

UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

**Pacific Sub-Regional Forum on Crimes that Affect the Environment
Combating the trafficking of wildlife, including marine and timber species
20-22 March 2024, Novotel Hotel, Nadi, Fiji**

BRIEF REPORT



Outcome summary

The Pacific Sub-regional Forum on Crimes that Affect the Environment was held in Nadi from the 20 to 22 March 2024. The forum aimed to strengthen national capacities to combat the trafficking of wildlife, including timber and marine species.

Over 40 officers from law enforcement and security agencies, customs, environment, fisheries, biosecurity, and public prosecutors' offices from Fiji, PNG, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu attended the forum, with representatives from relevant environmental NGOs in Fiji.

The forum was facilitated by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Environment Team with support from technical experts from Nature Fiji – Mareqeti Viti, WWF Pacific, the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), the US Geological Survey (USGS), Wildlife Justice Commission (WJC), and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS).

Members from national wildlife networks, with regional and international technical experts:

- i. Shared information on trends, good practices, case studies, challenges, and proposed recommendations to combat wildlife, forest, and fisheries crimes at the national and regional and global levels.
- ii. Deliberated on standard operating procedures for investigating and prosecuting wildlife crime. All wildlife network members agreed that standard operating procedures were essential and presented an overview of how their national procedures would operate in practice.
- iii. Discussed opportunities for regional collaboration against trafficking of marine and timber species and agreed to national and sub-regional priorities and actions to combat wildlife crime.

The forum provided the platform for the countries to talk through the processes they have in place, for all to understand how things are currently working (or not working) and to identify where there may be needs and opportunities to coordinate. By the end of the forum, country representatives had identified and agreed to priority actions to strengthen sub-regional efforts to combat wildlife crime under four strategic areas – capacity building, networking, operational and awareness raising.

Pacific sub-regional priorities to combat wildlife crime

Strategic areas	Priority actions	Immediate follow up/ actions
1. Capacity building	<ol style="list-style-type: none">a) Conduct training on species identificationb) Develop a species identification resource guide or/ and species ID app for easy identification – include listing of CITES and non-CITES species – name, photo, and list of necessary documents/ permits that are requiredc) Conduct specialized training for law enforcement and border agencies on domestic legislation, advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check with SPREP and IUCN on species ID capacity building

	<p>intelligence analysis, online investigations, crime scene to court.</p> <p>d) Special training for prosecutors on collecting and presenting evidence and issuing charges.</p> <p>e) Explore possibilities for forensic labs/ support for national authorities.</p>	
2. Networking	<p>a) Establish national level working groups</p> <p>b) Establish a formal sub-regional (or regional) wildlife enforcement network for information sharing and capacity building</p> <p>c) Establish a regional CITES secretariat</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share contact details with participants and create a WhatsApp group • Liaise with PTCCC, Pacific Fusion Centre to explore opportunities for regional coordination • Discuss with SPREP possibility of a regional CITES secretariat or desk officer
3. Operational	<p>a) Propose targeted operations on illegal wildlife trade and other illicit commodities</p> <p>b) Establish a sub-regional Customs operation like Operation Mekong Dragon</p> <p>c) Work towards a sharing a list of registered wildlife traders</p> <p>d) Develop list of experts – scientific, law enforcement, legal</p> <p>e) Develop a watchlist of wildlife criminals or persons of interest</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize a closed webinar for Customs officials in collaboration with Fiji Customs representatives after they return from the Operation Mekong Dragon VI briefing meeting • Develop and share a template for the list of wildlife traders • Share expert list for country focal points to populate
4. Awareness raising	<p>a) Research and awareness raising on patterns and trends of wildlife trafficking at national level</p> <p>b) Raise awareness of wildlife trafficking and prohibited species for trade/ permits and requirements through airlines and cruise ships</p> <p>c) Conduct awareness of wildlife crime with leaders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse patterns and trends of existing data on legal wildlife trade • Collate and analyse seizure data

Session summary

Welcome remarks

Ms Jenna Dawson-Faber, UNODC's Environment Team Regional Coordinator for Asia-Pacific, welcomed everyone to the forum and provided some background information. The forum is the culmination event of the "Combating Wildlife Trafficking in the Pacific" project implemented by the UNODC with partner countries – Fiji, PNG, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu - over the last three years.

In October 2021, the UNODC's Global Programme on Crimes that Affect the Environment extended technical support to the Pacific region through the aforementioned "project, with financial support from the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs of the U.S. Department of State. Environment agencies, including focal points for CITES, partnered with national authorities to support the implementation of a range of actions, including assessments of wildlife, forest and fisheries crimes and related training courses to improve coordination, investigations, and prosecutions.

Ms Jenna Dawson-Faber extended UNODC's appreciation to all partners for the enthusiasm, commitment, and hard work in tackling the transboundary trafficking of wildlife, timber, and marine species. As organized criminal groups are exploiting not only the precious natural resources of Pacific countries, but also the limitations in political will, capacity, and resources to confront them, there is great potential for scaling up regional coordination to develop synergies, shared understanding and knowledge transfer, common standard operating procedures, communication channels and a sense of shared responsibility to prevent and address wildlife trafficking in the region.

"We need to not only keep up with the creativity of the criminals, but we also need to be prepared for how their operations evolve. We are fortunate to have with us a variety of experts to help us achieve these goals, and it is my hope that we leave this event with a renewed commitment to work together."

Opening remarks

Following the welcome remarks, the forum was officially opened by the Permanent Secretary for the Fiji Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, Dr Sivendra Michael, who encouraged all participants, as the '*experts to protect the environment which we have borrowed from future generations, to lead the change and to walk the talk*'. Below is an excerpt of key points from his opening address:

The agenda of the forum clearly reflects the broad scope and the magnitude of the issues that are critical and pertinent to us in the Pacific. There can be no doubt, that as we work towards addressing some of our pressing environment and development management issues, we are also being faced with newly emerging challenges.

... wildlife crime, fisheries crime, forest crime, illegal mining, and waste trafficking - they all have been at peak high. These crimes are a hindrance, and a barrier to achieving the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, endorsed by the Pacific Forum leaders in 2022, which underscores the "...great value of our ocean and land, and the deep connection to our community, natural environment, resources, livelihoods, faiths, cultural values and traditional knowledge." ... national laws and policies also echo and recognize the critical need to protect

the region's biodiversity, its environment and resources from exploitation, degradation, nuclear contamination, waste, pollution, and health threats.

It can be difficult to imagine (with other major crimes taking place such as drugs and money laundering) that the illicit trafficking of wildlife, including illegal fishing and logging, is the fourth largest crime in the world. Reports from the Nature Crime Alliance indicate that these illicit activities generate as much as US\$280 billion each year, which is more than all of our combined Gross Domestic Product. The World Wildlife Crime Report 2020, in analysing the data for 180,000 seizures from 149 countries and territories, identified over 6,000 wildlife species of mammals, reptiles, corals, birds, and fish, seized between 1999-2018.

But in reality, we do not know the magnitude of the crime. What we do know, is that we are facing a biodiversity crisis, many keystone species are endangered or threatened; and over 1 million species of flora and fauna has become extinct in the last decade. (Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) - Report 2009).

As a region rich in natural resources, with vast marine spaces, limited capacity on surveillance systems, and rare and endangered endemic species that are highly valuable in the trade, the Pacific is an attractive source location for wildlife criminals and specialist collectors. In 2020, with the COVID-19 pandemic we saw first-hand the potentially devastating impacts of the illegal wildlife trade on human health, the global economy and security. By taking a stand against wildlife crime, we reduce the risks of zoonotic pathogen spill-over from wildlife and prevent future public health emergencies.

The trafficking of wildlife is increasingly recognized as both a specialised area of organized crime and a significant threat to many plant and animal species. Criminal groups use the same routes, facilitators, and techniques to traffic wildlife as they do for other illicit commodities, and they exploit gaps in national law enforcement and criminal justice systems. By taking a stand against wildlife crime we stand against organised crime, illicit trade and corruption.

Combating crimes that affect the environment is a huge challenge. It is in our interest to strengthen cooperation between agencies, to scale up coordination between our countries, to share information and data with each other and to keep the communication channels open, flowing, and active. Echoing the words of the former United States Attorney General Loretta Lynch:

“We all have a responsibility to protect the endangered species, both for their sake and for the sake of our own future generations”. The protection of plant and animal species is an enormous tasking that requires our collaborative action towards a common goal.

