



**Report to Congress on the
Eliminate, Neutralize, and Disrupt Wildlife Trafficking Act of 2016
P.L. 114-231, Sec. 201**

The Eliminate, Neutralize, and Disrupt (END) Wildlife Trafficking Act (P.L. 114-231; 16 U.S.C. §§ 7601-7644) (the Act) directs the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Commerce, to submit to Congress a report that lists Focus Countries and Countries of Concern, as defined in the Act.

Wildlife trafficking remains a serious transnational crime that threatens security, economic prosperity, the rule of law, long-standing conservation efforts, and human health. E.O. 13773 of February 9, 2017, called for a comprehensive and decisive approach to dismantle organized crime syndicates and specifically recognized the connection between wildlife trafficking and transnational criminal organizations.

The Task Force on Wildlife Trafficking (Task Force), co-chaired by the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Attorney General, brings together 17 federal departments and agencies to implement the National Strategy for Combating Wildlife Trafficking (the “National Strategy”). The USG’s three-pronged approach to combating wildlife trafficking – strengthening law enforcement, reducing demand, and building international cooperation – deprives criminals of a key source of financing, reducing the criminal threat posed to U.S. citizens.

The Task Force’s work to combat wildlife trafficking is making a difference on the ground at home and worldwide. Task Force efforts and activities are better coordinated across the USG: efficiencies are identified and leveraged, redundancies eliminated, and resources used more strategically; international outreach continues to expand; and improved intelligence has identified new areas of work and opportunities for U.S. engagement. Working in partnership with the private sector, local communities, and NGOs, the United States has led the way globally, securing agreements and commitments from governments and stakeholders to take urgent action at all levels. Highlights of Task Force efforts are included in the separate strategic review, as called for in Sec. 301(d) of the Act.

To improve accountability and reporting on strategy implementation, the Task Force developed several indicators for monitoring USG-supported actions to address wildlife trafficking in Focus Countries. These indicators are designed to measure inputs, outputs, or outcomes of law enforcement capacity building and cooperation efforts, policy reform, and demand reduction actions tailored to each country. They also measure dimensions of how seriously wildlife crime is perceived or addressed in each country. U.S. missions in all 28 Focus Countries reported indicator data in 2020. Almost every post reported supporting host country wildlife law enforcement efforts with training or other resources in 2020. Twenty-five of 28 posts reported seizures of assets, proceeds, and illegal wildlife or wildlife products by law enforcement authorities. Twenty-two of 28 posts reported data on arrests, prosecutions, and convictions of wildlife traffickers. The Task Force also obtained data on demand reduction indicators for 14 of the 28 Focus Countries. In total, USG demand reduction efforts for illegal wildlife products reached an estimated 226 million people in 17 Focus Countries.

Focus Countries[\[1\]](#)

Methodology for Determining Focus Countries

State worked closely with the other agencies of the Task Force to employ both qualitative and quantitative information to identify Focus Countries and Countries of Concern, as defined in Section 2 of the Act, for the 2017 END Act Report. Technical experts and scientists from Task Force agencies established a process to analyze wildlife trafficking information and gathered a set of relevant and available data. This analysis included evaluation of data drawn from public reporting by USG agencies, international entities such as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, and the UN Office of Drugs and Crime, as well as NGOs such as the Center for Advanced Defense Studies, TRAFFIC, the Environmental Investigation Agency, and Transparency International. Information from the required national assessments reinforced and augmented our previous findings.

Task Force agencies, including those represented at U.S. missions overseas, reviewed the initial analysis and provided additional information that was often only available locally. These country-specific analyses helped to round out the global data, including by providing information on additional species such as felines, primates, and marine species. Agencies also considered the trajectory of wildlife populations and the impacts of trafficking, government, and private sector efforts to prevent illegal

trade, and the presence of legal or poorly regulated domestic markets for species threatened by wildlife trafficking.

The Task Force further evaluated whether governments had recently taken steps to improve legislation, regulations, and/or enforcement and other trends such that the country is increasing its efforts to combat the illegal trade in wildlife. Subsequent to the initial 26 Focus Countries identified in the 2017 and 2018 reports, the 2019 report listed an additional two Focus Countries. No Focus Countries were added or removed in 2020 or 2021.

2021 Focus Countries

State, in consultation with the Departments of the Interior and Commerce, and with USAID, agreed that all 28 of the countries and jurisdictions listed as Focus Countries in the 2020 END Act Report should remain listed. Each country previously listed continues to be a “major source of wildlife trafficking products or their derivatives, a major transit point of wildlife trafficking products or their derivatives, or a major consumer of wildlife trafficking products,” and designation appears to have contributed to increased attention to combating wildlife trafficking in some Focus Countries.

This determination is based on analysis of the statutory criteria in the Act and does not reflect a positive or negative judgment of the listed countries or indicate that these countries are not working diligently to combat wildlife trafficking. Indeed, the United States has longstanding partnerships with many of these countries with respect to combating wildlife trafficking and recognizes the strong political will that already exists in many of these countries to tackle this problem. State and other Task Force agencies look forward to continuing close and constructive relationships with these countries as we work collaboratively to combat wildlife trafficking. No new focus countries were added.

Consistent with Section 301 of the Act, U.S. missions in each Focus Country developed a strategic plan based on the U.S. mission’s assessment of wildlife trafficking within that country. U.S. agencies used the strategic plans to guide and coordinate USG approaches and responses to the needs and gaps identified in the assessment. The Task Force co-chairs, along with USAID, developed and distributed templates for both the assessments and strategic plans. All Task Force agencies, both at post and in Washington, were invited to contribute to their development. The Task Force reviewed the assessments and strategic plans for completeness and consistency,

recognizing variability based on location, resources within the U.S. mission, and previous engagement in the issue.

U.S. missions in all Focus Countries have completed their assessments and strategic plans. Together these documents provide an overview of the issues related to wildlife trafficking in that country, identify key areas for strategic intervention by the USG, and either establish a new platform or support existing structures within the mission to guide a coordinated, “whole of USG” approach to interventions.

2021 Focus Country List (in alphabetical order)

Bangladesh
Brazil
Burma
Cambodia
Cameroon
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Gabon
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
India
Indonesia
Kenya
Laos
Madagascar
Malaysia
Mexico
Mozambique
Nigeria
People’s Republic of China
Philippines
Republic of the Congo
South Africa
Tanzania
Thailand
Togo
Uganda
United Arab Emirates
Vietnam
Zimbabwe

Countries of Concern

2021 Countries of Concern

To identify Countries of Concern among the 28 Focus Countries as directed by Section 201(b) of the Act, State, in consultation with the Departments of the Interior and Commerce and with USAID, reviewed publicly available information as well as classified material that indicated that governments actively engaged in or knowingly profited from the trafficking of endangered or threatened species. In 2020, no Countries of Concern were removed from the list, and Cambodia, Cameroon, and Nigeria were added. There were no changes to this list in 2021. This designation does not indicate that all parts of the government are or have been involved in wildlife trafficking, but that there are serious concerns that either high-level or systemic government involvement has occurred. The Task Force will, among other things, ensure that USG agencies coordinate efforts among U.S. federal agencies and non-federal partners to implement the U.S. mission strategic plans developed in accordance with section 301 of the Act, with a view to supporting these countries and their governments to reduce trade in and consumer demand for illegally traded wildlife and wildlife products.

2021 Countries of Concern List (in alphabetical order)

Cambodia
Cameroon
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Laos
Madagascar
Nigeria

[1] Note that this list includes both countries and jurisdictions