An Assessment of Poaching and Wildlife Trafficking in the Garamba-Bili-Chinko Transboundary Landscape

Gervais Ondoua Ondoua, Eustache Beodo Moundjim, Jean Claude Mambo Marindo, Rémi Jiagho, Leonard Usongo and Liz Williamson

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network, is the leading non-governmental organization working globally on trade in wild animals and plants in the context of both biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. TRAFFIC works closely with its founding organizations, IUCN and WWF.

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Front cover photograph and credit: Soldiers in Garamba National Park © Jeremy T. Lock

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Soldiers in Garamba National Park
Garamba National Park and Azande hunting domain, separated by the Aka River
© Naftali Honig/Garamba National Park/African Parks Network
An assessment of poaching and wildlife trafficking in parts of southeast Central African Republic (CAR) and northeast Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) was carried out on behalf of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). USAID’s Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) seeks to understand better and address the poaching and trafficking of wildlife in the Garamba-Bili-Chinko landscape of CAR and DRC. This landscape includes the Garamba complex (Garamba National Park and three hunting reserves), the Bili complex (Bili-Uéré and Bomu reserves) and the Chinko reserve, and is henceforth referred to as Garamba-Bili-Chinko or GBC. This remote and underdeveloped region is inhabited by agricultural communities and transhumant pastoralists, and lacks income generating opportunities, infrastructure and government services. It is characterized by weak governance and insecurity, the latter perpetuated by the activities of foreign armed groups, notably the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA).

The objectives of this study were to present analyses of: 1) local communities living around the protected areas of the GBC landscape, 2) wildlife trafficking networks operating in the landscape, 3) the Mbororo pastoralists in the landscape, and 4) to make recommendations to USAID for interventions to reduce poaching and wildlife trafficking in this landscape.

“Organized poaching and trafficking of wildlife by armed non-State actors is severely threatening the survival of some of the most iconic and threatened species in the region, notably Elephants and Giraffes.”

Hunting and poaching were considered at three levels: a) small-scale legal hunting by local people, b) small-scale illegal hunting by relatively local individuals, and c) large-scale illegal hunting by armed non-State and State actors. The latter is organized poaching, and the subsequent trafficking of wildlife is often facilitated by political and administrative authorities as well as criminal networks. Wildlife is taken primarily from protected areas in the region, which are the Garamba complex (Garamba National Park, and Azande, Gangala-na-Bodio and Mondo-Missa hunting domains), the Bili complex (Bili-Uéré Hunting Domain, Bomu Wildlife Reserve and Bomu Hunting Domain) and the Chinko Project Area.

Information on the following was gathered through interviews in villages and settlements throughout the landscape: demographic profile (age, ethnicity, gender, religion and social status);
sources and level of income (occupation, income-generating activities, income allocation); access to basic infrastructures (clean water, education, health care, road networks and communications); dynamics of poaching (actors involved, species targeted, trafficking routes); nature of relationships between the various stakeholder groups; and nature of conflicts.

Economic poverty is prevalent in the rural environment and there are few economic opportunities, thus local people are greatly dependent on natural resources. The information collected during this study confirmed that the isolated communities living in this landscape have access to only the most basic social infrastructure. The Bantu communities make their living through, in order of importance: small-scale agriculture, livestock rearing, hunting (both legal and illegal), fishing, harvesting of non-timber forest products (NTFPs), artisanal mining, small trade, temporary employment, and handicrafts. However, hunting, both legally and illegally, is the most important source of income for many local people, but they are not militarized.

The study focused particular attention on the Mbororo—a group of nomadic, pastoralist Fulani—their links to wildlife trafficking and some of the challenges being posed by transhumance migration. Ways to regulate the movements of their large cattle herds (by, for example, formal identification of transhumance corridors) are urgently needed.

It was clear that organized poaching and trafficking of wildlife by armed non-State actors (armed groups, militia and highly-militarized poachers) is severely threatening the survival of some of the most iconic and threatened species in the region, notably Elephants and Giraffes. Fortunately, there are dedicated and competent conservation agencies on the ground, and these organizations must be fully supported (financially, logistically and politically) so that they can continue to defend the wildlife and GBC ecosystem against the enormous pressures currently being exerted upon them.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations formulated to reduce or mitigate the threats to wildlife from poaching and trafficking in the GBC landscape.