Session 2: Snapshot of wildlife species in the Pacific

The purpose of the session was to improve understanding of the value of Pacific biodiversity, sustainability, and species at risk, for law enforcement and border management officers. There were four presenters:

- (a) **Dr. Robert Fisher, Supervisory Research Biologist, USGS** rfisher@usgs.gov Focused on Pacific Species in IWT – traffickers and trends
- Some species from the Pacific in illegal trade:
 - The Manus green snail is CITES I listed, but annual sales may approach 5000 – lots for sale online.
 - Birdwing butterflies smuggled out of the SI and into the US as “origami handicraft” “wall decorations” “decorative wall hangings”.
 - Fiji’s longhorn beetles – sells at insect fairs for \$4-12k (dead).
 - Fly river turtles from PNG/AUS/IDN – illegally exported out of IDN.
 - SI skinks are not bred in captivity, however they are laundered as ‘captive bred’ and traded into the US. There is no legal import into the US of wild individuals.
 - Toucans and other birds not native to SI are being exported to mainly to Bangladesh as captive bred species, and could likely be using fake CITES certificates to smuggle the birds.
 - Areas that require attention/ action:
 - Illegal importing into countries – monitoring permits – example of species illegally imported are green iguanas and tortoises, Fiji iguanas.
 - Illegal exporting from countries of origin - tighter control on permits, and monitoring of potential smuggling and re-export.
 - Tightening the CITES permit process at the national level to approve export of Pacific species - there is a need to look into potential use of fake CITES permits from the region.
 - Target islands, resorts – monitoring people coming in from these islands before boarding international flights.
 - Monitoring the illegal trade of some targeted species such as iguanas, orchids, parrots.
 - Use of airline stewards potentially as mules; construction crews, temporary/guest workers from around Fiji (resort construction) or international (for roads or mines).
 - Monitoring yachts and boats (better border search and control measures)
 - Addressing the illegal breeding and trade of the Fiji iguanas - Fiji and Ecuador (due to Galapagos) could partner and go to CITES MA to discuss Uganda situation – needs action at high political level.
 - Addressing the issue of the trade of whales’ teeth/ Tabua – Permanent Secretary has suggested an inter-agency working group to discuss this issue.

(b) **Ms. Nunia Thomas-Moko, Director, Nature Fiji-Mareqeti Viti** nuniat@naturefiji.org
Highlighted endemic and endangered species in Fiji and their value to Fiji's biodiversity and the reasons why these species needed to be protected from illegal trade and exploitation.

- Environment and biodiversity value to Pacific people– not only an ecological role but also connected to cultural identity and health.
- Pacific biodiversity facing threats related to overharvesting/ exploitation and threats from invasive species - for example, rats and cats as invasive species; risk of hull cleaning carrying invasive species; boat traffic between islands also a source of lizards/ frogs/ toads/ mongoose/ mynah birds that hitch rides – also a biosecurity risk.
- Diminishing forest area per capita – loss of forests also affects loss of wildlife – based on Study on Deforestation and forest degradation 2020, predicted that by 2030 Fiji would have only 0.7HA per person, by 2050 this would be 0.5HA (1 rugby field is 1 HA).

(c) **Mr. Nicho Gowep, Senior Scientific Officer, Conservation and Environment Protection Authority PNG** ngowep16@gmail.com Discussed the risk factors related to exploitation of marine turtles that are found in PNG and other Pacific countries.

- 7 species of sea turtles in the world, 6 live on coastal waters of Pacific, 5 of which nest on sandy beaches (Leatherback, Hawksbill, Green, Loggerhead, Flathead, Olive Ridley).
- All 7 species are protected internationally (CMS Appendix I and II and CITES I).
- The Leatherback, Hawksbill and Loggerhead are critically endangered.
- PNG legislation and policy: leatherbacks are fully protected/ no marine turtles are allowed to be traded to or from PNG under International Trade (Fauna and Flora) Act.
 - PNG has developed a national plan of action for marine turtles that will help guide decisions about conservation/management/protection.
 - A draft NPOA was drafted in Dec 2023 and will be consulted in 2024.
 - Engagement with communities to participate in and be part of any decision-making process for marine turtles will be critical for management and protection.
- Threats: bycatch and entanglement in fishing gear, pollution (plastic, ghost nets, oil), climate impacts (loss of nesting beaches due to rising sea levels, hot sand temperatures creating mostly female hatchlings), development on nesting beaches or extraction (i.e. mining in feeding grounds), overexploitation from use and trade.
- Use and trade: sale, food, ceremonial; trade in whole turtles, meat, eggs, oil, fat, bones and shell (shell made into curios and souvenirs like bracelets/earrings/hair combs) – use and trade is a major threat for marine turtles, especially Hawksbill in Asia-Pacific.
- Understanding use and trade:
 - Turtle Use Project is being implemented to understand the motivations and drivers of use and trade and how best to support communities to reduce reliance (led by WWF and SPREP).
 - ShellBank is piloted in PNG - agreed to be implemented in 2024 (marine turtle traceability toolkit to identify populations, how they are interconnected, and which are most at risk from poaching/harvesting/trade/bycatch). WWF and partners (subject to funding) can provide training to identify turtles and parts and how to handle as evidence to support investigations.

(d) **Ms. Karen Baird, Threatened and Migratory Species Advisor, SPREP** karenb@sprep.org
Provided an overview of the threats and trends of migratory species in the region.

- Review of status of sea turtles in the Pacific Ocean 2021 – literature review that is a precursor to developing an extinction risk model, which will be used as a predictive tool to identify pressing threats and allow policymakers to address these as priorities.
- Domestic consumption and bycatch are potential vehicles for turtle shells to enter IWT (whole shells but also jewelry).
- At least 189 shark and ray species in the region; low observer coverage on longline vessels (less than 5%) combined with transshipment on the high seas provides likely opportunities for illegal trade; swim bladders sold in Asia for USD200/kg.
- CITES listing of sharks is increasing due to threats - overharvesting/ exploitation.



Session 3: Country progress and lessons learnt

Country teams presented their achievements, challenges and recommendations moving forward. Vanuatu country team presented on Day 2 as their flight was delayed. All country teams demonstrated significant progress and achievements to combat wildlife trafficking:

(a) **Fiji country presentation – Senivasa Waqairamasi, Department of Environment**

senivasa.waqairamasi@environment.gov.fj

- The Resource Management Unit (Environment and climate change Ministry) is responsible for CITES.
- Endangered and Protected Species Act 2002 (regulations came in 2003); amended Act in 2017 that included an updated list of species (Amendment of schedules was made through regulations in 2021); EPS regulates CITES listed species and 530 indigenous species not listed in CITES; illegal trade is in crested iguana, long horn beetle, parrots, Tabua, giant clam meat etc.
- National BD Strategy and Action Plan for Fiji 2020-2025; currently being aligned to 23 targets under Global BD Framework and includes a focus area on wildlife trafficking.
- Wildlife Crime Taskforce Team was informally established in 2023 to develop SOP for detection, investigation, and prosecution of wildlife crime. The taskforce worked together to conduct a training with Police and Customs middle – management officers in November 2023 and created a chat group with all participants which is used to share information, ask for advice on species, permits etc. The taskforce is to be formalized by the National Environment Council and needs a TOR.
- Challenges and lessons learnt:
 - illegal export of iguana.
 - not adhering to the permit requirement and trade implications (restriction from importing countries i.e. corals and marine species – Singapore CITES MA inquiring about a permit that Fiji issued which did not have Fiji Customs endorsement.
 - political will.
 - upholding legislative process requirements and consistent decisions/advice regarding illegal import/declaration.
 - Fiji fisheries is learning from Customs relationship/ operations with Police about how to deal with illegal harvest and trade of marine species.
 - Need to document real life scenarios - when things go wrong.

(b) **PNG country presentation – Nicho Gowep, Conservation and Environment Protection**

Authority PNG ngowep16@gmail.com

- PNG biodiversity – species rich - marine BD: 3000 marine fish species, 300 coral species; 15-20k plant species; mammal species 242 (52 endemic); 762 birds (85 endemic); 305 reptiles (85 endemic).
- Progress to date:
 - The Rapid Assessment report on the criminal justice response to wildlife and forest crime in PNG recommendations were to review the legislation re CITES and protected species within the country, conduct capacity building, and improve stakeholder collaboration.

