis** – endangered animals and losing species worldwide. When animals are removed from their natural ecosystems, the environment cannot thrive to its best ability.
- ❑ Hurt the environment by **damaging surrounding habitats and untargeted wildlife**
- ❑ **Hurts local economies and overall human health** – many local communities worldwide rely on wildlife tourism.
- ❑ International wildlife trade directly **increases risks of zoonotic pandemics and infectious diseases**. Wet markets (live animal markets where wildlife is sold in urban settings) are breeding grounds for zoonotic diseases, like the one that likely caused the Coronavirus outbreak.
- ❑ Penetration of **organized crime groups and other armed actors**
- ❑ **Removes billions from government coffers** in the form of taxes, fees, and duties lost to illicit trade

Traded Species

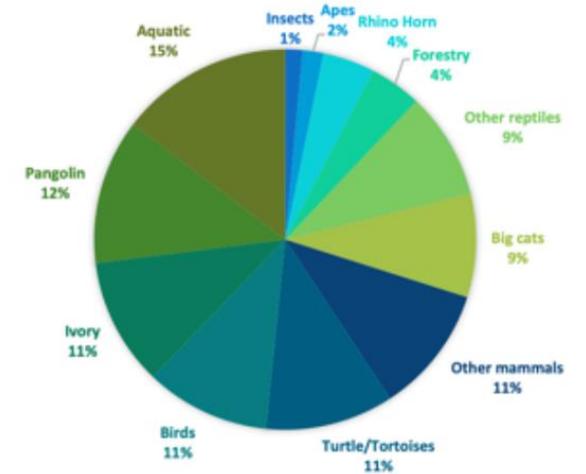
Popularly Traded Species

AMERICAS	WEST & CENTRAL AFRICA	EAST & SOUTHERN AFRICA	EUROPE	ASIA-PACIFIC
Sea turtles	Elephant	Elephant	Birds of Prey	Tigers
Iguanas	Pangolin	Turtles/tortoises	Whale	Turtles
Parrots	Rosewood	Rhino	Bears	Pangolins
Totoaba	Crocodiles	Big Cats	European eels	Orangutans
Corals	Panther	Shark	Songbirds	Parrots

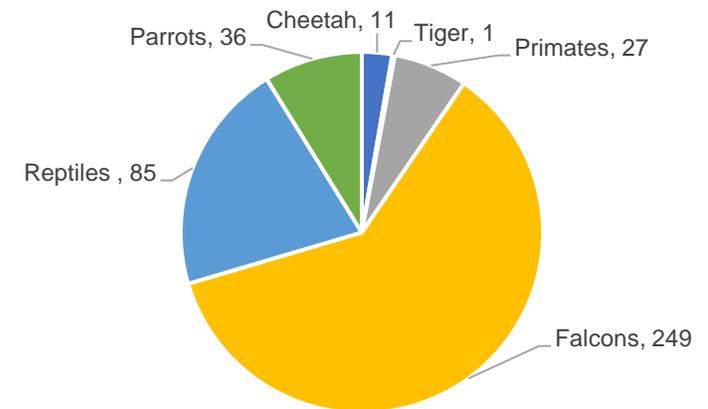
Popularly Traded Species – UAE

Cheetahs, Tiger cubs, Lion cubs, Snakes, Crocodiles, Chimpanzees, Gorillas, Orangutans, Monkeys, Baboons, Slow lorises, Spiders, Large lizards, Snakes, Tortoises, Meerkats, Hyenas, Servals, Falcons, Parrots, and more

