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Combating Wildlife Trafficking: A Conservation and Development Priority for USAID

Dr. Mary Rowen

**Panel - Criminal Elements: Organized Crime
and Natural Resources**

Society of Environmental Journalists

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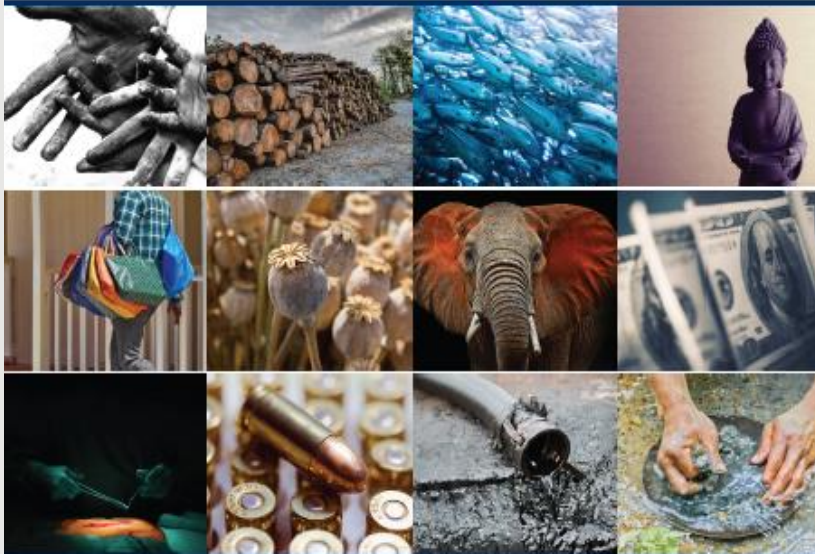
The Illegal Wildlife Trade Generates 5-20 Billion Dollars Annually

- **1,300 African rhinos** are poached annually – 1 every 8 hours in South Africa
- **Between 2010-2012, an estimated 100,000 elephants** were poached for their ivory
- **317,000 live birds** trafficked annually
- **Reptiles account for 9%** of the total share of wildlife seized between 2005 and 2014
- More than **one million pangolins** have been traded in the past 10 years
- Over the past ten years, **more than 1,000 wildlife rangers** have been killed at work (80% by poachers)