- PNG has reviewed the International Trade (Fauna and Flora) Act 2003 and the Crocodile Trade (Protection) Control Act 1979. This has involved 2 stakeholder consultations supported by UNODC to peer review the text of the Intl Trade (Fauna and Flora) Bill 2023 (April 2023, Oct 2023) – the draft bill is currently with the State Solicitor for vetting.
- Conducted 2 stakeholder regional capacity building workshop (West Sepik province Dec 2022, Western province Sept 2023) to raise awareness of CITES and PNG protected species and issues of IWT, build capacity on species ID, establish regional contacts to combat IWT.
- Outcomes:
 - Established informal working group to combat IWT in the two borders of PNG (through WhatsApp) – Sandaun Province and Western Province.
 - PNG Customs in Vanimo detained crocodile skulls when passing through border without CITES permit (Customs, 21 Nov 2023).
 - NAQIA and CEPA detained 56 birdwing butterfly species export via DHL with CITES documentation on 7 March 2024.
 - PNG Police arrested suspects in a dingy with two marine turtles (Western Province Royal PNG Navy) 6 Dec 2023, Daru interdict 800kg of sea cucumbers attempted to be smuggled into IDN by poachers at Mari Village, South Fly district, Western province (PNG Customs and Transnational Crime Unit RPNGC) 17 Nov 2021; Customs has stopped log vessels with evidence of wildlife on board (justifications provided by suspects were that wildlife died (whether they killed it when saw LE coming is uncertain).
- Lessons learned:
 - stakeholder collaboration is essential
 - stakeholders need capacity building and resources on matters related to IWT.
 - funding support is essential for awareness and capacity building.
 - need to engage with regional expertise or local species expert on species ID.
 - conduct more awareness on endemic species and CITES-listed species as many people are not aware of the need to protect species, prohibited species etc.



(c) **Solomon Islands country presentation – Rose Babaua, Environment and Conservation Division** RBabaua@mecdm.gov.sb

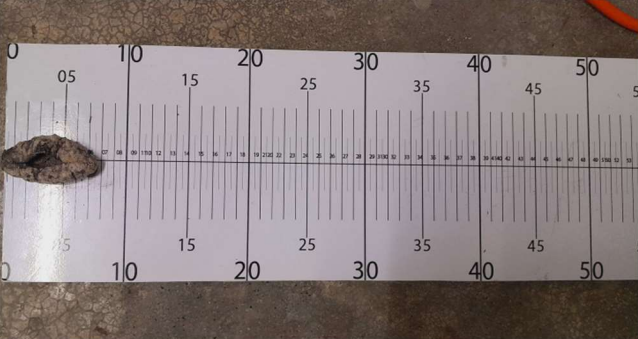
- Progress:
 - Completed the Rapid assessment on the criminal justice response to wildlife and forest crime in Solomon Islands and Open-source investigation and intelligence analysis training in 2022.
 - Developed Rapid Reference Guide for investigating and prosecuting wildlife related offences and complement corruption risk mitigation (CRM) process for ECD and developed mitigation measures in 2023.
 - Participated in regional training for SI enforcement agencies on wildlife crime investigations (Pacific Harbour Fiji 2023) and wildlife seizure training (Port Vila, Vanuatu 2023).
 - Conducted training for local exporters on wildlife permit processes and requirements as an outcome of CRM mitigation plan (March 2023).
- Gaps/challenges:
 - Legislative gap (penalties are insufficient to act as any form of deterrent).
 - National capacity (need more international law enforcement experts for both ECD and Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources to advise on best practices, protocols, assist investigations and case file prep).
 - Need continuous training for officers from law enforcement and border agencies on domestic legislation, advanced intelligence analysis, online investigations, crime scene to court, species identification.
 - Need special training for prosecutors on collecting and presenting evidence and issuing charges.
 - Need to strengthen cooperation and networking systems to enable and enhance the collection, analysis and sharing of information and intel on wildlife and forest crimes.
 - Possible corruption risks across supply chain (issuing licenses, permits).

(d) **Vanuatu county presentation, Tom Maimai, Ministry of Climate Change**

tmaimai@vanuatu.gov.vu

- Wildlife crime poses significant threats to biodiversity, ecosystems and local communities (culture, economy, identity).
- Challenges:
 - Financial constraints, lack of personnel, technology.
 - Geographic barriers including vast marine areas and remote islands make enforcement difficult.
 - Weak legislation (including lack of alignment between different legislations) and enforcement mechanisms.
 - Lack of prioritization on environmental issues.
- Government initiatives:
 - Strengthening/reviewing/aligning legislation (passing laws to protect endangered species and habitats – CITES Act (SPREP bringing a consultant to review this), Envi Protection and Conservation Act, Fisheries Act, Customs Act).

- Capacity building - training LE and Customs has motivated and engaged them to work together.
 - Improved collaboration with government and international partners, NGOs, neighbouring countries and regional agencies (SPC, SPREP) - sharing intel/resources/ expertise.
 - Community engagement: educating communities about importance of BD and consequences of wildlife crime (env rangers/conservation management committee, fisheries observers and fisheries community based authorized officers), encouraging community reporting and participation in conservation efforts (terrestrial and marine).
 - Success stories:
 - Export of black fern was high 2000-2010 but has since been reduced since DEPC started enforcing the CITES Act.
 - Logging in Santo Island – in late 2023 over 3000 species of hard woods (including rosewood) was logged for export; DEPC intervened and stopped the logging activity.
 - Fisheries - in 2023 a variety of sea cucumbers (including CITES listed species) were confiscated by Vanuatu Fisheries Department from an individual in Port Vila who was storing these for illegal export; in 2022 several undersized coconut crabs (totally banned) that were locally exported from one island to another were confiscated at the border by Vanuatu Fisheries Department at the domestic terminal (they were then sent to be sold).
 - Vanuatu Biosecurity confiscated and destroyed crates of unidentified eggs imported into Vanuatu by an Asian company/ individual (?) – did not look like bird eggs but potentially reptile eggs (potential for further investigation).
 - Achievements:
 - Participated in wildlife crime trainings, developed Rapid Reference Guide, wildlife crime taskforce being established (will hope to formalize this while at the forum).
 - Future directions:
 - Strengthen enforcement and legislation.
 - Increase community involvement and awareness.
 - Enhance collaboration and support from government, international partners for sharing intel, resources, expertise to tackle transnational WLC.
- The presentation from the Vanuatu team led to a discussion among country teams about sea cucumber - which countries have NDF studies and management plans, size limits, open/closed seasons. PNG for example, has done an NDF for sea cucumbers and has management plan (Fiji has neither, Vanuatu has a management plan but no NDF, SI has a management plan but no NDF).
 - It also highlighted some of the good practices in place for coordinating efforts, for example PNG Customs has a contact list for who to call for different issues (when seizing CITES-listed species, controlled substances); and the Solomon Islands has an SOP on plastics (to implement the plastic ban).



SUCCESS STORIES

- Fisheries
 - ✓ In 2023 a variety of sea cucumber species (that included CITES listed species) were confiscated by the Vanuatu Fisheries Department (VFD) from a Chinese national in Port-Vila who was storing them for illegal export
 - ✓ In 2022 a number of undersized coconut crabs that were locally exported from one island to another were confiscated at the border by the Vanuatu Fisheries Department at the domestic terminal. They were sent to be sold
 - ✓ Successful completion of Non-Detrimental Findings in 2023 by VFD and DEPC, for the legal trade of Blue sharks.

CITES ENFORCEMENT TRAINING – Wildlife Crime Investigation and Prosecution

DETECTION

	Detection	Organization	Date
I.	Detention of 56 Birdwing butterfly species export via DHL (Courier) with CITES documentation	NAQIA and CEPA	7 March 2024
II.	Royal PNG arrest a dingy with two marine turtle and release	Royal PNG (Water Police western Province)	6 Dec 2023
III	Vanimo PNG Customs officer detain Crocodile Skulls when passing through the border without CITES permit	PNG Customs	21 Nov 2023
IV	PNGCS/RPNGC (TCU) Daru interdict approximately 800kg of beech-de-mer attempted to be smuggled into Indonesia by poachers at Mari Village; South Fly District, Western Province	PNG Customs Service & Transnational Crime Unit (RPNGC)	17 Nov 2021



Session 4: Wildlife crime data, case studies, approaches, and tools

There were three presenters for this session to explore wildlife crime data and case studies, emerging approaches, and useful tools:

(a) **Jenna Dawson-Faber, UNODC** jenna.dawson-faber@un.org

- Provided an overview of the tools and resources developed by UNODC to combat wildlife crimes, including:
 - World Wildlife Crime Reports (2016 and 2020) [World Wildlife Report \(unodc.org\)](https://www.unodc.org/documents/wildlife/crime-reports/)
 - UNODC Global Analysis on Crimes that Affect the Environment – 2024 report will have a fisheries case study from the Pacific.
 - UNODC Threat Assessment on Transnational Organised Crime in the Pacific – http://www.unodc.org/documents/southeastasiaandpacific/Publications/2016/2016.09.16_TOCTA_Pacific_web.pdf The latest report will be released in 2024 and will have information on environment crimes, especially fisheries crime, illegal logging and wildlife trafficking.
 - Rapid Assessments on the Criminal Justice Response to Wildlife and Forest Crime [Asia Pacific \(unodc.org\)](https://www.unodc.org/documents/wildlife/crime-reports/)
 - ICCWC Toolkit https://www.unodc.org/documents/Wildlife/Toolkit_e.pdf and Indicator Framework to assess law enforcement response to wildlife and forest crime https://www.unodc.org/documents/Wildlife/Indicator_Framework_e.pdf
 - Rapid Reference Guides for investigating and prosecuting wildlife crime.
 - Wildlife and Forest Crime Field Guide for frontline officers, Legislative guides, wildlife crime scene training guide, corruption risk assessments for wildlife agencies, fisheries and forestry etc. [Publications & Resources \(unodc.org\)](https://www.unodc.org/documents/wildlife/crime-reports/)



(b) **Jenny Feltham, Wildlife Justice Commission** felthamjenny@gmail.com

- Presented selected case study illustrating the steps involved in investigating a wildlife crime case and the role of the WJC in supporting countries in intelligence gathering.
- The mission of WJC is to disrupt and help dismantle the transnational criminal networks trading in wildlife, timber and fish by collecting evidence and turning it into accountability.
- WJC conducts law enforcement-driven, intelligence-led, investigations; analyse intelligence to share with law enforcement and policy makers; provide operational support, training and mentoring to law enforcement; and influence policy and build political will to address wildlife crime.
- In recent investigation on sea cucumber and shark fin trafficking and other marine species WJC identified links between some companies operating in the Pacific and adverse entities in LAC and HK.
- Increasing evidence of wildlife trade convergence with other crimes, for example in Feb 2024 businesswoman and husband charged with trafficking \$15m in meth from PNG to Australia, alleged to have previously owned a sea cucumber farm.
- WJC can provide technical support to national agencies for intelligence gathering, investigations. For example, Fisheries officers can collaborate with Police/ TCU and connect with WJC for support with intelligence gathering and analysis.
- WJC services to countries:
 - conducting data analysis,
 - sharing actionable intelligence reports,
 - providing specialist analytical services upon request – e.g. phone analysis,
 - providing support to conduct covert investigations and joint operations,
 - providing price data to support prosecutions,
 - providing intelligence documented to evidentiary standard, and
 - testifying in court



(c) **Francis Areki, WWF Pacific** fareki@wwfpacific.org

- Sharks and rays in the Pacific illegally traded/ transshipped.
- There is domestic demand for consumption of marine turtles.
- Sea cucumbers are being stockpiled.
- WWF has tools that can assist to identify shark fins and turtles (from parts/ DNA) – Shellbank
- Recommend community awareness to understand the value of marine species, for example, the parrotfish grinds coral into sand (20kg a year); Napoleon wrasse and other fish change sex every few years (which many communities don't understand); sea cucumbers are the vacuums of the sea.

Marine Species Issues

- Sharks and Rays
 - Transshipment/Domestic Markets
- Marine Turtles
 - Domestic Demand
- Sea Cucumber
 - Stockpiling

How does ShellBank work?

Confiscation database
Samples collected from seized or surrendered turtle parts or products.

Recovery database
Samples collected from nesting turtles, hatchlings or embryo/eggs.

In-water database
Samples collected in-water from wild turtles, including all size classes.

These three databases enable the tracking of marine turtles for conservation, research, investigation, and prosecution purposes.

11,200 TURTLES

harvested annually in the Solomon Islands as a small-scale fishery

Henderson et al., 2020. Free sharks, turtles and other marine species in Solomon Islands. Biological Conservation (in press)

FJI
2,420 Turtles- 12 months in 136 villages-10 provinces- Highest Consumption- Lomaiviti

What we and our partners have achieved so far - moving from Pilot into Practice

- Over **650** samples collected from more than **20** sites
- 11** New nesting beaches are being studied and published
- SIX** new hawksbill genetic stocks from partner projects identified
- More than **10,000** Database entries for Green and Hawksbills have been recorded
- 25** countries have expressed interest in collaborating or are already working with the ShellBank team
- THREE** Reports and **TWO** Guidelines for collection and laboratory procedures published

CITES Turtle Resolution

Better enforcement action:

“3. RECOMMENDS Parties improve monitoring, detection, and law enforcement activities at all transaction points (e.g., markets, online, ports) to help combat the illegal take and trade of marine turtles and enhance cooperation and collaboration in the control of trade in marine turtles; amongst wildlife-law enforcement agencies at national and international levels, including in the exchange of actionable intelligence regarding the illegal take and trade of marine turtles;

Use DNA for research and law enforcement investigations:

“5. RECOMMENDS Parties collect samples from seized marine turtles for scientific analysis to determine species involved and populations of origin, and as appropriate, provide these to forensic and research institutions capable of reliably determining the species and geographic origin of the samples in support of research, investigations, and prosecutions”



Mr. Francis Areki (center) and environment CSO reps

Session 5: Standard operating procedures (SOPs) and wildlife enforcement networks (WENs)

Ms. Caitlin Spaeth, Senior Wildlife Investigator from the US Fish and Wildlife Services presented on undertaking job hazard analysis, which helps to demonstrate the flow of how to develop SOPs. This was followed by a presentation by Ms. Jenna Dawson- Faber on lessons learnt from operations and wildlife enforcement networks.

(a) **Caitlin Spaeth, US Fish and Wildlife Services**, caitlin_spaeth@fws.gov

- Provided a walk-through step by step overview of completing Job Hazard Analysis form which can be tailored to any task/job to help determine safety needs, procedures that need to be concluded.
- The form helps create the SOP which is based on the specifications that go into form.
- The presentation included short discussions on zoonotic diseases as a risk factor for inspecting/ interacting with wildlife, for example, customs officers making seizures, checking containers or suitcases with suspected wildlife.
- As a guide, keep the activities as small/basic as possible – the activities should be straightforward, clearcut and achievable. Don't tackle the entirety of the activity in one job as it may be too long/overwhelming.
- Each aspect of a job has its own job hazard analysis (i.e. how to search a container, how to search luggage, etc.).




(b) **Jenna Dawson-Faber, UNODC** jenna.dawson-faber@un.org

- UNODC collaborates with other international partners to provide technical support to various initiatives:
- Operation Mekong Dragon (OMD) is a Customs operation targeting trans-boundary trafficking of illicit drugs and CITES goods by all routes (air, sea, land borders).
 - The OMD was initiated in 2018 by China and Viet Nam Customs administrations with operational/ technical support from WCO RILO/AP and UNODC.
 - OMD is now in its 6th phase – OMD VI to be implemented from 18 April to 18 September 2024.
 - Fiji Customs has been invited to attend OMD VI.

- UNODC supports follow up on 216 cases from OMD - 195 cases have concluded legal proceedings. For example, on 25 April 2023 Vietnam Customs seized 11.8kg rhino horns and 4.7kg ivory at Hanoi airport, one courier was arrested and case prepared and prosecuted in court. The suspect was sentenced to 12 years imprisonment by the Hanoi People's Court in November 2023.
- Operation Sama – Customs operation in Africa formed after OMD – based on lessons learnt and experiences from OMD.
- WIRE – Wildlife Inter-regional enforcement meetings to promote cooperation between African, Asian, and Latin American countries. Have three working groups on investigations, prosecution and mutual legal assistance, and customs.
- Wildlife enforcement networks (WEN) is a regional or sub-regional network which involves a collection of national agencies responsible for wildlife law enforcement. Focused on supporting and strengthening enforcement in that region to address wildlife crime and providing a platform enabling collaboration and communication between its member states, regional, sub-regional and global enforcement and support bodies and other networks. WENs can be formal or informal and there are pros/ cons associated with both.

WEN Goals

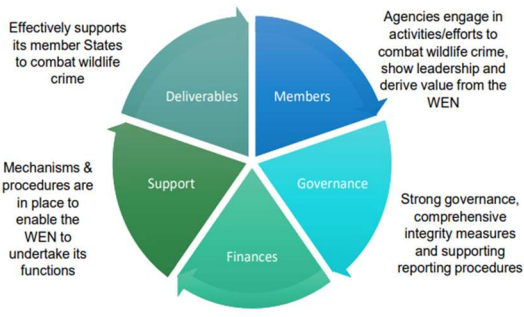
- Build cooperation between agencies responsible for wildlife law enforcement;
- Facilitate standardized regional approaches;
- Support and encourage coordinated efforts and participation of member states in operations combating wildlife crime;
- Share experience, skills and information;
- Exchange intelligence and risk data;
- Support capacity building efforts;
- Ensure all actions, products and deliverables of the WEN are aimed at more effectively combating wildlife crime.



