



Analysis of International Donor Funding to **Combat Illegal Wildlife Trade 2010–2023**



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Glossary

All dollar (\$) amounts are in US dollars unless otherwise indicated.

CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
BMZ	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
BMUV	Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection
FATF	Financial Action Task Force
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GWP	Global Wildlife Program
UNTOC	United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNODC	United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDOS	United States Department of State
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service

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ABOUT THE GLOBAL WILDLIFE PROGRAM

The Global Wildlife Program (GWP) is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and led by the World Bank. It is a global partnership to combat illegal and unsustainable wildlife trade, build human-wildlife coexistence, and promote wildlife-based economies. Through an investment of \$359 million in GEF financing and \$2.32 billion in co-financing, the GWP brings together efforts in 38 countries. GWP national projects across Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean, along with a global coordination project, create a collaborative program that facilitates action on the ground, connections across borders, and the sharing of experiences, lessons, and best practices.

Executive Summary



This report is the third edition of the Illegal Wildlife Trade Donor Investment Analysis prepared by the Global Environment Facility-supported, World Bank-led Global Wildlife Program. Following earlier reviews in 2016 and 2018, this report summarizes the status of international donor funding in combating illegal wildlife trade from January 2010–June 2023. The report assesses international donor funding in Africa, Asia, and — for the first time — Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as considering cross-regional and global investment.

Since 2010, 73 international donors have invested over \$3.63 billion in combating illegal wildlife trade, corresponding to an annual average of \$269 million. This remains similar to the last analysis which recorded average commitments of \$261 million per year between 2010–2018.

Key findings include:

- Since 2010, almost 60% of donor investment in combating illegal wildlife trade went to Africa (\$2.16 billion), compared to 25% (\$909 million) in Asia and 3% (\$111 million) in Latin America and the Caribbean. The remainder was distributed across global (8%; \$300 million) and cross-regional (4%; \$153 million) interventions. Trends indicate a reduction in relative investment in Africa since 2018, with increased funding for global interventions and the emergence of donor investment in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Investment went to 89 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America and Caribbean. The top 10 countries received \$1.18 billion or 32% of donor investment since 2010. These include six countries in Africa and four in Asia: Tanzania, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Indonesia, Namibia, Bangladesh, Kenya, Madagascar, Vietnam and the Lao People's Democratic Republic.
- Donor investment is predominantly from bilateral country donors and multilaterals. Since 2010, 55% of investment has come from donor countries (\$1.99 billion), followed by multilateral donors (40%; \$1.45 billion), foundations (4%; \$136 million), and international NGOs (1%; \$53 million). The proportion of bilateral country investment has increased over time. From 2018–2023, donor



countries provided almost two thirds of investment (66%) compared to 30% from multilateral donors.

- Five major donors — two countries and three multilaterals — provided 91% of funding between 2010–2023: United States, Germany, the European Commission, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and the World Bank Group. These are the same top donors identified in earlier analyses, although the order of the five changed with the emergence of the United States as the highest donor from 2010–2023.
- Donor investment in combating illegal wildlife trade most often flows directly to national governments, who received 43% (\$1.34 billion) of funds between 2010–2023. National governments are the top recipient type for multilateral donors and donor countries, receiving 45% of multilateral donor investment and 35% of donor country investment. The second highest recipient type was international NGOs who received 22% (\$799 million) of investment, followed by intergovernmental organizations (10%; \$351 million), and multiple recipient types (9%; \$319 million). Only small amounts of donor investment went directly to national NGOs, the private sector, academia, or sub-national governments.
- Since 2010, the highest funded intervention category is protected and conserved area management to prevent poaching (35%; \$1.27 billion), followed by law enforcement and criminal justice systems (24%; \$880 million), sustainable livelihoods (18%; \$638 million), policy and regulation (11%; \$389 million), research and assessment (7%; \$244 million), and demand reduction and behavior change (5%; \$198 million). Trends indicate a relative reduction in protected and conserved area management over time, replaced by increasing investment in criminal justice.
- Donor investment across intervention categories differs among regions. Mirroring the global trend, protected and conserved area management was the intervention of highest investment in Africa (41% of investment in Africa; \$874 million) and Asia (37% of investment in Asia; \$334 million). In contrast, the highest investment in Latin America and the Caribbean was for criminal justice

(40%; \$42 million). The second highest funded intervention category differed in each region, being sustainable livelihoods (22%; \$462 million) in Africa, criminal justice (22%; \$198 million) in Asia, and protected and conserved areas management (18%; \$19 million) in Latin America and the Caribbean. For cross-regional and global investment, the highest investment has been in criminal justice (42%; \$189 million), followed by policy and regulation (17%; \$78 million).