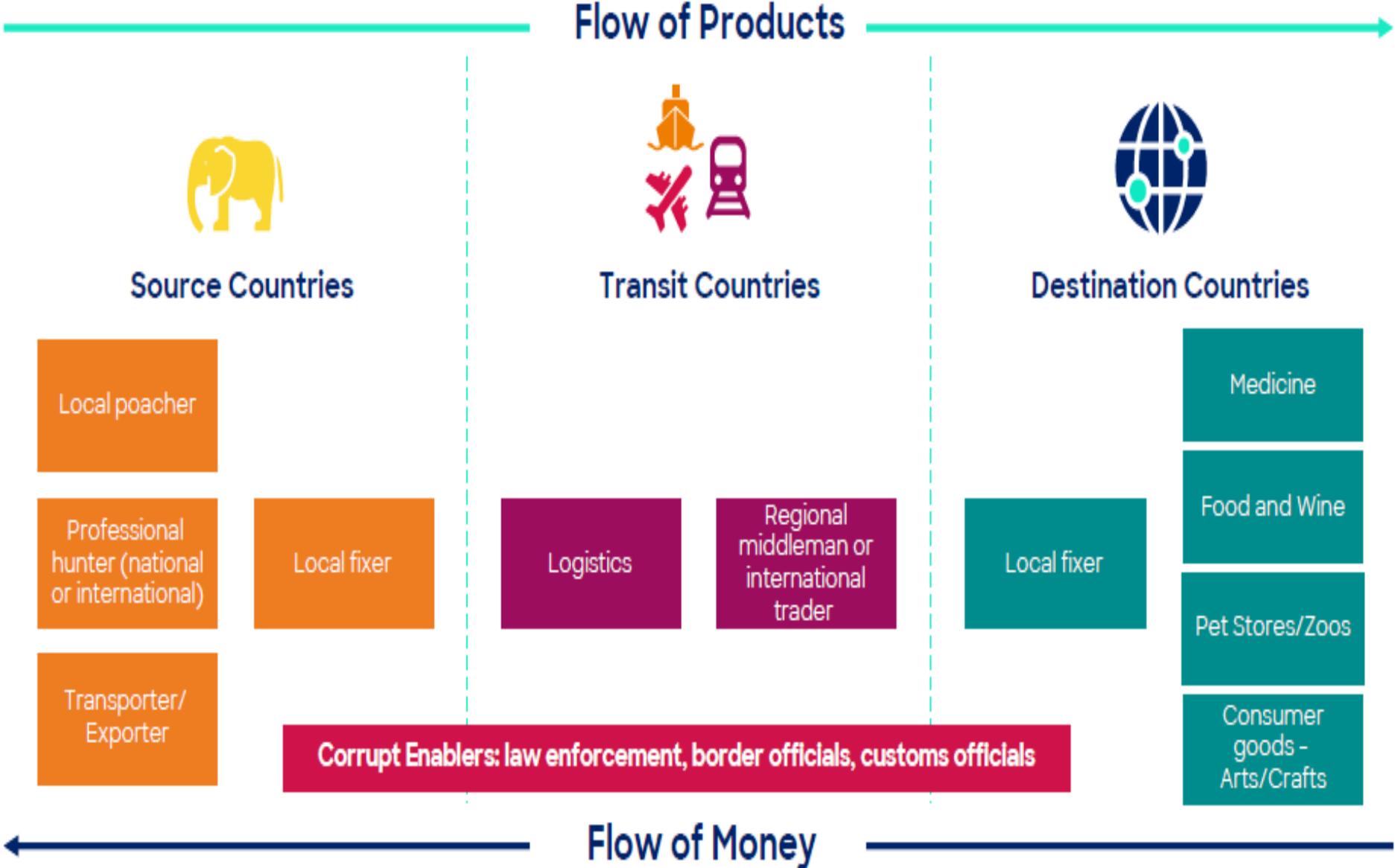
Commonly Seized Species



Commonly Seized Species, UAE



Trade Supply Chain



Methods to Launder Proceeds from the Illegal Wildlife Trade

Misuse of Banks / FIs

Cash deposits (Loan / Payments), Low value payments, Money Mule accounts, Card Accounts, Wires

Front Companies

Co-mingle licit and illicit proceeds, links to import-export industries, movement of goods and payments across borders

High value goods

Purchasing high-value goods – real estate and luxury items (e.g., vehicles, jewellery and artwork)

Hawala

Network of brokers across countries to facilitate international transfers without money physically flowing

New Technologies

Encrypted communication platforms, Social media sites, Online vendor platforms, Use of VPN connections

Payment Platforms

Mobile banking, Prepaid cards, mobile apps or social media-based platforms linked to bank accounts, Crypto

PEPs & Public Officers

Heavy use of cash, linkage of local PEPs and public officers (bribery / Corruption) and the use of Nominees

High Risk Business

Pet Suppliers, General Trading Companies, Import & Export Business, Cash intensive business, Eco Tourism Companies