The WEN Concept



WHAT DOES A WELL-PERFORMING WEN LOOK LIKE?



- Effectively supports its member States to combat wildlife crime
- Agencies engage in activities/efforts to combat wildlife crime, show leadership and derive value from the WEN
- Strong governance, comprehensive integrity measures and supporting reporting procedures
- Access to sustained funding to support functioning, projects and events
- Mechanisms & procedures are in place to enable the WEN to undertake its functions

Sessions 6-9: Developing standard operating procedures (SOPs)

Prior to country teams discussions on the SOPs, the Solomon Islands team (Geoffrey Mauriasi GMauriasi@mecdm.gov.sb) and Dr. Fisher (USGS) presented case scenarios where the absence of an SOP hindered investigation and prosecution. The teams were then provided with possible questions to guide their discussions for the SOPs along key headings (see template in appendix):

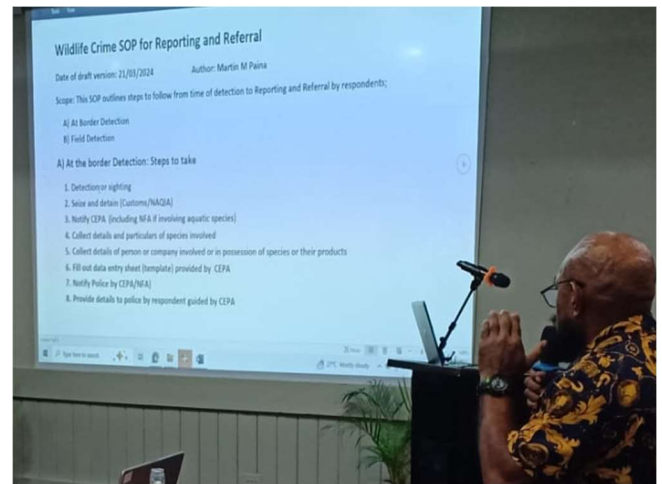
- Background.
- Purpose and scope.
- Key offences related to wildlife crime under the national legal framework.
- Key stakeholders/ Authorities mandated under the legislation.
- Process of dealing with detections:
 - Roles of stakeholders in detection
 - Detecting wildlife offences
 - Assessing the severity of the offence and securing the crime scene
 - Evidence collection and preservation
 - Engaging expert assistance
 - Reporting seizures or complaints
- Process of dealing with investigations:
 - Protocol for requesting support for investigations
 - Information sharing to support investigations
 - Collaborating on investigations
 - Investigating ancillary offences
- Communication.
- Preparing cases for prosecution.
- Conflict resolution.
- Media and public engagement.
- Data collection.
- Regular coordination.

A brief outcome of the work of the country teams on the SOPs and reflections, is presented below:

(a) PNG Team

- An approach to developing the SOP is to develop individual processes and consolidate these into one. This was the approach taken by the PNG team who also used the Rapid Assessment and identified agencies who they need to connect with, especially the agencies which are not present at the forum.
- The PNG team presented a flow chart for information sharing which they had developed:
 - from detection the case is referred to different authorities responsible for the different offences - forest/fish/CITES;
 - respective authorities investigate the offence, establish the severity of the offence, build the case for legal proceedings;
 - there can be parallel investigations (i.e. fraudulent CITES permit – investigated by Customs for the fraudulent doc and CEPA for CITES offence);

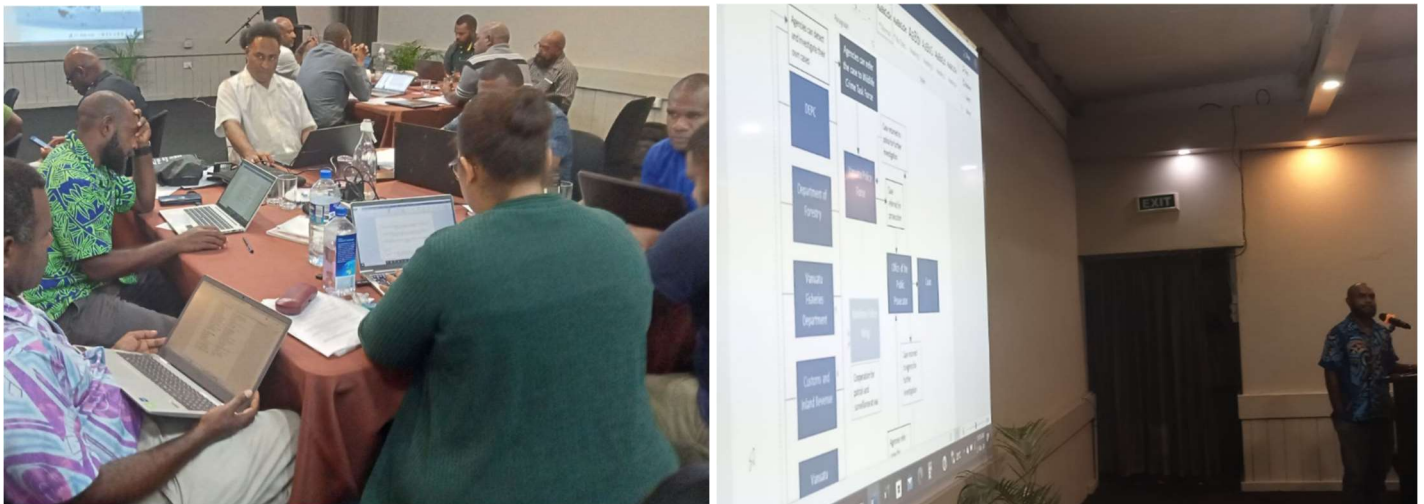
- then further referral to other line agencies/regulatory bodies to obtain and/or share info (financial analysis supervision unit, investment promotion authority, dept of info/comms/tech);
- and pursue legal proceedings; common agreement that they will work together as a group to make use of the legislation that has the most severe penalties
- The next step for the team is to identify which agencies already have MOUs with each other and establish liaison/focal points within the agencies.
- PNG has already good examples of information sharing to combat wildlife crime:
 - CEPA created a set of pamphlets about the most trafficked/endangered/species of concern, with photos and a box that noted to call CEPA if they come across it (with contact details). The pamphlets were given to Customs and Biosecurity, and this has already generated results – for example, a shipment of the Birdwing Butterfly was seized after NAQIA (Biosecurity) officials recognised the Birdwing Butterfly from the pamphlets and contacted CEPA to inspect and confirm.
 - Seizures have also been made by Police, Customs, NAQIA and Fisheries officers following training workshops on CITES/ species prohibited for trade organized by CEPA.
- The PNG team also presented a draft SOP for reporting and referral (see photo) for border and field detection.
- The PNG team suggested that the way forward may be to establish a wildlife Crime inter-agency secretariat which should drive the agenda and programme. Each sector agency will take turns to chair the secretariat meetings and will organize and implement workshops for engagement in each of the regions in PNG.



(b) Vanuatu Team

- The Vanuatu team agreed that the main challenges were establishing clear line of communication between agencies, and that each agency had their own legislation and mandate to enforce laws with little alignment between them. The establishment of a task force should help address these challenges.

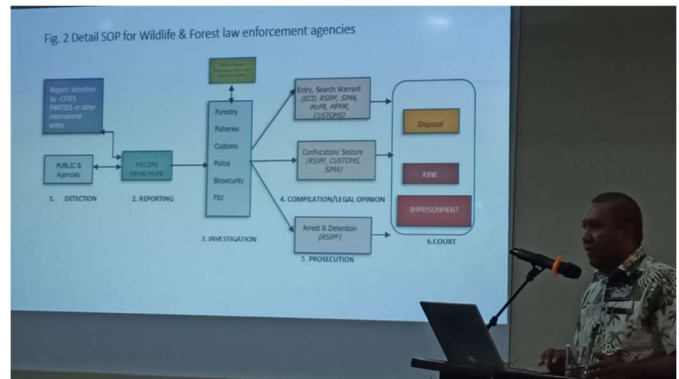
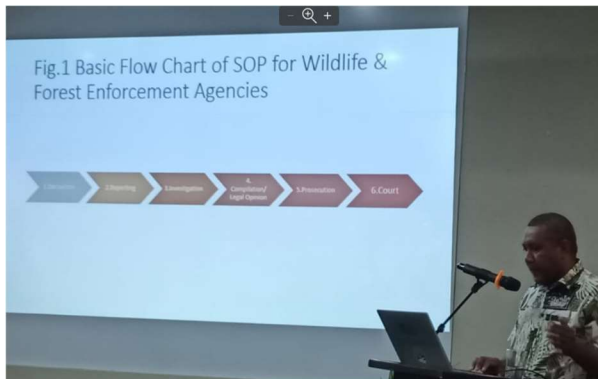
- The Vanuatu team proposed the Wildlife Crime Task Force as the central coordinating mechanism for cases to be referred for further investigation by Police. The task force is currently informal, but they are developing a TOR.
- Usually, whichever agency detects an offence will follow their own procedures for investigation, including submitting the case for prosecution. Possibly cases that serious offences will be taken to the Wildlife Crime Task Force to discuss and refer on for Police investigation
 - *Note – the Task Force can include a criteria in their SOP for cases to be brought to the attention of the Task Force – for example, what makes it a serious crime, for example, does it involve a species listed on Appendix 1 of CITES?*
- Currently Vanuatu has a Wastewater task force which is working quite well. It would be beneficial for the Vanuatu team to share examples of TORs for the Wastewater Task Force and their experiences, with the other country teams.



