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United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



Crimes that  
Affect the  
Environment

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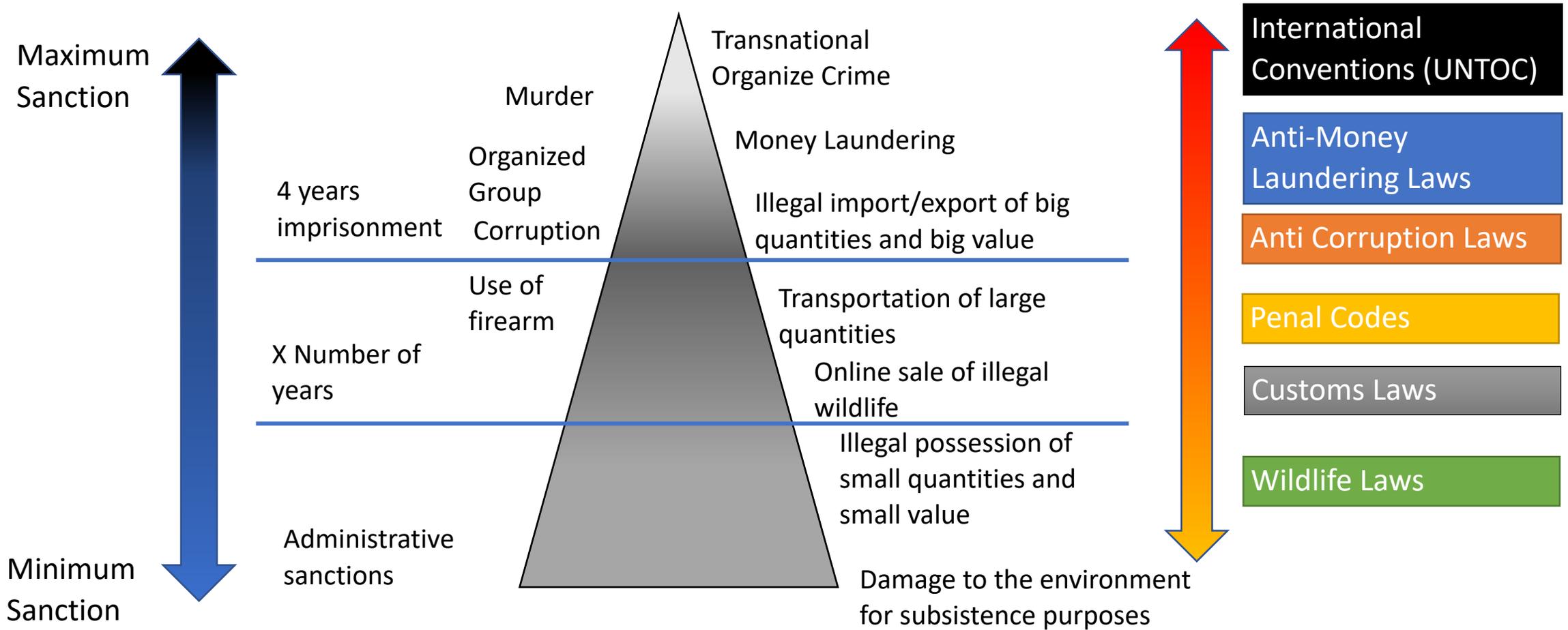
# Transnational cooperation in combating illicit wildlife trade in Asia, Africa and Latin America

A global  
response for  
wildlife and  
forest crime  
is necessary.



