# Authorities from Laos, Thailand and Myanmar received 'Training of Trainers' Course on Cross Border Cooperation to Prevent Illegal Wildlife Trafficking

One of the main activities of Fighting Wildlife Trafficking in the Golden Triangle Project is to support in building capacity of civilian law enforcement authorities to prevent and investigate wildlife trafficking at the provincial level and across borders. To achieve this, WWF recently organized the first Training of Trainers (ToT) course for law enforcement officers of Laos, Thailand and Myanmar, in the Golden Triangle, Chiang Rai province, Thailand.



Conducted by WWF-Greater Mekong and TRAFFIC, the ToT was attended with more than 30 law enforcement officers of the three countries and spent a week from 26-30 Aug 2019 in the Golden Triangle learning critical skills for training teams to combat illegal wildlife trade and strengthen cross border cooperation to prevent illegal wildlife trafficking.

The goal of this programme is to teach officers how to effectively train their teams, integrating behavior change elements, new knowledge and skills and improving their morale, work ethics and practices by developing local training capacity and ensuring that trained officers are able to pass on skills and knowledge in their offices, the project will sustain skills and knowledge within the Golden Triangle areas where Laos, Myanmar and Thailand jointly share borders.

As the main partners in implementing efforts to strengthen wildlife law enforcement in Laos and cross-border cooperation with neighbouring countries, **twelve officers from Laos'** Department of Forest Inspection (DoFI), Provincial Office of Forest Inspection (PoFI), and police and customs of Oudomxay, Luang Namtha and Bokeo Provinces attended this important training.

The five-day training allowed participants to learn other important skills such as personal preparedness, team safety, road-block techniques, observing, patrolling, inspecting suspects, search, seizure and confiscation, and application of laws and penalties.



The instruction given during this ToT will help the officers to be more effective as trainers of wildlife law enforcement officers, not only to their teams but to the public as well as their agencies. Equipping them with a lot of new skills and techniques on everything from search and seizure to investigations to working with communities.

Additional instruction was given on crime scene investigation, including how to secure the location, collect evidence, take photos, interview witnesses, and how to give clear instructions about roles and responsibilities to the team.





WWF currently supports an anti-wildlife crime programme in the Greater Mekong Region, including in the Lao PDR, where wildlife poaching and illegal wildlife trade markets have caused serious declines and local extinctions of endangered species populations. The objective of the programme is to effectively reduce demand for illegal wildlife products, as well as to improve ranger capacity and support wildlife law enforcement activities and capacity building.

In Laos, WWF is pleased to support the Government of Lao (GoL) PDR in implementing actions that reduce the sale and availability of illegal wildlife and wildlife products. There are four priority provinces supported under this project: Vientiane Capital, Oudomxay, Luang Namtha and Bokeo. However, other provinces can be supported to enable rapid responses to active wildlife crime or emerging criminal activities.



The WWF-Laos and GoL Memorandum of Understanding was signed on 15 Mar 2019 and concludes on 30 June 2020, on "Support to strengthen wildlife law enforcement in Laos and cross-border cooperation with neighbouring countries."

Theoverall objective of this project is to reduce illegal wildlife trade in key markets and retail hubs in Laos by expanding capacity to detect, discourage, and disrupt organized criminal networks, and prosecute those members involved in illegal wildlife crime. The project will also facilitate the establishment of trust and working relationships across national and border agencies.

**The Fighting Wildlife Trafficking in the Golden Triangle Project is funded by
the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of International Narcotics
and Law Enforcement (INL).**

This project is designed to reduce trafficking of wildlife within the Golden Triangle, in key target locations in the Lao PDR, Myanmar and Thailand, by: (1) enhancing wildlife-related law enforcement by improving guidelines and protocols for inter-agency collaboration; and (2) Building capacity of civilian law enforcement authorities to prevent and investigate wildlife trafficking at the provincial level and across borders.