- For the first time, the analysis assessed the extent to which donor interventions address related themes of transnational organized crime, corruption, crime convergence (the relationship between illegal wildlife trade and other types of crime), illicit financial flows, and One Health and zoonotic diseases. Transnational organized crime was the theme most frequently considered in interventions (43% of 2018–2023 interventions), followed by crime convergence (17%), corruption (14%), illicit financial flows (14%), and One Health and zoonotic diseases (13%).

The analysis highlights the ongoing substantial international donor investment in combating illegal wildlife trade, providing updated data to guide donor coordination. Summary data such as that shown in this report can be enriched by more detailed discussions of regional and country investment (including consideration of parallel investments by recipient governments), the sharing of successful (and less successful) case studies among donors, a greater focus on monitoring and evaluation to better assess the results of interventions, and by coordination mechanisms that bring together donors, implementing partners and governments to discuss respective efforts, opportunities for synergies and reduced overlap, and priorities for future investment.

SECTION 1:

Objectives and Methodology



Background

Illegal wildlife trade is recognized as one of the most lucrative criminal activities globally, alongside drug trade, arms trade, and human trafficking. The World Bank Group (2019) estimates the costs of illegal logging, fishing, and wildlife trade at \$1–2 trillion per year. The impacts of the crime are extensive. Beyond the immediate conservation threat to illegally traded species, population reductions caused by trafficking can trigger ecosystem-level impacts and undermine climate resilience (UNODC, 2024). Illegal wildlife trade poses significant risks to development. It threatens the socioeconomic benefits people derive from nature, robs governments of revenues through legal trade, and erodes governance and the rule of law through corruption, money laundering, and illicit financial flows.

Growing understanding of the scope and severity of these impacts has built political profile and escalated global action and coordination to combat wildlife crime. The World Bank Group (2018) reported that \$2.35 billion was invested by 24 international donors to combat illegal wildlife trade in Africa and Asia from 2010–2018 — an annual investment of \$261 million. Alongside enhanced efforts of national governments in countries affected by illegal trade, these donor investments funded a diverse range of interventions to address poaching at source, disrupt trafficking and illicit supply chains, and stem demand in consumer markets.

Latest assessments of illegal wildlife trade data show positive impacts of this investment yet indicate that wildlife trafficking persists worldwide despite concerted international and national action. While a combination of demand and supply side efforts have reduced poaching of iconic megafauna such as elephants and rhinoceros, the global scale of wildlife crime remains substantial. As documented in the latest World Wildlife Crime report (UNODC, 2024), the geographical and market scope of illegal wildlife trade is immense. Seizures from 2015–2021 document illegal trade in 162 countries and territories, with an additional 82 countries implicated in trafficking chains for these seizures. Between 2015–2021, nearly 13 million specimens, averaging 1.84 million specimens per year and comprising 4,000 plant and animal species, were seized from illegal trade. Wildlife trafficking encompasses a range of distinct markets and commodities, including food, medicine, live animal and plant keeping, and luxury goods.



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The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted but did not stop wildlife trafficking. Seizure data shows signs of reduced trade in 2020 and 2021, including for key traded products such as rhinoceros horn, elephant ivory, and pangolin scales (UNODC, 2024). However, it is unclear to what extent this reflects a sustained reduction in trafficking, a disruption in trade due to COVID-19 restrictions on travel, transport and trade, or COVID-19 linked reductions in enforcement effort or reporting of seizures. Overall, progress to meet Sustainable Development Goal target 15.7 to end wildlife trafficking will not be met by 2030 according to UNODC (2024).