# WILDLIFE OFFENCES AND SERIOUS CRIMES

A specific coordinated network of law enforcement agencies to address illicit trafficking of wildlife and timber





Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

# WILDLIFE ENFORCEMENT NETWORKS



# SEVERAL ATTEMPTS OF WENS

Global meetings of Wildlife Enforcement Networks in 2023

- **11 Existing WENs**

- Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Working Group on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement
- Caribbean Wildlife Enforcement Network (CaribWEN)
- China National Inter-agencies CITES Enforcement Coordination Group (NICEGG)
- Commission of Central African Forests (COMIFAC) / Central Africa WEN
- European Commission Enforcement Working Group
- Horn of Africa Wildlife Enforcement Network (HA-WEN)
- Lusaka Agreement Taskforce (LATF)
- South America WEN (SudWEN)

- **Existing resources from CITES:**

- [WEN webpage](#)
- [WEN Guidelines](#)
- [WEN Directory](#)

# ASEAN WEN (NOW AWG ON CITES AND WE)

- Started in 2006
- Objectives [[Link](#)]
  - Awareness raising
  - Capacity building
  - Cooperation among LE agencies
- Established a Secretariat in Thailand (now closed)
- In 2017 changed into ASEAN Working Group on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement
  - Improve cooperation among LE agencies and CITES MAs [[Link](#)]



## CHALLENGES

- Language barriers
- Different legal frameworks
- Difficult communication

# ASEAN SENIOR OFFICIALS MEETING ON TRANSNATIONAL CRIME

- Working Group on Illicit Wildlife and Timber Trade
- Started in 2017
- 10 Members
- Objective [[Link](#)]
  - Regional and international LE cooperation
  - Complement AWG on CITES and WE
  - Exchange of information
- Chairmanship: Royal Thai Police
- Meetings: annually



# LUSAKA AGREEMENT TASK FORCE

- Started in 1999. Treaty came into force in 1996
- Objectives [[Link](#)]
  - LE cooperation and investigations on violations of wildlife laws
  - Capacity building
  - Exchange of information
- 7 Members and 3 signatories

## CHALLENGES

- Lack of financial resources
- Different legal frameworks



# HORN OF AFRICA WEN

- Started in 2017
- Objectives [[Link](#)]
  - Policy and governance
  - Capacity building
  - Cooperation among LE agencies
- Secretariat at IGAD
- Action plan developed in 2018

## CHALLENGES

- Financial resources
- Political instability
- COVID-19



# SUD-WEN

- Launched in 2014 through *Sao Paulo Declaration*
- Objectives [[Link](#)]
  - Foster collaboration among LE agencies
- 10 Countries
- Led by Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Environment and Public Prosecutors Offices, Police, Customs and CITES agencies

## CHALLENGES

- Differences in legal frameworks and country strategies
- Limited regional communication and information/intel exchange
- Limited institutional capacities at national level on transnational /cross-border cases

# LESSON LEARNED



Importance of a clear goal: operational or policy?

Focus on building national capacity

Importance of coordination (Secretariat?)

Clarity about information and mechanisms to be used



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ICCWC



USAID  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

# Wildlife Inter-Regional Enforcement (WIRE)

30 November - 2 December 2022

Bangkok

## INFORMAL NETWORKS OF COOPERATION



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- Create an informal network among practitioners, mainly:
  - Police
  - Prosecutors
  - Customs
  - Wildlife authorities
- Promote cooperation between African, Asian and Latin American countries
  - 4 WIRE meetings:
    - 2016: WIRE-Police (Bangkok, Thailand)
    - 2017: WIRE-Prosecutors (Bangkok, Thailand)
    - 2017: WIRE-Customs (Hanoi, Vietnam)
    - 2018: WIRE-Broad (Nairobi, Kenya)
    - 2021: WIRE-Broad (Virtual with China Customs)
    - 2022: WIRE-Broad (Bangkok, Thailand)

# WIRE 2022

- 107 representatives from police, customs, prosecution, wildlife agencies
- From Africa: Cameroon, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Republic of the Congo, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda
- From Asia/Oceania: Cambodia, China (including Hong Kong SAR), India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Nepal, Singapore, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam
- Latin America: Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru
- Others: France, Italy, USA

# ACTION POINTS

- Africa-focused operation among Customs authorities in the continent
- Identifying common targets
- Emphasis on MLA
- Emphasis on financial investigations
- Emphasis on wildlife forensics
- Involvement of judges in WIRE