**Recommendations to USAID**

- **Illegal Activities & Law Enforcement**
  - Species & Enforcement Public Information Campaigns
  - Expansion of Early Warning Networks
  - Rafaï-Obo Trafficking Investigation
  - Restoration of State Authority & Law Enforcement

- **Local Communities & Livelihoods**
  - Alternative Economic Activities Assessment
  - Alternative Economic Activity Support
  - “Beyond Enforcement” Theory of Change Framework Application

- **Mbororo Pastoralists & Transhumance**
  - Transhumant Pastoralist Expert Consultation
  - Cross-border Cattle Herder Dialogue & Agreement

- **Transboundary Conservation Collaboration**
  - NGO & USAID Tri-border Collaboration
  - Trafficking Consultative Platforms with CAR, DRC, South Sudan & Sudan
  - Diplomatic Relations Building

**Recommendations to Regional Governments & Conservation Groups**

- Chimpanzee Urgent Action Campaign
- Wildlife Legislation Standardization
- Amnesty Period for Guns & Ammunition Relinquishment
- Law Enforcement Procedural Support

- Resource-use Multi-stakeholder Consultative Platforms

- Transhumance Corridors Identification & Legislation
- Livestock Vaccine Kits & Veterinary Supplies

- Cross-border Collaboration with South Sudan & Uganda
A. Recommendations to USAID

### Thematic Area 1: Illegal Activities & Law Enforcement

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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th>Key Partners</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Promote public information campaigns that highlight Endangered and other protected species, legislation, law enforcement and corruption. Many people in this region are not sufficiently aware of the different levels of legal protection afforded to various species of wildlife—that some species are “fully (integrally) protected”, others only “partially protected” and some not protected at all. These distinctions should be emphasized and efforts made to clamp down entirely on the killing of Endangered and other protected species. USAID could support such campaign activities through their government and NGO partners.</td>
<td>ICCN, MEFET, NGOs, USAID</td>
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<td>1.2</td>
<td>Support deliberate expansion of existing Early Warning Networks to encompass poaching and illegal wildlife trade (see Appendix V).</td>
<td>USAID, NGOs, ICCN, MEFET</td>
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<td>1.3</td>
<td>Undertake a detailed investigation of trafficking of wildlife along the Rafaï-Obo axis in CAR, focussing on Zemio, which is acknowledged to be a regional centre of wildlife trade. Commission research to determine species and volumes being traded along these trafficking routes and through the transit hubs.</td>
<td>NGOs, ICCN, MEFET, USAID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>Support the restoration of State authority and law enforcement in CAR and DRC, through for example, funding ongoing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) campaigns.</td>
<td>USAID, NGOs, FBOs</td>
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### Thematic Area 2: Local Communities and Livelihoods

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<td>2.1</td>
<td>Consult with bushmeat experts and other livelihoods specialists to assess alternative economic activities, and to determine appropriate incentives to reduce poaching.</td>
<td>USAID, NGOs, ICCN, MEFET</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Based on the outcomes of 2.1, support alternative pro-conservation, economic incentives for communities located in the vicinity of protected areas to discourage illegal bushmeat hunting and other poaching and/or trafficking activities.</td>
<td>USAID, NGOs, ICCN, MEFET</td>
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<td>2.3</td>
<td>Use a Theory of Change framework and existing models, such as the Beyond Enforcement initiative, to improve evidence-based programming designed at the community or landscape level.</td>
<td>USAID, IUCN, IUCN SULi, NGOs, ICCN, MEFET</td>
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### Thematic Area 3: Mbororo Pastoralists and Transhumance