(c) Solomon Islands Team

- The Solomon Islands team went through the template and identified relevant authorities for each step (powers). The challenges they identified was that there were overlapping legislation and overlapping powers in terms of confiscation and seizure, and some agencies are not present in the forum, so their discussions were limited to fisheries, environment, police, and prosecution.
- The team presented a flow chart of the criminal justice process from detection to court, and elaborated the agencies, legislation, and roles at each stage of the 6-step process. Following discussions with other teams, they added feedback between authorities so that agency focal points would be aware of the status/ progress of cases they referred. Thus, there was a general agreement among country teams that a feedback loop should be built into SOPs.
- Like other country teams, the Solomon Islands team also identified that they would have an issue with the storage of specimens, especially live species. Additionally, because of the legislative gaps between agencies, they would need to establish inter-agency agreements.

- As a way forward, the ECD will establish an MOU with Police and encourage the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources to do the same.



(d) **Fiji Team**

- According to the Fiji team, the SOP would address the challenge of identifying the channel of communications – for example, what triggers detection of wildlife at the border, who are the first responders and who should they refer to? Other challenges to address include species identification and detection; interpretation of laws and clashes in ideals for enforcement; political will and pressure to waiver or exempt; and the lack of storage facilities as anything investigated by police must have a record.
- The Fiji team presented their draft SOP which included a diagrammatic 12-step process from detection to feedback and data management. The draft SOP also included a seizure protocol for illegal export and import of wildlife species, including timber and marine species.
- As a possible annex to the SOP, the Fiji civil society group developed a list of various scientific experts for species identification.

Legislations

- Environment Management Act 2000
- Forestry Act
- Wildlife Fisheries Management Act 2012
- Biosecurity Act 2008
- Customs Act 1996
- Crimin Act 2009
- Process of Crime Act 1997
- National Trust of Fiji Act 1970
- Police Act 1965

Wildlife Crime Offence

- Search of Endangered and Protected Species Act 2002
- Fiji Revenue and Custom Services & Biosecurity Authority of Fiji (BIAF)
- Report/Export Seizure Protocol
- Species ID
- Species Identification
- Notification for all species under CITES and EPS; Ministry of Environment and Climate Change
- Registry of Fiji's Expert Group
- Seizure, Storage, Investigation
- Ministry of Environment issue formal notification to FRCS & Fiji Police Force (JPF) - ICS
- Legal Advice (SG's & DPP's)
- Prosecution
- Proceed with Prosecution
- Feedback to all Interagency

Figure 1: Fiji's SOP - Wildlife Crime (Proposed)

What do we do if a species that has been detected is not listed? According to Dr. Rob Fisher

“Roll it up to the next taxonomic level, i.e. if it’s a monitor lizard but not listed specifically, all monitor lizards are CITES II so consider it that”

Sessions 10-12: General comments, priorities, conclusion:

- All country teams agreed that capacity building on species identification is essential. This can be through training, resource development and an advisory group of experts that national authorities can access.
- Country teams also agreed that there is a need for a court-recognized list of experts rather than just a list of experts.
- All country teams agreed that MOUs are critical to have between agencies to assist with implementation of the SOP; that countries face challenges in storage facilities; and that there is a need to consider the chain of custody – especially when elaborating roles of agencies in the SOP.
- National authorities need further training on documentation, permits, etc. – and it is recommended that hands-on training that involves showing real documents as well as fraudulent/faked/forged docs for comparison and to learn what to look for – is conducted.
- Ultimately it was good for the countries to talk through the processes that they have in place, for all to understand how things are currently working (or not working) and where there may be needs and opportunities to coordinate.
- The SOP and network/ priority discussion sessions served a dual purpose – to strengthen national and sub-regional networks, and to identify national and sub-regional priorities, next steps, actions. Strategic areas moving forward involve:
 - Capacity building –
 - Conduct training on species identification.
 - Develop a species identification resource guide or/ and species ID app for easy identification – include listing of CITES and non-CITES species – name, photo, and list of necessary documents/ permits that are required.
 - Conduct specialized training for law enforcement and border agencies on domestic legislation, advanced intelligence analysis, online investigations, crime scene to court, documentation/ permit requirements and processes.
 - Special training for prosecutors on collecting and presenting evidence and issuing charges.
 - Explore possibilities for forensic labs/ support for national authorities.
 - Networking –
 - Establish national level working groups.
 - Establish a formal sub-regional (or regional) wildlife enforcement network for information sharing and capacity building.
 - Establish a regional CITES secretariat.
 - Operational
 - Propose targeted operations on illegal wildlife trade and other illicit commodities.
 - Establish a sub-regional Customs operation like Operation Mekong Dragon.
 - Work towards sharing a list of registered wildlife traders.
 - Develop list of experts – scientific, law enforcement, legal.
 - Develop a watchlist of wildlife criminals or persons of interest.

- Awareness raising
 - Research and awareness raising on patterns and trends of wildlife trafficking at national level.
 - Raise awareness of wildlife trafficking and prohibited species for trade/ permits and requirements through airlines and cruise ships.
 - Conduct awareness of wildlife crime with leaders.

Current progress on immediate follow up/ actions include:

- Participant contact details shared with all participants/ resource persons
- WhatsApp group of participants/ resource persons created (Nicho Gowep, PNG CEPA)
- Connection with PTCCC to explore opportunities for regional coordination (Meli B Doughty, Fiji TCU)
- Template for the list of wildlife traders developed (Kelemedi Gukirewa, Fiji Customs)
- Participation of Customs Officers in Operation Mekong Dragon VI Briefing Meeting organized



Appendix: Information Brief and Agenda

Pacific Sub-Regional Forum on Crimes that Affect the Environment: Combating the trafficking of wildlife, including marine and timber species 20-22 March 2024, Fiji, Novotel Hotel Nadi

Information Brief

As a region rich in natural resources and rare and endangered endemic species that are highly valuable in the trade, the Pacific is an attractive source location for wildlife criminals and specialist collectors. Pacific countries face similar challenges in having an extensive geographic area, porous maritime borders, a relatively small population scattered across multiple islands, and limited law enforcement resources to patrol its vast territory. Thus, there is great potential for scaling up regional coordination amongst countries, to develop synergies, shared understanding and knowledge transfer, common standard operating procedures, communication channels and a sense of shared responsibility to prevent and address wildlife trafficking.

In October 2021, the UNODC's Global Programme on Crimes that Affect the Environment (GPCAE) extended technical support to the Pacific region through the "Combating Wildlife Trafficking in the Pacific" project, with financial support from the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs of the U.S. Department of State. Through the project the GPCAE and government Environment agencies as focal points for CITES, partnered with national authorities to support the implementation of a range of actions, including assessments of wildlife, forest and fisheries crimes and related training courses to improve coordination, investigations and prosecutions in Fiji, PNG, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

The UNODC GPCAE is convening the Pacific subregional forum on crimes that affect the environment, with a focus on wildlife crime, from the 20-22 March 2024 in Nadi, Fiji. The objectives of the forum are to:

- i. Share information on trends, good practices, case studies, challenges, and recommendations to combat wildlife, forest, and fisheries crimes at the national and regional and global levels.
- ii. Develop national standard operating procedures for investigating and prosecuting wildlife crime, including the trafficking of marine and timber species, and draft terms of references for a proposed sub-regional wildlife enforcement network.
- iii. Identify national and sub-regional priorities and actions to combat wildlife crime.