This report provides an updated assessment of the scale and nature of international donor investment to combat illegal wildlife trade, building on World Bank Group assessments in 2016 and 2018. It aims to provide a broad overview of donor investment and identify trends in funding, offering practical insights to donors to guide future funding programs and priorities

Objectives

The objectives of this updated analysis are to:

1. Estimate the extent of international donor investment in combating illegal wildlife trade over 2010–2023.
2. Fill geographic gaps in previous analyses by assessing donor investment in Latin America and the Caribbean, an emerging region of illegal wildlife trade. Thus, this report assesses international donor funding in Africa, Asia, and — for the first time — Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as considering cross-regional and global interventions.
3. Explore how donor investment has changed since previous analyses, in terms of the regional distribution of investment, donor and recipient profiles, and the types of intervention funded.

Results are structured in two parts: i) a global overview of donor investment and trends, ii) geographical deep dives for donor investment profiles in the three targeted regions, and summaries of cross-regional and global interventions. Finally, the report offers suggestions for further analysis and coordination among donors, development partners and recipient countries.

Methodology

SCOPE

This report estimates international donor funding¹ to combat illegal wildlife trade from January 2010 — June 2023. For purposes of the analysis, illegal wildlife trade is defined as: the illegal trade, smuggling/trafficking, poaching, and/or unlawful removal from the wild or collection of endangered species, protected wildlife, derivatives, or products thereof. This may include the selling, exchange or consumption of wildlife that is at risk and protected by law. Mirroring prior analyses, the focus is on fauna-related investments. Fish and timber products that are not part of broader fauna-focused interventions are not included.

The analysis considers investment across five geographies:

1. Africa
2. Asia
3. Latin America and the Caribbean (hereafter Latin America)
4. Cross-regional (investment spanning countries in two or more of the targeted regions)
5. Global (investment that goes beyond work at cross-regional levels, including initiatives that span the potential global reach of illegal wildlife trade [for

¹ The scope of funding in the analysis includes grants and loans, and excludes innovative financial mechanisms like bonds.

example, global assessments and research] and include potential investment beyond Africa, Asia and Latin America).

For Africa, Asia and Latin America, investment comprises funding at the level of individual countries, and interventions in multiple countries in the region, specific sub-regions or the region as a whole. The geographical regions of Africa, Asia and Latin America are defined according to the composition of geographical regions used by the Statistics Division of the United Nations in its publications and databases. Each country or area is shown in one region only. These geographic regions are based on continental regions, which are further subdivided into sub-regions.

DATA CONTRIBUTORS

Previous analyses in 2016 and 2018 sought investment data from major donors. For this updated analysis both donors and implementing partners were approached for data. Twenty one organizations contributed new data for this analysis, comprising 11 (52%) international donors and 10 (48%) implementing partners (Annex I). These data contributors provided 2018–2023 data that was added to the 2010–2018 data collated previously. As the 2018 analysis included only partial data for 2018, the 2023 collection included data for the whole of 2018 to minimize potential gaps in reporting, and duplicates in the combined dataset were removed. As earlier analyses did not include data for Latin America, contributors were asked to provide data on investment to combat illegal wildlife trade in Latin America from January 2010 — June 2023.

DONOR PORTFOLIO

The combined 2010–2023 dataset includes at least 73 donors². These were categorized based on Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) definitions as four donor types: donor country, multilateral donor, foundation or private donor, and international NGO. The breakdown of donors across the four types is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Donor Data from the 2010–2023 Analysis

Donor Type	Number of Donors	Percentage of Total
Donor Country	13	18%
Multilateral Donor	8	11%
Foundation	38	52%
International NGO	14	19%
Total	73	100%

The inclusion of donor data differs across the 2010–2023 period. The 2010–2018 data has a higher number of country donors and multilateral donors, and some of these were not able to provide 2018–2023 data for this analysis. Moreover, the latest data collection phase includes more data from implementing partners covering a range of funding from smaller philanthropic and private foundations. Donors for each data collection period are given in Annex II.

DATA COLLECTION TEMPLATE

A standardized data collection template was used to collect data from donors and implementing partners in 2023. This built on the template used for 2016 and 2018 analyses, with refinements made in response to donor feedback to: i) make it easier to complete the data collection template, ii) improve explanation of the intervention categories, iii) collate new data on themes relevant to illegal wildlife trade. Key aspects of the data collection process and analysis are summarized below.