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<td>3.1</td>
<td>Consult experts on transhumant pastoralism in Central Africa, through for example, the IUCN World Initiative for Sustainable Pastoralism (WISP), to explore the best ways to improve relations with and integrate Mbororo pastoralists into the local communities.</td>
<td>Governments of CAR &amp; DRC, USAID</td>
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<td>3.2</td>
<td>Seek agreement on the cross-border migration of cattle herders into CAR and DRC. Facilitate dialogue and negotiations with the governments of Chad and South Sudan.</td>
<td>Governments of CAR &amp; DRC, USAID</td>
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### Thematic Area 4: Transboundary Collaboration in Support of Wildlife Conservation

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<td>4.1</td>
<td>Facilitate NGO communications and co-ordination with USAID in South Sudan, along with information sharing between the conservation bodies on the ground in the tri-border area. For example, support the development of an MoU between the agencies responsible for protected areas to facilitate information- and intelligence-sharing, and collaboration on cross-border security and counter-wildlife trafficking efforts.</td>
<td>USAID</td>
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<td>4.2</td>
<td>Support broader transboundary collaboration through the establishment of a permanent consultation platform on wildlife protection and counter-wildlife trafficking involving CAR, DRC, South Sudan and Sudan. Such a platform could bring together local administrators from each country, Protect Area (PA) managers (representatives of the States and their partners), local communities, law enforcement agencies and civil society.</td>
<td>Governments of CAR &amp; DRC, ICCN, MEFET, USAID, NGOs, FBOs, AUC-DREA</td>
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<td>4.3</td>
<td>Assist in strengthening diplomatic relationships between the countries affected by organized poaching in the GBC landscape (CAR, DRC, South Sudan and Uganda). This could improve border security and biodiversity conservation, as well as ensuring the integrity and security of the landscape. To that end, those countries and their partners could host a meeting with donors and strategic organizations working in the region to review security issues and illegal wildlife trafficking thoroughly, and plan to secure the future of the landscape.</td>
<td>USAID, AUC-DREA, strategic partners and donors</td>
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### Thematic Area 2: Local Communities and Livelihoods

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<td>2.4</td>
<td>Develop multi-stakeholder consultative platforms on local resource use and benefit sharing to enhance dialogue, communications and collaboration among key stakeholders living in and around protected areas.</td>
<td>ICCN, MEFET, NGOs, SULi, NGOs, FBOs</td>
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### Thematic Area 3: Mbororo Pastoralists and Transhumance

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<td>3.3</td>
<td>Identify and delineate transhumance corridors that would control the movements of large cattle herds and thus restrict their impacts to narrower areas, avoiding protected areas. A legal framework governing livestock movements would also be needed.</td>
<td>Governments of CAR &amp; DRC, NGOs, NGOs</td>
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<td>3.4</td>
<td>Support provision of vaccine kits and other veterinary supplies for the treatment of livestock belonging to herders who do not transgress the boundaries of protected areas and agree to collaborate with efforts to combat wildlife trafficking. As well as motivating compliance with conservation, treating cattle would reduce the threat that diseased cattle pose to wildlife. In CAR, this could be done through the National Federation of Central African Livestock Producers (Fédération Nationale des Éleveurs Centrafricains, FNEC).</td>
<td>Governments of CAR &amp; DRC, USAID</td>
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### Thematic Area 4: Transboundary Collaboration in Support of Wildlife Conservation

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<td>4.4</td>
<td>Implement and extend mechanisms for cross-border collaboration to include South Sudan and Uganda. For example, bi-lateral MoUs such as those existing between Uganda and Kenya, or South Africa and Mozambique, could outline specific areas of collaboration and capacity related to illegal wildlife trade to support mutual legal assistance (MLAs) for evidence gathering and international prosecutions.</td>
<td>USAID</td>
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Chimpanzee killed near Bili and her infant confiscated by a patrol © Alain Lushimba/AWF
TRAFFIC report: Poaching and Wildlife Trafficking in the GBC Landscape

Figure 2. Map of the Garamba complex, showing Garamba National Park and three hunting domains. Credit: ICCN-APN
Figure 3. Map of the Bili complex, showing the Bili-Uéré and Bomu reserves. Credit: AWF
Figure 4a. Map of Chinko showing regional context. Credit: Chinko Project
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