The forum will involve resource persons from national CITES management and scientific authorities (Environment, Fisheries, Forestry), border agencies (Customs, Biosecurity), law enforcement and security (Ministry of Home Affairs, Police and Public Prosecutors), and NGOs such as Nature Fiji – Mareqeti Viti. The forum will also engage with representatives from international and regional agencies such as US Fish and Wildlife Services (FWS), US Geological Survey (USGS), Wildlife Justice Commission (WJC), the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and WWF Pacific, to provide support for resource persons from national authorities.

Pacific Sub-Regional Forum on Crimes that Affect the Environment: Combating the trafficking of wildlife, including marine and timber species

20-22 March 2024, Novotel Hotel, Fiji

AGENDA

Time	Day 1, Wednesday 20 March 2024
8:30-9:00	Registration
9:00-10:00	Session 1: Official Opening <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome address – <i>Ms. Jenna Dawson- Faber, Regional Coordinator, Global Programme on Crimes that Affect the Environment (GPCAE), UNODC</i>• Keynote address – <i>Dr Sivendra Michael, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, Fiji</i>• Group photo
10:00-10:30	Coffee Break
10:30-13:00	Session 2: Snapshot of Wildlife Species in the Pacific <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understanding the value of Pacific species, sustainability, and risk• <i>Dr Robert Fisher, Supervisory Research Biologist, USGS</i>• <i>Ms. Nunia Thomas-Moko, Director, Nature Fiji-Mareqeti Viti</i>• <i>Mr. Nicho Gowep, Senior Scientific Officer, CEPA PNG</i>• <i>Ms. Karen Baird, Threatened and Migratory Species Advisor, SPREP</i>
13:00-14:00	Lunch
14:00-15:30	Session 3: Country progress and lessons learnt <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Progress of combating wildlife crime in the Pacific and presentation of country case studies• <i>Fiji</i>• <i>PNG</i>• <i>Solomon Islands</i>• <i>Vanuatu</i>
15:30-16:00	Coffee Break
16:00-17:00	Session 4: Combating crimes that affect the environment <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wildlife crime data and case studies, emerging approaches, and tools• <i>Ms. Jenna Dawson- Faber, Regional Coordinator, GPCAE, UNODC</i>• <i>Ms. Jenny Feltham, Programme Officer, Wildlife Justice Commission</i>• <i>Mr. Francis Areki, Senior Technical Adviser, WWF Pacific</i>
Time	Day 2, Thursday 21 March 2024
8:30-9:00	Registration
9:00-10:30	Session 5: Standard operating procedures (SOPs) and wildlife enforcement networks (WENs)

- Lessons learnt from investigating wildlife, forestry or fisheries crimes, operations and WENs
- *Ms. Caitlin Spaeth, Senior Wildlife Investigator, US Fish and Wildlife Services*
- *Ms. Jenna Dawson-Faber, Regional Coordinator, GPCAE, UNODC*
- *Ms. Marie Fatiaki, Programme Officer, GPCAE, UNODC*

10:30-11:00 Coffee Break

- 11:00-13:00 **Session 6: Developing the national SOPs and enforcement networks - I**
- *Group work*

13:00-14:00 Lunch

- 14:00-15:30 **Session 7: Developing the national SOPs and enforcement networks - II**
- *Group presentations and peer review*

15:30-16:00 Coffee Break

- 16:00-17:00 **Session 8: Developing the national SOPs and enforcement networks - III**
- *Group work*

Time Day 3, Friday 22 March 2024

8:30-9:00 Registration

- 9:00-10:00 **Session 9: Reviewing the draft SOPs - IV**
- Country presentations of draft SOPs
 - *Fiji*
 - *PNG*
 - *Solomon Islands*
 - *Vanuatu*

10:00-10:30 Coffee Break

- 10:30-13:00 **Session 10: Developing a proposed sub-regional WEN and identifying priorities and actions**
- Identify national and sub-regional priorities to combat crimes that affect the environment, including establishing a sub-regional WEN
 - *Group work & plenary*

13:00-14:00 Lunch

- 14:00- 15:00 **Session 11: Roundtable Discussion & Wrap Up**
- Recommendations and agreed next steps

- 15:00-16:00 **Session 12: Official Closing**
- Closing Address
 - Vote of thanks
 - Group photo

16:00-17:00 Closing afternoon tea

Appendix: Participant List

PARTICIPANT LIST					
UNODC Pacific Sub-regional Forum on Crimes that Affect the Environment: Focus on Wildlife, Fisheries and Forestry Crimes					
20-22 March 2024, NOVOTEL NADI, FIJI					
No.	Name and Surname	Position	Organization	E-mail/Phone Number	Country
1	Ms. Sheemal Nand	Technical Officer, Resource Management Unit	Resource Management Unit, Department of Environment	sheemal.nand@environment.gov.fj	Fiji
2	Mr. Meli Bavatu Doughty	ASP/ Manager, Transnational Crime Unit	Fiji Police Force	Meli.Doughty@police.org.fj	Fiji
3	Mr. Rajesh Krishna	Director Legal	Fiji Police Force	ranras_krish@yahoo.com	Fiji
4	Mr. Savenaca Tuivaga	Manager Assessment, Narcotics Bureau	Fiji Police Force	Savenaca.Tuivaga@police.org.fj	Fiji
5	Ms. Alisi Lalabalavu	Sergeant of Police, Narcotics Bureau	Fiji Police Force	alisi77lalabalavu@gmail.com	Fiji
6	Mr Mesake Sovasova	Liaison Officer	Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration	mesakesovasova@gmail.com	Fiji
7	Mr. Savenaca Siwatibau	Cybercrime/ Cybersecurity Analyst	Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration	Savenaca.Siwatibau@police.org.fj	Fiji
8	Ms. Saini Naibe	Senior Legal Officer	Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions	saini.naibe@odpp.gov.fj	Fiji
9	Mr. Peni Matea	Customs Officer	Fiji Revenue and Customs Services	pmatea@frcs.org.fj	Fiji
10	Mr. Kelemedi Gukirewa	Senior Customs Officer - Border Enforcement and Intelligence, Border Division	Fiji Revenue and Customs Services	kgukirewa@frcs.org.fj	Fiji
11	Ms. Jacqueline Nalomaca	Fisheries Officer - Compliance & Enforcement	Ministry of Fisheries	jinalomaca19@gmail.com	Fiji

12	Ms. Ana Nasiga	Programme Officer (ISLAND)	Nature Fiji Mareqeti Viti	ananasiga@naturefiji.org	Fiji
13	Ms. Karalaini Rereavosa	Project Officer (Turtle)	WWF Pacific	krereavosa@wwfpacific.org	Fiji
14	Mr. Nicho Gowep	Acting Manager, Wildlife Trade and Enforcement Branch	Conservation and Environment Protection Authority	ngowep16@gmail.com	PNG
15	Mr. Philip Misikaram	Manager - Intelligence Support Unit, Intelligence and Targeting Division, Border Security and Regional Operations Wing	PNG Customs Services	misikaramp@customs.gov.pg	PNG
16	Mr. Mathew Gati	Customs Officer - Maritime/ National Border Command	PNG Customs Services	gatim@customs.gov.pg	PNG
17	Mr. Esmond Dalle	Senior Fisheries Officer	PNG National Fisheries Authority	edalle@fisheries.gov.pg	PNG
18	Mr. Henry Eremas	Senior Analyst	Financial Analysis Supervision Unit	HEremas@bankpng.gov.pg	PNG
19	Mr. Martin Paina	Senior Animal Health Officer	NAQIA	MPaina@naqia.gov.pg	PNG
20	Ms. Rose Babaua	Chief Conservation Unit, CITES MA Officer	Environment and Conservation Division	Rbabaua@mecdm.gov.sb	Solomon Islands
21	Mr. Geoffrey Mauriasi	Senior Legal Officer	Environment and Conservation Division	GMauriasi@mecdm.gov.sb	Solomon Islands
22	Ms. Alison Kaua	Fisheries Officer, Compliance, Inshore Fisheries Department	Ministry of Marine Resources and Fisheries	AKaua@fisheries.gov.sb	Solomon Islands
23	Ms. Rinah Mark	Senior Legal Officer	Ministry of Marine Resources and Fisheries	RMark@fisheries.gov.sb	Solomon Islands
24	Mr. Vernon Taupongi	Principal Legal Officer	Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions	VTaupongi@dpp.gov.sb	Solomon Islands
25	Mr. Boaz Kukuti	Detective Sergeant, Criminal Investigations	Royal Solomon Islands Police Force	Boaz.Kukuti@rsipf.gov.sb	Solomon Islands
26	Mr. Tom Maimai	Compliance Officer	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Natural Disasters	tmaimai@vanuatu.gov.vu	Vanuatu
27	Mr. Hudson Feremaito	Finfish Biologist	Vanuatu Fisheries Department	hferemaito@fisheries.gov.vu	Vanuatu