Trade Supply Chain – High Risk Industries

High risk industries in source countries	Destination market high risk industries	Supply Chain
Game lodges, Safari parks, Hunting Companies, Eco Tourism Companies	Medicine production, medical testing facilities	Cash intensive businesses
Pet Stores, Exotic Pet Trading, Animal product exporters	Pet stores, zoos and breeding farms	Travel Agents
Import Export companies, shipping logistics providers	Leather goods importers, manufacturers	Seafood and Marine Products importers/exporters
Breeding farms	General Trading Companies	General Trading Companies
Any environmental product supplier, timber companies, seafood,	Furniture Production Companies	Free-Trade Zone Companies
Companies that sell low value/high bulk agricultural products	Arts, Crafts, Curios and Antiques Retailers	Import Export Companies

International Organizations & Local Laws (UAE)

- ❑ ***The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)*** is the principal international instrument dealing with wildlife trade.
 - ❑ The convention covers over 37,000 species of wildlife and is ***crucial in establishing rules and prohibitions for the trade of endangered wildlife***
 - ❑ CITES ***regulates the trade and sale of wildlife products*** by facilitating the administration of permits and licenses depending on the species conservation and protection status.
 - ❑ Overall, the ***treaty seeks to prevent the overexploitation of listed species*** and penalize those involved via national measures.
- ❑ UAE recognized the importance of tackling illegal wildlife trade early on and in line with its keenness on conserving the environment, it became one of the first nations in the Middle East to ratify CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) in 1990.
 - ❑ The geographical location of the UAE makes it a critical hub as many shipments pass through via air, sea and land ports, thus the UAE has recognized the issue and has enacted several legislations.

International Organizations & Local Laws (UAE)



Picture (5): Ivory destruction event held in Dubai, April 2015, in cooperation with Dubai Municipality, Dubai Customs, Dubai Police and IFAW



Picture (2): Showing two different sessions of different training workshop conducted in 2016

- ❑ ***In 1988 Dubai Government issued an order for the ban of ivory***, preventing businesses of buying and selling and manufacturing ivory and rhino horns
- ❑ ***Federal Law No. (11) for the year 2002 concerning the regulation and control of International Trade in Endangered Fauna and Flora.***
- ❑ ***Federal Law No.22 of the year 2016 to regulate the ownership of dangerous wild animals.*** This Federal law aims to regulate the ownership, possession and handling of dangerous wild animals. The ownership of dangerous wild animals is now limited to zoos, wildlife parks and a few other designated entities only.
- ❑ In 2016, the UAE conducted a workshop on combating illegal wildlife trade and implementation of CITES for ***the aviation sector.***



ABOUT MENA FCCG:

The MENA Financial Crime Compliance Group (MENA FCCG, www.menafccg.com) is a voluntary body that seeks to bring collective action in the fight against money laundering and terrorist finance in the region. The Group comprises 13 banks representing eight MENA countries, including Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, and the UAE. The Group is presided over by Dr. Wissam H. Fattouh, Secretary General for the Union of Arab Banks while Michael Matossian is the current Deputy Chair. The Group also seeks to enhance dialogue among public and private sector actors as the best medium for a more targeted and intelligent approach for responding to the changing face of financial crime. In November 2021, the Group officially launched a Europe Chapter at an inaugural meeting in London. The chapter aims to extend MENA FCCG's objectives to Europe by bringing together compliance professionals of Arab banks operating in Europe to enhance financial crime literacy and support implementation of best practices. The Arab Bankers Association acts as the strategic partner and the Chapter has entered a strategic alliance with Themis Services, a specialist financial crime consultancy.



ABOUT UFW:

United for Wildlife (UFW, www.unitedforwildlife.org) was founded by Prince William and The Royal Foundation in 2014 to protect endangered species from this abhorrent trade. At its core, United for Wildlife fosters global collaboration in the private sector to stop the trafficking of wildlife products. It does this through two Taskforces: a Financial Taskforce and a Transport Taskforce. These Taskforces bring together some of the world's largest businesses in the transport and financial sectors to break the chains of the illegal wildlife trade. By sharing knowledge and information across sectors and between countries, United for Wildlife is transforming illegal wildlife trade prevention and the prosecution of those who profit from these crimes.