ASSESSMENT OF FUNDS COMMITTED

Funds in this analysis are ex-ante. They refer to initial commitment of funds and do not track actual expenditure or outcomes achieved. Thus, the analysis does not reflect any changes in project scope or funding after approval, even if components related to illegal wildlife trade were modified, or removed, or if goals were not met.

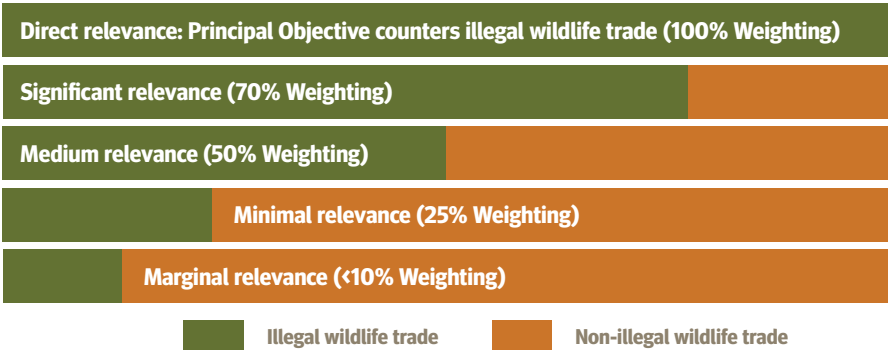
2 One implementing partner contributing data was not able to disclose the name of the donor foundation. This data could potentially represent more than one foundation, hence there are at least 73 donors and potentially more in the global dataset.

Only funding specific to illegal wildlife trade interventions was included. While the entire budget allocation for some projects may be relevant to the analysis, combating illegal wildlife trade frequently features as a smaller component of a project covering other topics.

Funding allocations for 2018–2023 were quantified in one of two ways, depending on the level of data available:

- a. The known amount of funding
- b. An estimate of funding in cases where budget allocations were not known. In these cases, data contributors estimated the proportion of the budget that was relevant to combating illegal wildlife trade, with five levels of weighting applied based on the relevance of the project objective (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Attribution Levels Used to Estimate Illegal Wildlife Trade Budget Amounts



The project approval year was typically used as the year of commitment for all funds, consistent with previous analyses.

All investments were converted to US dollars (US\$) for analysis, and all amounts are reported in US\$.

RECIPIENT TYPES

Recipients of donor investment were categorized for analysis as follows:

1. National government
2. Sub-national or local government
3. National NGO
4. International NGO
5. Intergovernmental organization (IGO)
6. Multiple recipient types (for example, national government, NGO and IGO). For the 2018–2023 data collection, one donor was unable to separate funding across recipient types, resulting in this new reporting category
7. Academic institution and research group
8. Private sector
9. Data not provided. Some donors were unable to specify the recipient type for the 2018–2023 data collection. These gaps were not present in prior analyses.

INTERVENTION CATEGORIES

As in past analyses, six categories were used to define the types of interventions funded:

1. Policy, legislation and regulation
2. Protected and conserved areas management to prevent poaching
3. Efforts to strengthen criminal justice

4. Sustainable, diversified livelihoods to increase community benefits and deter illegal activity
5. Demand reduction and behavior change
6. Research and assessment.

A project could occupy a single category or multiple categories and be allocated against all six if relevant. Expenses were estimated against the different intervention categories when funding allocations were not known. Minor revisions were made to the titles and definitions of the categories for the 2018–2023 data collection period to better guide allocations of investment across the six intervention categories, and to ensure that any funds included in the analysis were entirely or partially directed towards addressing illegal wildlife trade (Table 2).

More specifically:

- The prior communications and awareness category was narrowed to a more specific category on demand reduction and behavior change to more clearly track efforts to stem consumer demand. General communications and awareness raising were included in the research and assessment category unless they specifically applied to communications linked to another category.
- The definition for protected and conserved areas management was tightened to exclude general protected area activities that may not strengthen anti-poaching and trafficking responses.
- The definition for sustainable use and alternative livelihoods was narrowed to only capture livelihood activities that aim to deter poaching or wildlife trafficking.
- The definition and title for law enforcement was broadened to be clear that this category supports the entire criminal justice system.