28	Mr. Ronald Noah	Customs Officer - Border	Customs and Inland Revenue Department	rnoah@vanuatu.gov.vu	Vanuatu
29	Ms. Jeyalda Ngwele	Fisheries Officer, Compliance	Vanuatu Fisheries Department	njeyalda@fisheries.gov.vu	Vanuatu
30	Mr. Simcha Blessing	Assistant Public Prosecutor	Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions	sblessing@vanuatu.gov.vu	Vanuatu
31	Mr. John Kelep	Supervisor/ Inspector Border	Vanuatu Biosecurity	jkelep@vanuatu.gov.vu	Vanuatu
32	Mr. Junior Sahe	Police Constable	Vanuatu Police Force	juniors@vanuatu.gov.vu	Vanuatu
33	Ms. Kelera Tokalau	Senior Environment Officer West	Ministry of Climate Change and Environment	Kelera.tokalau@environment.gov.fj	Fiji
Resource Persons & National, International and Regional Partners					
34	Mr. Francis Areki	Programme Manager/ Senior Technical Adviser	WWF Pacific	fareki@wwfpacific.org	WWF Pacific
35	Ms. Jenna Dawson - Faber	Regional Coordinator, Global programme on Crimes that Affect the Environment, Border Management Branch	UNODC	jenna.dawson-faber@un.org	UNODC
36	Ms. Marie Jane Fatiaki	Programme Officer	Environment Team, Pacific, UNODC	mari.fatiaki@un.org	UNODC
37	Dr. Rober Fisher	Supervisory Research Biologist	USGS	rfisher@usgs.gov	USGS
38	Jenny Feltham	Programme Officer	Wildlife Justice Commission	felthamjenny@gmail.com	WJC
39	Ms. Karen Baird	Threatened and Migratory Species Adviser	SPREP	karenb@sprep.org	SPREP
40	Ms. Nunia Thomas – Moko	Director	Nature Fiji Mareqeti Viti	nuniat@naturefiji.org	NatureFiji
41	Ms. Rolenas Baerele	Principal Officer Environment and Conservation	Department of Environment Protection and Conservation	rbaereleo@vanuatu.gov.vu	Vanuatu DEPC

42	Ms. Senivasa Waqaraimasi	Principal Environment Officer, Resource Management Unit	Resource Management Unit, Department of Environment	senivasa.waqairamasi@govnet.gov.fj	Fiji CITES MA/ DOE
43	Dr Sivendra Michael	Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Climate Change and Environment	sivendra.michael@gmail.com	Fiji
44	Mr. Winston Rounds	Manager Border Enforcement, Border	Fiji Revenue and Customs Services	wrounds@frcs.org.fj	Fiji
45	Ms. Caitlin Spaeth	Senior Investigator	US Fish and Wildlife Services	caitlin_spaeth@fws.gov	US FWS

Appendix: Template for SOP Discussions

Standard Operating Procedures for inter-agency coordination for the investigation and prosecution of wildlife crime in	
1. Background	
2. Purpose and scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the specific goals of this SOP? • Which crimes and issues will the SOP address? • Which agencies are involved, and what are their roles and responsibilities?
3. Key offences related to wildlife crime under the national legal framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the main laws and specific offences? List the laws and specify the sections. • List in Appendix 1 possible related offences in other relevant legislation
4. Key stakeholders/ Authorities mandated under the legislation	
5. Process of dealing with detections	
a. Roles of stakeholders in detection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are the first responders in detection?
b. Detecting wildlife offences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are wildlife related offences detected by each agency? (for example, Customs and border controls, cyber monitoring, Intelligence, inspections, patrols etc.) • Who needs to be notified immediately upon detection? • What information needs to be collected at the initial stage? • What documents should the first responder request to see? • What are the immediate actions required by the detecting agency?
c. Assessing the severity of the offence and securing the crime scene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What criteria are used to assess the severity and urgency of a detected crime? • What criteria are used to open a case file? • How is the crime scene secured while minimizing disruption to evidence? • Who is responsible for securing the scene, and what support is needed?
d. Evidence collection and preservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What standards and procedures are followed for evidence collection and preservation? • Who is authorized to collect and handle evidence? • How is the chain of custody for evidence maintained?
e. Engaging expert assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When do you need expert advice and who are the experts you can contact/ for what purpose? (e.g. identifying species, caring for live wildlife, specialized storage requirements, transportation needs, etc.)
f. Reporting seizures or complaints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What should the first responders document before seizing a prohibited species in trade? • Who should the first responder send the report to? • When should the first responder refer to a different agency? Under what circumstances?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a timeframe for this – from detection to referral/ reporting to other agencies? • If the detection is made by a member of the public or the private sector, to whom do they direct notification?
6. Process of dealing with investigations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which agencies conduct investigations?
a. Protocol for requesting support for investigations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the protocol for requesting support from key agencies to investigate cases? - Official letter, MOU etc.
b. Information sharing to support investigations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What information could and should be shared between agencies? • Intelligence? • Who should be involved? How? • How is collected information and evidence analyzed? • What channels are used for sharing intelligence derived from the analysis with other agencies?
c. Collaborating on investigations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When to conduct joint investigations (national)? • When to conduct cross-border investigations (multinational)? • How often to meet/discuss/monitor to track progress of the investigation? • What protocols exist for engaging with national/ international partners? How to establish roles/jurisdiction? • How is information shared with and received from international entities?
d. Investigating ancillary offences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When to conduct parallel financial investigations? Who can do this? • Investigating money-laundering, corruption and bribery – who can do this? • Identifying proceeds of crime and initiating freezing and confiscation procedures of assets – who can do this?
7. Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What communication channels and tools will be used for coordination among concerned agencies? • How will sensitive information be protected during inter-agency (and international) communication? • What protocols exist for urgent or emergency communication?
8. Preparing cases for prosecution	<p><i>All countries have approved guidelines for investigating cases, interviewing witnesses/ victims, documenting statements, examining crime scenes, collecting evidence, arresting and interviewing suspects, and completing reports for the prosecutor. This SOP is not meant to duplicate those guidelines but to improve coordination for the eventual prosecution of wildlife crime cases.</i></p>
9. Conflict Resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What mechanisms are in place for resolving conflicts or disagreements between agencies? • Who has the final authority in decision-making processes?
10. Media and public engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will inter-agency efforts be communicated to the public? • What role does the public play in any investigation and how will it be managed? • Is there a role for civil society or the private sector? If so, what?
11. Data collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What data needs to be collected? • How should it be shared? • How could it be shared?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which agency is responsible for recording the data? • How/where will the data be recorded? • (e.g. seizure data, prosecution data – date, species, quantity, offence, charge, penalty, etc.) • How will data integrity, confidentiality, and privacy be ensured?
<p>12. Regular coordination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will agencies coordinate on wildlife crime issues? (e.g. quarterly meetings, messaging group, mailing list, etc.) • Which agency is responsible for leading the coordination?
<p>As an Annex to the SOP can include:</p> <p>Tips for the preservation of crime scenes, collection, and handling of wildlife exhibits, including marine and timber</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How should first responders secure the crime scene upon arrival?</i> • <i>What protocols are in place for minimizing contamination or disturbance of the crime scene?</i> • <i>Who is authorized to enter the crime scene, and how is access controlled?</i> • <i>How are different types of evidence (biological, physical, digital) identified at the scene?</i> • <i>Are there priorities for collecting certain types of evidence based on their perishability or importance?</i> • <i>What specific techniques and tools should be used for collecting different types of wildlife evidence (e.g., feathers, scales, timber samples)? Who can do this?</i> • <i>How should evidence be collected to maintain its integrity and prevent contamination?</i> • <i>Are there special considerations for collecting evidence in marine environments or from large timber?</i> • <i>How should wildlife exhibits be handled to preserve their condition?</i> • <i>What containers or packaging materials are suitable for different types of exhibits?</i> • <i>How should exhibits be transported from the crime scene to ensure their integrity?</i> • <i>What details must be documented at the time of evidence collection (e.g., date, time, location, collector's name)?</i> • <i>How is the chain of custody established and maintained for each piece of evidence?</i> • <i>Who is responsible for the documentation, and how are records stored and accessed?</i> • <i>How should different types of wildlife exhibits be stored to prevent degradation?</i> • <i>Are there specific temperature or humidity controls required for certain exhibits?</i> • <i>How is unauthorized access to stored evidence prevented?</i>