GLOBAL FINANCIAL INTEGRITY

Transnational Crime and the Developing World

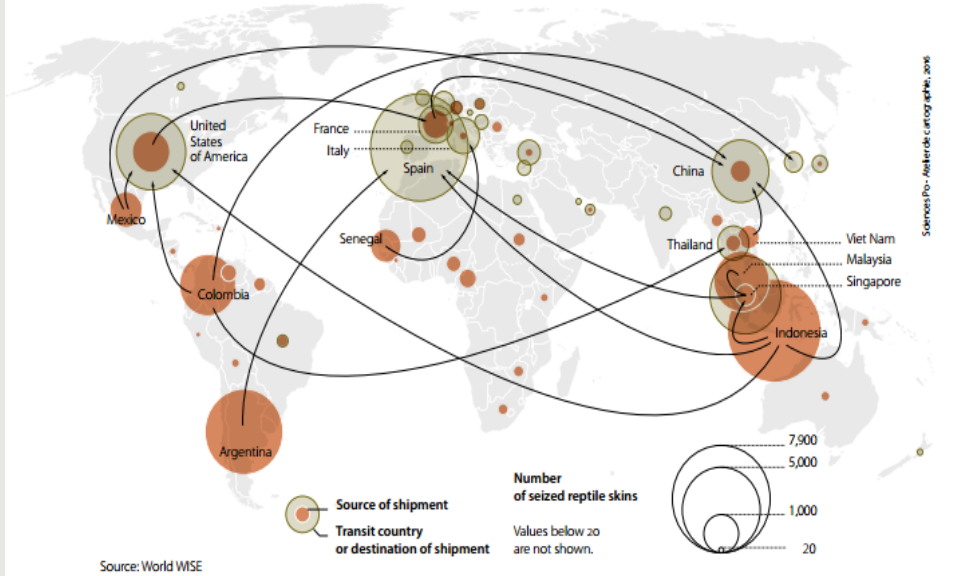


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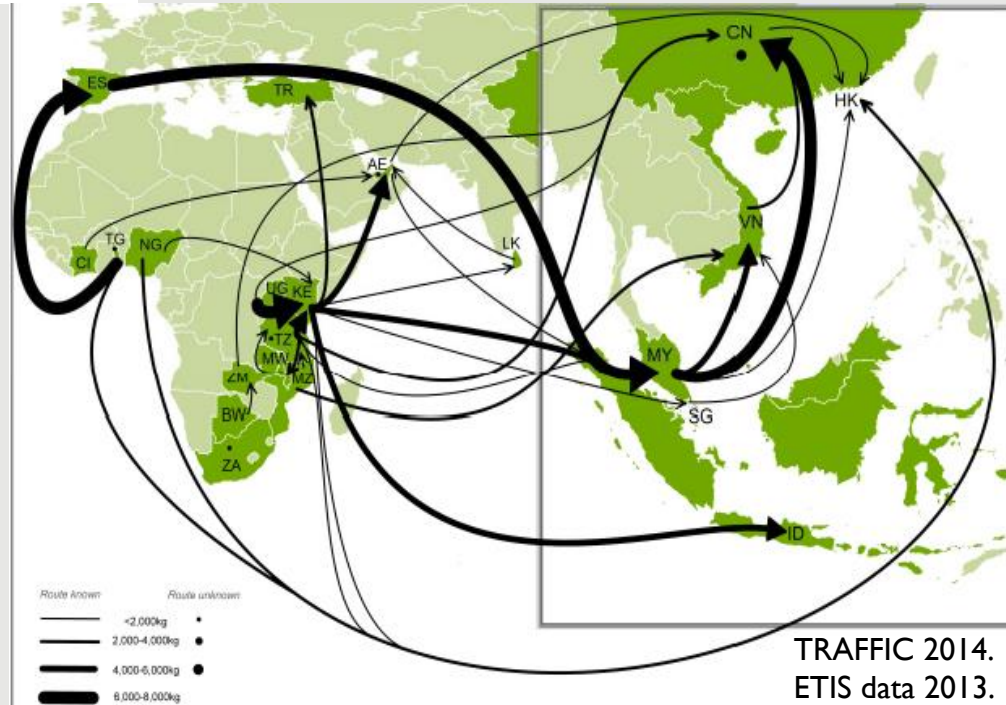
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Map 1 Main flows of reptile skin seizures, 2005-2014



Reptile Skin Seizures 2005-2014

Trade routes for large-scale (>500kg) seizures of ivory 2012-2013



US Agency for International Development



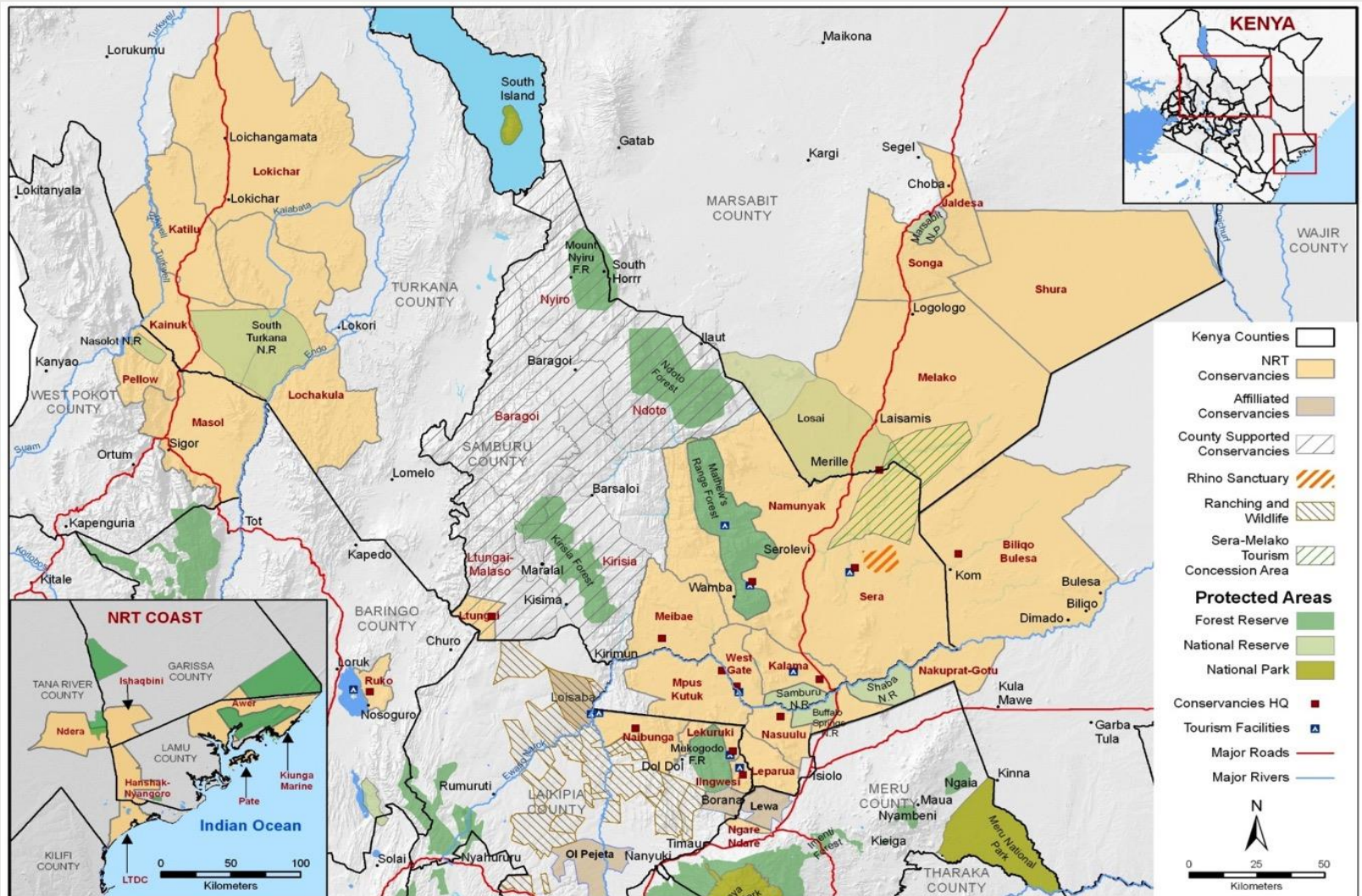
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BIODIVERSITY IS A FOUNDATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

