



WORKSHOP SUMMARY REPORT

Event co-leaders:	Rosie Cooney, Michael Murphree and Dilys Roe
Time and date:	15 November 2014, 13:30-15:30
Rapporteurs:	Frank Vorhies
Presenters:	Mariana Montoya, Andrew Agyare, Karine Nuulimba, Neema Pathak Broome, Melissa Vivacqua Rodrigues, Johnson Masereka and Vivienne Solis

The goal of this workshop was to examine the importance of strengthening community resource rights and benefit-sharing for achieving sustainable and equitable use of wild species, and in particular combating the current global upsurge in wildlife crime. Through a series of case studies across a range of countries, wild resources and landscapes, it explored the role of community-based governance approaches and mechanisms for natural resource management including regulating wildlife trade.

Key emerging lessons:

- 1) Community ownership, empowerment and benefit-sharing plays a key role in combating illegal wildlife trade, as well as in, more broadly, conservation and sustainable management of wild resources (wildlife, forest resources, fisheries, etc). There is evidence that under many circumstances, communities who have ownership over a natural resource and/or benefit from its are more likely to use wild resources sustainably and to take measures to protect them from poaching by both "insiders" and "outsiders". Examples are not restricted to specific regions or biomes, but span dry lands, forests, and marine contexts, and Africa, Asia and Latin America.
- 2) An unbalanced focus on fighting the poachers, rather than on empowering the stewards of wild resources may undermine community resilience and cohesion and thus result in weakening critically important community-based governance systems. Well-meaning NGOs who are raising funds to fight wildlife crime often under-appreciate the importance of strong and resilient community-based resource management.
- 3) Empowered communities will often need to build strategic alliances with government agencies, NGOs or others for these impacts to result. For example, for communities with high valued resources that are attractive to outside poachers, strong relationships with

police and even the military may be needed. In other cases, NGOs may help to bring in technical capacity and financial resources to improve the effectiveness of community management systems.

- 4) A number of governance parameters are likely to reduce illegal activity and enhance sustainable management. These include a clear understanding of the resource boundaries and of community responsibilities. As well, clarity about who can harvest, at what levels and when helps as well to clarify who is not allowed to harvest and thus should be sanctioned if they attempt to do so.

Exemplary case/s and other useful links:

Strengthened land and resource rights of tribal communities in the Yawal Wildlife Sanctuary, Maharashtra, India, under the Indian Forest Rights Act, has led to improved control of organised gangs of timber smugglers. In this area government authorities had attempted to control the smuggling with armed force, but this was unsuccessful. When the communities gained these management rights, they asserted these rights against outsiders, and formed youth networks to counter timber smuggling, which was successful.

In the Peruvian Amazon, in the Regional Communal Conservation Area of Tamshiyacu Tahuayo, strengthened indigenous rights to control and conserve their territorial lands has led to effective control of illegal commercial exploitation of fisheries and bushmeat. The government does not control these areas - they are controlled by the community, with backup from police when needed.

In Namibia, the communal conservancy programme has strengthened rights of indigenous and local communities to own, manage and benefit from wildlife. This has led to a dramatic reduction in poaching. Conservancies employ game guards (often former poachers) to protect wildlife, with backup from police when required. Efforts against poaching focus not on "catching poachers", but on "stopping poaching" - winning the hearts and minds of communities is a critical element. Insensitive anti-poaching efforts can actually undermine this.

Original presentations and report are available in the event's folder (see link in annexed "Repository of original Powerpoint presentations and Rapporteur reports").

Key recommendations:

The global community engaged in combating illegal wildlife trade (including governments, international organisations, donors, and NGOs) should support community-based action to reduce and control wildlife crime, including (where appropriate) strengthening the rights and

abilities of local communities and indigenous peoples to own, manage and benefit from wild resources

National government agencies responsible for combating wildlife crime should seek to build strong, collaborative relationships with local communities and indigenous people who live with and close to wild resources subject to poaching. Enforcement actions should wherever possible seek to support community rights and needs. Heavy handed and poorly targeted enforcement actions that risk undermining community support for conservation should be avoided.

This event has been instrumental in shaping recommendation #12 of the Stream final document.

Rec#	Title
12	Transnational wildlife crime