

Global law enforcement collaboration – the Wildlife Inter-Regional Enforcement Forum

The Wildlife Inter-Regional Enforcement (WIRE) Forum was established in 2016 to improve cooperation in investigating transnational criminal networks. It fosters international collaboration through informal networks, working groups, and restricted-access meetings. Restricted meetings not only foster trust and relationship building, but also enable sharing of critical information on:

- >>> Risk indicators, hotspots and border threats.
- >>> Upcoming operations involving foreign nationals.
- >>> Possible repatriation of seized contraband.
- >>> Persons of interest.

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I sincerely appreciate your support so far on the efforts towards combating illegal wildlife trade and making it possible to be part of the WIRE Platform. It provided so many opportunities for collaboration and cooperation at the international level. Hopefully, we'll have more success stories to share from Nigeria on the response to illegal wildlife trade. Saliu Kadir, Team Lead, Environment Unit, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) Nigeria

8th WIRE Forum attendance

140 participants including government officials from justice, prosecution, wildlife and environmental departments, customs police and law enforcement (47 women and 93 men)

36 countries (18 Africa, 3 Americas, 11 Asia, 3 Europe, 1 Oceania)

65 restricted government meetings

18 transnational investigations in 2024



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TACKLING THE IMPACT OF ILLEGAL TRADE IN TOTOABAS

At the 8th WIRE Forum, ICCWC organized a closed-door meeting between China, Mexico and the United States of America which resulted in agreed actions to tackle the illegal trade in totoaba. Totoabas are illegally fished for their swim bladders. This illegal fishing poses a severe threat to the vaquita, a species of porpoise at the brink of extinction. Both species are CITES Appendix I-listed, and afforded the highest level of protection under the Convention. They are both endemic to Mexico.



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DISSEMINATION OF OPERATION SAMA RESULTS

Operation SAMA (Saving African Wildlife through Multilateral Assistance) was inspired by the successful Operation Mekong Dragon, presented at the 7th WIRE Forum in 2023. Led by customs and involving 35 African countries, SAMA applied a similar collaborative model, resulting in the seizure of 106 endangered species products across 19 countries, along with multiple arrests and prosecutions. The results were shared at the 8th WIRE Forum, highlighting progress and offering insights to inspire future action.