Data from earlier collection periods was not re-assessed and retains the same split across intervention categories as initially coded. Thus, trends over time should be interpreted with caution.

THEMATIC TAGS

In addition to the six intervention categories, the 2018–2023 data collection phase gathered information on five thematic areas related to illegal wildlife trade. Data contributors were asked to indicate whether interventions were intended to influence any of the following five thematic areas:

1. Transnational organized crime — interventions that address criminality as defined by the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC).³
2. Corruption — interventions that tackle corruption which may facilitate illegal activity along supply chains.
3. Crime convergence — interventions that focus on the relationship between illegal wildlife trade and other types of crime (such as drugs or arms smuggling).
4. Illicit financial flows — interventions that address the illicit profits of illegal wildlife trade including implementation of ‘follow the money’ approaches to target illicit financial flows.
5. One Health and zoonotic diseases — interventions that recognize connections between the health of people, the health of animals, and that of their shared environment, or that address zoonotic spillover risk.

Data contributors were asked to give only positive or negative responses, providing a project-level or intervention-level ‘tag,’ and were not asked to quantify investments against these areas.

³ A structured group of three or more persons, existing for a period of time, and acting together to commit one or more serious crimes as defined by UNTOC to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit from wildlife trafficking.

Table 2. Definitions of Intervention Categories for 2023 Data Collection vs. those for 2016 and 2018

<p>Policy, legislation, and regulation</p> <p>Inter-sectoral policies and regulatory frameworks that incorporate wildlife conservation and management considerations; strengthening laws and customs/trade facilitation processes and makes efforts to prioritize illegal wildlife trade on a national and international level.</p> <p><i>Previous definition: Inter-sectoral policies and regulatory frameworks that incorporate wildlife conservation and management considerations; strengthening laws and customs/trade facilitation processes.</i></p>	<p>Protected and conserved areas management to prevent poaching</p> <p>Improved management of the protected or conserved area in such a way that it can be assumed with a high degree of confidence that this will reduce poaching, illegal removal from the wild, and illegal wildlife trade-related activities in-situ.</p> <p><i>Previous definition: Protection of natural habitats for species; on-the-ground support to protected areas to address poaching (i.e., rangers, equipment etc.); investments to increase community, private, and state reserves and areas surrounding protected forests under land use policies that mitigate wildlife poaching and promote wildlife management best practices.</i></p>
<p>Efforts to strengthen criminal justice</p> <p>Mandated law enforcement agencies, customs, wildlife agencies and prosecution services that are directly involved in apprehending, prosecuting, defending, sentencing, and punishing those who are suspected or convicted of criminal offenses related to wildlife crimes including poaching and illegal wildlife trade.</p> <p><i>Previous definition (law enforcement): Coordination mechanisms and establishment of operational units, intelligence-led operations, and transnational law enforcement coordination to tackle higher-level operatives; increased capacity of customs officials, transportation, and detection technologies.</i></p>	<p>Sustainable, diversified livelihoods to increase community benefits and deter illegal activity</p> <p>Community-based initiatives that seek to tackle poaching and illegal wildlife trade by providing alternative legal livelihoods to those involved in or vulnerable to the illegal supply chain, and to strengthen disincentives for illegal behavior.</p> <p><i>Previous definition: Incentives for communities to live with and manage wildlife and to avoid human-wildlife conflict; income derived from wildlife management in support of sustainable development and integrated natural resource management practices; alternative legal livelihoods to those involved in the illegal supply chain.</i></p>
<p>Demand reduction and behavior change</p> <p>Demand reduction efforts and campaigns to change consumer behavior and reduce demand for the consumption of illegal wildlife products, that focuses on diminishing the purchase of specific wildlife products supported by consumer motivations to ensure efforts are more effective.</p> <p><i>Previous definition (communications and awareness): Outreach and communications efforts to raise awareness and reduce demand across range, transit, and end-use countries; demand reduction efforts and campaigns to increase awareness, change consumer behavior toward consumption of illegal wildlife products, and reduce market participants in the illegal trade.</i></p>	<p>Research and assessment</p> <p>Decision support tools, research, analysis, databases, stakeholder coordination, knowledge management, monitoring and evaluation, geospatial tools, knowledge sharing tools and applications, and communication and outreach related to illegal wildlife trade.</p> <p><i>Previous definition: Decision support tools, research, analysis, databases, stakeholder coordination, knowledge management, and monitoring and evaluation efforts</i></p>