# OPERATION MEKONG DRAGON

Recognized need for a joint regional OP against drug, wildlife and timber trafficking



- Initiated in 2018 by China and Viet Nam Customs administrations
- Targeting trans-boundary trafficking of illicit drugs and CITES goods by all routes (air, sea, land borders)
- Operational and technical support provided by the WCO RILO/AP and UNODC

## OPERATION MEKONG DRAGON IV

### Customs Administrations (24)

Australia	Bangladesh	Bhutan	Brunei
Cambodia	China	Hong Kong, China	India
Indonesia	Iran	Japan	Korea
Lao PDR	Macao, China	Malaysia	Maldives
Myanmar	New Zealand	Pakistan	Philippines
Singapore	Sri Lanka	Thailand	Vietnam

**27** Law Enforcement Agencies

### Other Law enforcement Authority (3)

Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment, Australia
National Parks Board, Singapore
Central Narcotics Bureau, Singapore

- OMD IV (15 Apr - 15 Sep 2022)
- Historical 24 countries and territories in Asia and the Pacific

## Briefing of Operation Mekong Dragon V and Operation Irene IV “湄龙”第五期暨“和平女神”第四期国际联合行动启动会



- OMD V commenced on 15 April 2023 and concluded on 15 September 2023

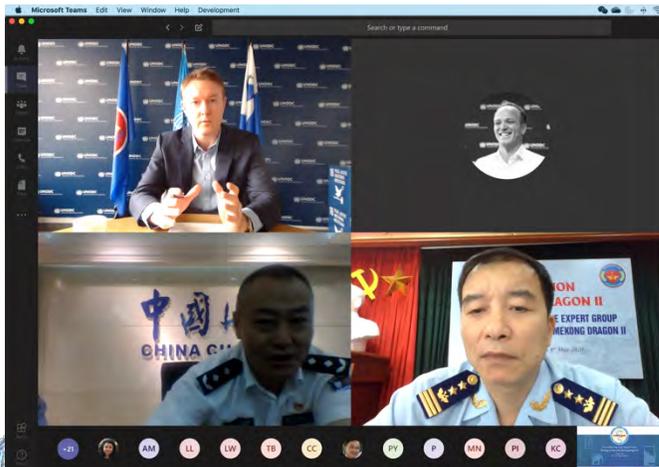
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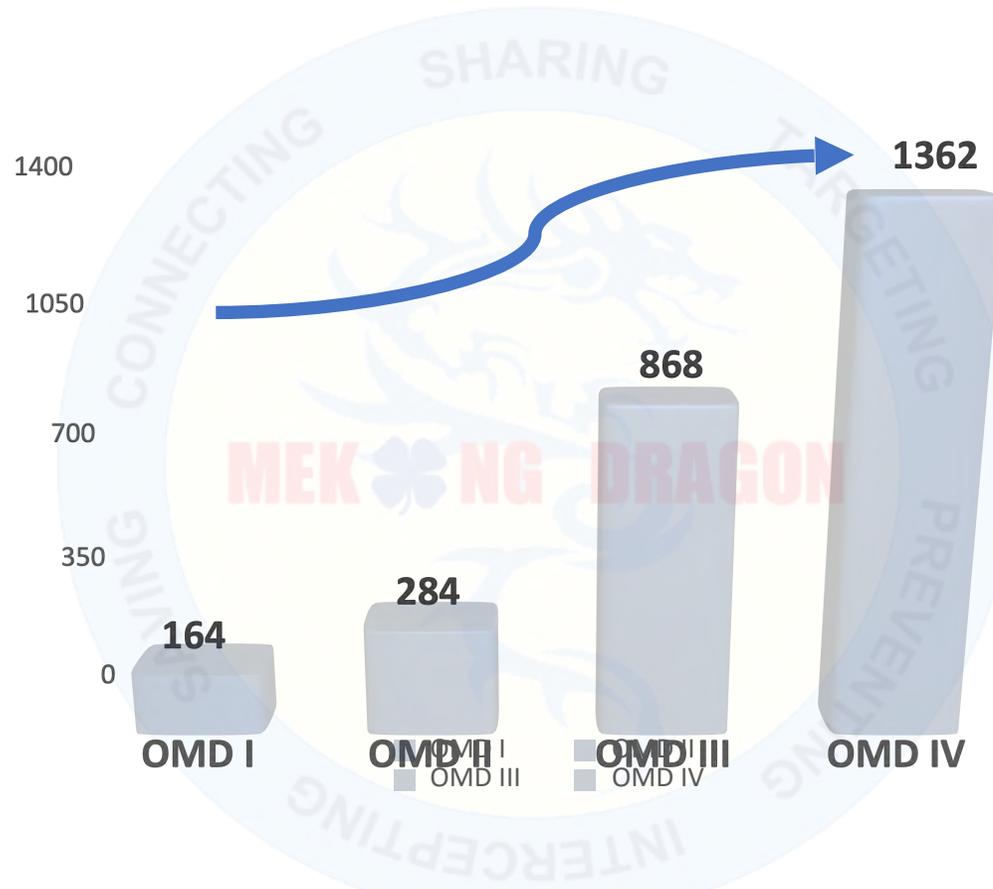
## OMD I (Sep 2018 – Feb 2019)