- At least 1.6 billion people depend on forests for livelihood.
- 2.6 billion people in developing countries depend on wild fisheries for food security.
- Wildlife tourism sustains local communities.



BIODIVERSITY – COMMUNITY CONSERVATION



Map – Northern Rangelands Trust

WILDLIFE CRIME HURTS

- Rangers are killed
- Rural communities are vulnerable
- Tourism & other legal, sustainable income is lost
- Profits finance other criminal activities



ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME UNDERMINES DEVELOPMENT

- Jeopardizing:
 - Rule of law
 - Economic benefits
 - Peace and security
 - Sustainable resource use
 - Equitable and inclusive growth
- Ranks with human trafficking, arms and drugs in \$\$\$
- Funds organized crime, terror groups and militias





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Combating Wildlife Crime

Protecting Wildlife

- Strengthening Protected Area Management
- Support for Community Wildlife Management
- Better monitoring and patrols

Disrupting and Dismantling Trafficking

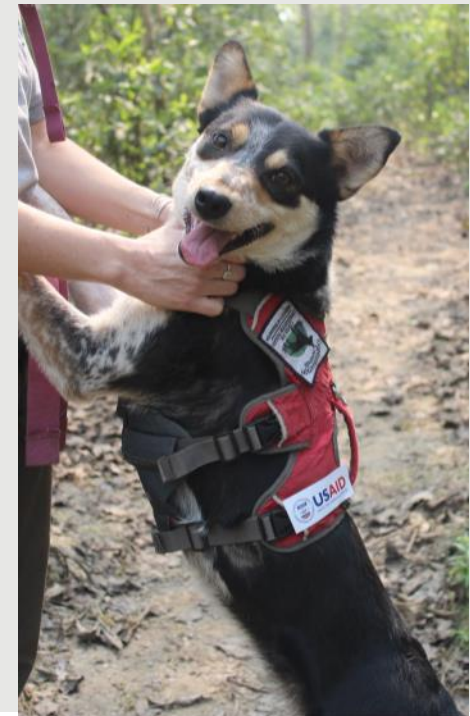
- Law Enforcement Strengthening
- Regional Cooperation
- Private Sector Transport

Reducing Demand

- Social and Behavior Change Communications
- Awareness and Action Campaigns
- Promote Substitutes

SCOPE OF RESPONSE

- USAID supports activities to combat wildlife trafficking through fighting poaching, improving enforcement and prosecution, disrupting transit, and reducing consumer demand in Africa and Asia.
- In recent years we have spent \$60-70 million/yr to combat wildlife trafficking; USAID works in more than 65 projects in 25 countries.
- 3 global programs, 5 regional/sub-regional programs



WHAT IS NEEDED: Law Enforcement

- Demonstrate effectiveness along enforcement chain
 - Focus:** Highlight important convictions and penalties, especially of middlemen and kingpins
- Demonstrate the role of corruption in facilitating and driving the trade
- Demonstrate the scale of illegal and illicit money flows derived from wildlife trafficking

WHAT IS NEEDED - Demand Reduction

- **Need: Highlight vendors selling illegal wildlife products**
- **Need: Country and culture specific messages**
- **Need: Influence buying trends towards alternative non-wildlife products**





THANK YOU

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<https://rmportal.net/biodiversityconservation-gateway>