DATA LIMITATIONS

This report analyzes data from three periods (2010–2016, 2017–2018, and 2018–2023), with different donors contributing to each data collection phase. Not all contributors of 2018–2023 data were able to provide data up to June 2023, with two only able to provide data to the end of 2022. Data on illegal wildlife trade-related investment in Latin America was not collected in earlier analyses and was retrospectively gathered where possible in 2023. Thus, the data set is not consistent over the period of analysis, and trends may be artefacts of this data structure.

Further, there are differences in how data were provided, with some donors providing full portfolios directly, and other data provided indirectly via implementing partners. This means that donor data are not always complete, as only partial data on donor portfolios might have been provided by implementing partners.

Quantification of ex-ante funds towards illegal wildlife trade and against the six intervention categories is subjective and relies on the recorder's assessment, experience, and knowledge, as well as the level of detail available in project documentation. While adjustments to intervention category definitions in 2023 were intended to provide greater clarity to those coding data, they have also changed the scope of activities that could be reported against some intervention categories. This is not expected to have a substantial impact, but trends should be carefully interpreted as earlier data were not re-coded against the revised definitions.

Some contributors could not answer all questions about their data (for example, not all donors were able to provide information about the recipient type). Most data contributors used the project approval year as the reference point for all funds committed, consistent with previous analyses. However, some instead reported funding based on the year the intervention was implemented. Due to the way some contributors provided information it was not possible to specify the exact number of interventions or projects in the portfolio. Nor was it always possible to state the average funding per project. Therefore, this portfolio information is not provided in this report.

Finally, this analysis does not offer or intend to provide a comprehensive picture of global funding to combat illegal wildlife trade. Rather, it describes international donor investment in key regions where wildlife trafficking occurs: Africa, Asia, and Latin America. It does not track investment outside of the targeted regions⁴, including in donor's own countries. Data submission was voluntary and does not cover all donors. Further, the analysis does not consider all investment types and does not track investment by national governments (often reported as co-financing against donor investment), as this falls outside its objective to track international donor investment. It also does not consider any other co-financing arrangements, innovative financial mechanisms, or in-kind investments.

⁴ The analysis includes global interventions that broadly aim to combat illegal trade. While the funding for these interventions may include countries beyond Africa, Asia and Latin America, most funding is expected to have been invested in these three regions.





SECTION 2:

Results

Overall Trends in Donor Investment

A high-level overview of donor investment from 2010–2023, providing information and trends on overall investment, donor profiles, target geographies, recipient types, intervention categories, and the consideration of thematic topics related to illegal wildlife trade.

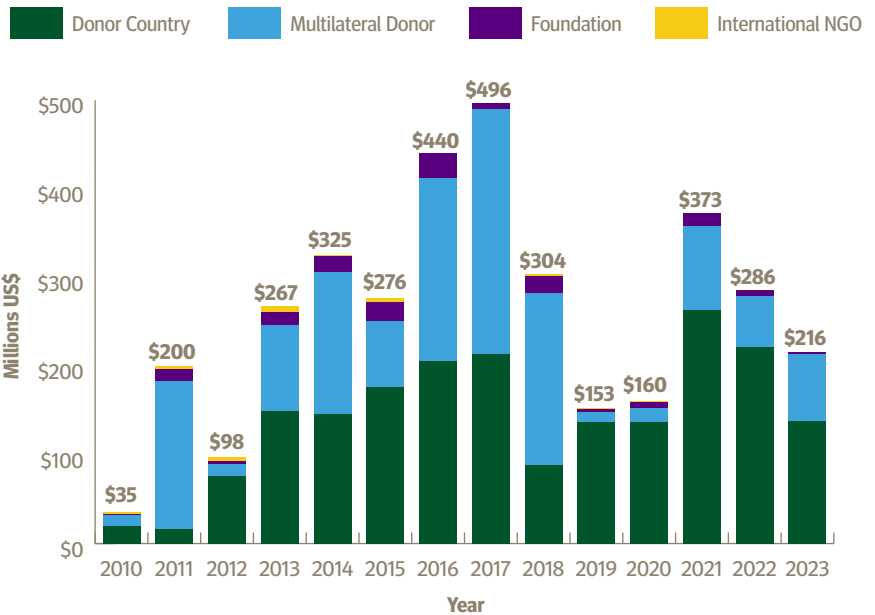
Between 2010–2023, 73 donors invested \$3.63 billion to combat illegal wildlife trade, representing an annual average of \$269 million. Figure 2 shows how donor investment since 2010 has two peaks — the highest in 2017, with \$496 million, and a second peak of \$373 million in 2021. This second peak could be partly driven by the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020, which drew attention to the zoonotic spillover risks of wildlife trade and disrupted enforcement efforts and local livelihoods. The lowest annual investment occurred in the first year of the analysis with \$35 million in 2010, followed by steady growth in donor investment in response to the highly publicized poaching crisis in Africa.