## OMD II (May – Sep 2020)



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## OMD III (Apr – Sep 2021)

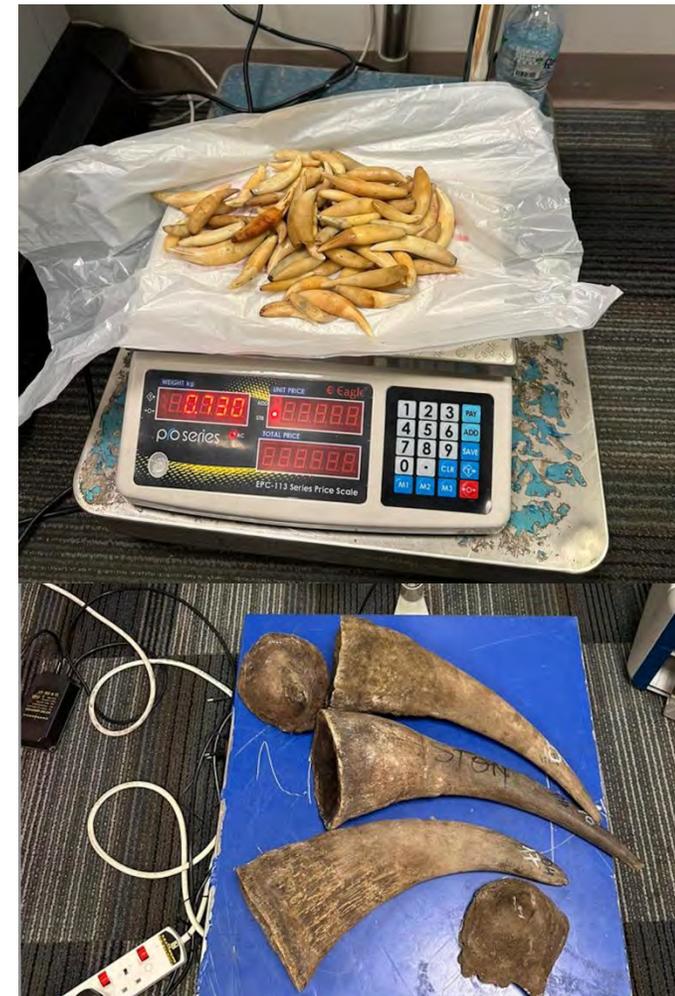


## OMD IV (Apr - Sep 2022)



# HOW TO MAKE CRIME LESS PROFITABLE

- Reduce economies of scales in production and transportation
- Reduce opportunities for collusions/corruption
- Increase capacity for financial investigations and money laundering investigations
- It takes a network to defeat a network





# THANK YOU



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