

Annual Report 2015

STICHTING WILDLIFE JUSTICE COMMISSION

THE HAGUE

Background of the Wildlife Justice Commission

The Wildlife Justice Commission is an innovative justice accountability mechanism for wildlife, which was set up in the Netherlands in March 2015, to help ensure that governments enforce the rule of law against perpetrators of wildlife crimes. Our focus is the **rule of law** and its **activation**. We subject what we do to the **Accountability Panel Procedure** rules and we adhere to the data protection laws in The Netherlands.

The Wildlife Justice Commission works in a spirit of cooperation, by providing the relevant authorities with a Map of Facts. The Map of Facts contains the results of investigations into transnational industrial-scale wildlife crimes, and the networks and individual perpetrators involved in these crimes. Compiled by **highly experienced law enforcement and legal experts**, the Map of Facts, can thus be of significant help to national authorities in enforcing national and international laws. Therefore, the method above is instrumental in disrupting and dismantling transnational wildlife crimes.

If the presentation of the Map of Facts to the relevant authorities does not result in any true law enforcement actions such as the prosecution of high-level wildlife perpetrators, the Wildlife Justice Commission will subsequently **engage stakeholders**, including foreign governments and other relevant stakeholders.

If still no action is taken, the Wildlife Justice Commission will convene a **Public Hearing**. During the hearing the Map of Facts is presented to five Members of an Accountability Panel – an independent panel consisting of highly respected international lawyers, judges, law enforcement experts, academics and investigative journalists. The Accountability Panel is asked to validate the Map of Facts and to recommend possible further steps to persuade the relevant authorities to take action.

Annual Performances

Internal Developments

2015 was the of the kick-off year for the Wildlife Justice Commission. The organisation was registered at the Chamber of Commerce, filled its statutes, was granted the tax exempt status (ANBI Status) by the Dutch Tax Authorities, and hosted its official launch at the Peace Palace in The Hague in October. The Wildlife Justice Commission was able to start its first investigation as early as March, regarding **CITES Annex I species** trafficking in Vietnam. The Wildlife Justice Commission also prepared several policies covering a range of issues, such as the handling of investigations, the Accountability Panel Procedure, privacy and security matters, as well as accountancy.

The organisation moved into its premises in The Hague at the beginning of the year. From there, the core team coordinates efforts in investigation, communication, fundraising and more. This team was strengthened by the recruitment of four key staff members, including an **Executive Assistant**. The Investigations Team was reinforced and a very experienced **Chief of Investigations** was appointed. Administrative procedures and structures were put in place and the necessary staff recruited. A Strategic Partnerships team, led by the newly recruited **Director of Strategic Partnerships**, was set up. The team is responsible for fundraising and the lobbying process during the National Dialogue phase. New and large

donors jumped on board. The necessary communication means, like a storyline, corporate identity, brochures and a website were developed, and a **Director of Communication** was recruited. In the meantime, the Wildlife Justice Commission continued to extend its network supporting individuals through the **Supervisory Board, Advisory Council, Accountability Panel** and a group of **Ambassadors**.

Progress in investigations work

In 2015, **two investigations** were conducted. In December 2015, the first investigation conducted in **Vietnam** resulted in a Map of Facts. This Map of Facts was reviewed by two Accountability Panel members who affirmed the document. The case file, consisting of 1,500 pages of evidence and intelligence analysis, describes a network, which is illegally selling and trafficking, on an industrial scale animal parts derived from endangered wildlife species such as elephant, rhino, tiger, bear, pangolin, and hornbill. Shortly after its completion, the Map of Facts was translated and sent to the relevant authorities in Vietnam, and key stakeholders including governments and IGOs engaged with the relevant governments to encourage them to take legal action.

Additionally, an investigation in **South-East Africa** was launched in early 2015, to gather and analyse information regarding a criminal networks poaching and trafficking of ivory and rhino horn. Only limited sources of information were accessible to the field researchers. Due to the high sensitivity of this case, it raised significant security risks to the operators on the ground. Therefore, this investigation was temporarily put on hold, and an assessment of the case is being conducted.

The most recent developments within the investigations team consist of the selection of two new cases for 2016 followed by open source and social media investigation, in preparation for further in-depth field missions. Aside from that, the Wildlife Justice Commission is closely monitoring the activities of the subjects identified in the case file.

Fundraising

In 2015, the fundraising strategy was based on three pillars. The first one is **governments and international governmental organisations**. The second pillar is **foundations** as potential donors. The third pillar is a network of high net worth **individuals**. Geographically the fundraising efforts are concentrated towards Europe, South East Asia, and the United States. The Wildlife Justice Commission is aiming for multi-year grants. These help to strengthen partnerships with donors based on trust, transparency and shared knowledge. It also shifts the relationship from building a new relation to enhancing an already existing one. The focus on **multi-year grants** also helps donors achieve their strategic priorities and better ensures the success of their funding objectives.

Communication

During the reporting period, Wildlife Justice Commission prepared and implemented an initial Communication plan. It included engaging important supporters and stakeholders by providing them with regular updates, introducing the Wildlife Justice Commission, to protect the message of the Wildlife Justice Commission, and to create a visible platform with key media and stakeholders. In June, the Wildlife Justice Commission launched its website and published a press release introducing the organisation.

In October, the Wildlife Justice Commission organised official launch event in Peace Palace, in The Hague. The event was a great success. In response to this launch, several articles were published by the press including articles in two of the largest daily Dutch newspapers, De Telegraaf, and the AD, as well as on online news site nu.nl and other international outlets.

Balance sheet as at 31 December 2015

| | 31-12-2015 |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| | € |
| ASSETS | |
| Non-current assets | |
| - Automation and furniture | 60.328 |
| Current assets | |
| - Receivables | 129.393 |
| - Cash and cash equivalents | 229.006 |
| Total current assets | 358.399 |
| Total assets | 418.727 |
| LIABILITIES | |
| Reserves | |
| - Continuity reserve | 0 |
| Debts | |
| - Short-term debts | 418.727 |
| Total liabilities | 418.727 |

Income Statement

(period 4 March 2015 - 31 December 2015)

| | Actual | Budget |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| | € | € |
| <u>Income</u> | | |
| Own Fundraising | 1.370.275 | 2.470.000 |
| Government grants | 62.182 | 0 |
| Interest | 0 | 2.000 |
| Total income | 1.432.457 | 2.472.000 |
| <u>Expenditure</u> | | |
| Charitable activities | | |
| - Investigation & review | 1.102.845 | 1.157.423 |
| - Dialogue | 27.067 | 131.461 |
| - Validation & lobbying | 66.751 | 779.933 |
| Total charitable activities | 1.196.663 | 2.068.817 |
| Fundraising | | |
| - Costs of Fundraising | 117.110 | 203.792 |
| Management & administration | | |
| - Management & administration costs | 118.684 | 199.391 |
| Total expenditure | 1.432.457 | 2.472.000 |
| Balance income and expenditure | 0 | 0 |
| Expenditure charitable activities divided by: | | |
| - total income | 84% | 84% |
| - total expenditure | 84% | 84% |
| Expenditure costs of generating income divided by income own fundraising | 9% | 8% |
| Expenditure management and administration divided by total expenditure | 8% | 8% |