DONOR PROFILE

Most international donor investment in combating illegal wildlife trade comes from donor countries and multilateral donors. Since 2010, donor countries have contributed \$1.99 billion (55%), multilateral donors \$1.45 billion (40%), foundations \$159 million (4%), and international NGOs \$28 million (1%). Much of the observed decline in investment following the 2017 peak results from a reduction in multilateral donor funds. Up to and including the 2017 peak, donor countries and multilaterals both provided 47% of investment. From 2018 onwards, donor countries have provided almost two thirds of investment (66%) compared to 30% from multilaterals.

Five major donors — two countries and three multilaterals — provided almost 91% of funding between 2010–2023: United States, Germany, the European

Figure 2. Donor Investment in Illegal Wildlife Trade by Year and Donor Type (in Millions)



Commission, GEF and the World Bank Group (Figure 3).⁵ These five donors collectively provided almost \$3.3 billion. The United States was the top donor, with 32% (\$1.16 billion) of total commitments, followed by Germany (19%; \$699 million), the European Commission (16%; \$563 million), GEF (15%; \$559 million) and the World Bank Group (8%; \$307 million). These are the same top donors identified in earlier World Bank investment analyses, although the order of the five changed with the emergence of the United States as the top donor over 2010–2023.

Figure 4 highlights relative shifts in the investment of the top five donors over time, using the 2017 investment peak to define two time periods. From 2018–2023, the United States provided nearly half (47%) of donor investment in combating illegal wildlife trade. Driven largely by the increased United States investment, the top five donors contributed 92% of investment from 2018–2023, compared to 90% from 2010–2017. The dominance of these donors was supported by operational settings that prioritized counter wildlife trafficking for funding. Investment trends were also influenced by the timing of budgetary cycles. For example, the European Commission operates on a funding cycle which is renewed every seven years, the most recent of which began in 2021. For GEF, investment in combating illegal wildlife trade is tied to GEF programming cycles and since the GEF-6 cycle, with the associated investment in phases of the Global Wildlife Program (GWP) — the GEF’s flagship program to combat illegal wildlife trade.

Figure 3. Investment of Top Five Donors vs. Investment from All Other Donors (in Millions)

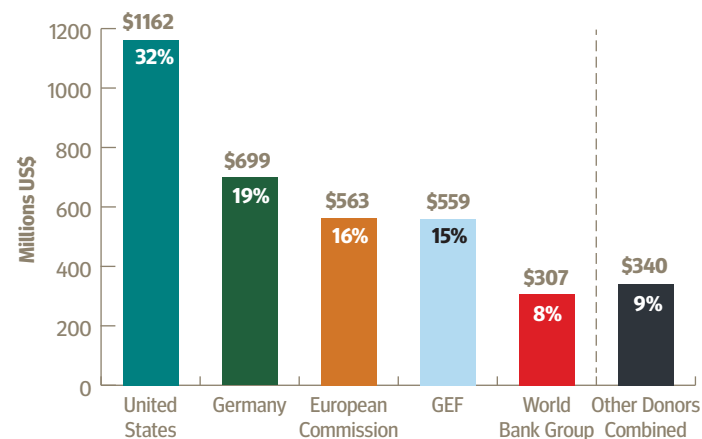
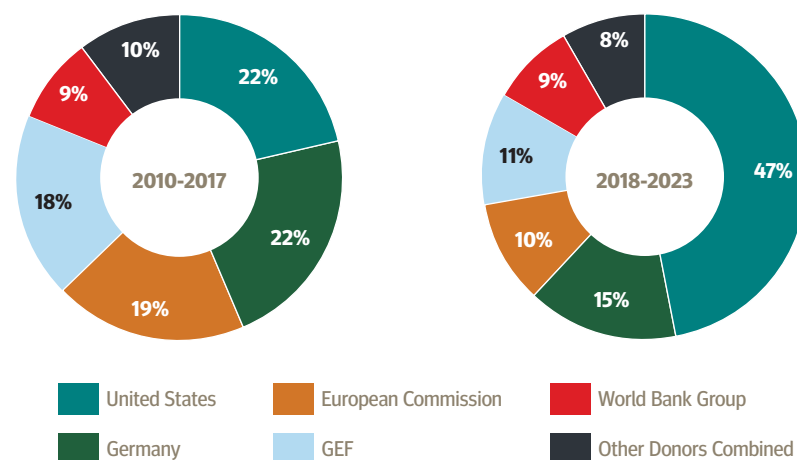


Figure 4. Proportion of Investment by Top Five Donors vs. All Other Donors (2010–2017 vs. 2018–2023)



⁵ The top 10 donors also include the United Kingdom, WildCat Foundation, the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation, United Nations Development Programme, and France.

GEOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

Geographically, most funds have been invested in Africa since 2010, with \$2.16 billion (or 59% of total investment) invested in combating illegal wildlife trade in Africa (Figure 5). This is followed by Asia at \$909 million (25%), with relatively modest investment in Latin America at \$111 million (3%) — assessed for the first time in this analysis and with most funding in the 2018–2023 period. Africa has been the region of highest investment in all years since 2010, ranging from 47% to 80% of annual investment. Investment in global interventions accounted for \$300 million (8%), and cross-regional interventions \$153 million (4%). There is a trend for proportionally less investment in Africa over time (Figure 6), with greater investment in global interventions and the emergence of investment in Latin America.

Figure 7 shows the geographies that have been the largest recipients of international donor funding since 2010. Global investments in combating illegal wildlife trade top the list, receiving \$300 million or 8% of 2010–2023 investment. Global investments have increased in recent years, particularly in 2021 when \$67 million was invested in global interventions, nearing the level of investment in Asia that year. Global investments are followed by multi-country or regional investment in Central Africa, which received \$285 million. Multi-country or regional assessments in multiple sub-regions of Africa (\$180 million), Asia (\$150 million), and Southern Africa (\$104 million) also received high investment, as did cross-regional Africa-Asia investments (\$137 million). Africa-Asia is the most frequent cross-regional investment combination, receiving almost 90% of cross-regional investment. When considering individual countries, the top 10 recipient countries received \$1.18 billion or 32% of investment. The top 10 includes six countries in Africa and four in Asia, with the greatest investment recorded in Tanzania (\$207 million).

Figure 5. Donor Investment by Geography (in Millions)

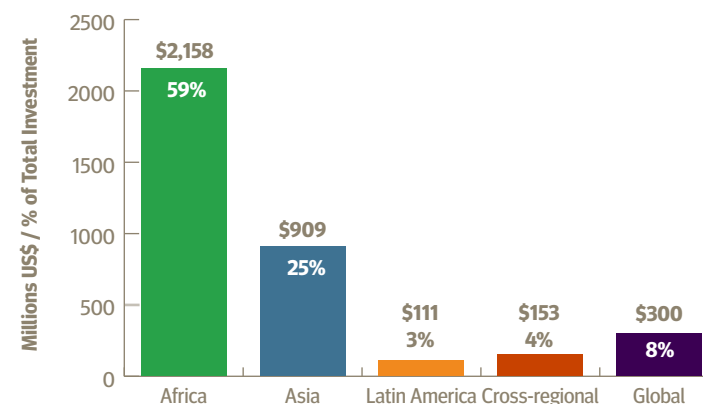
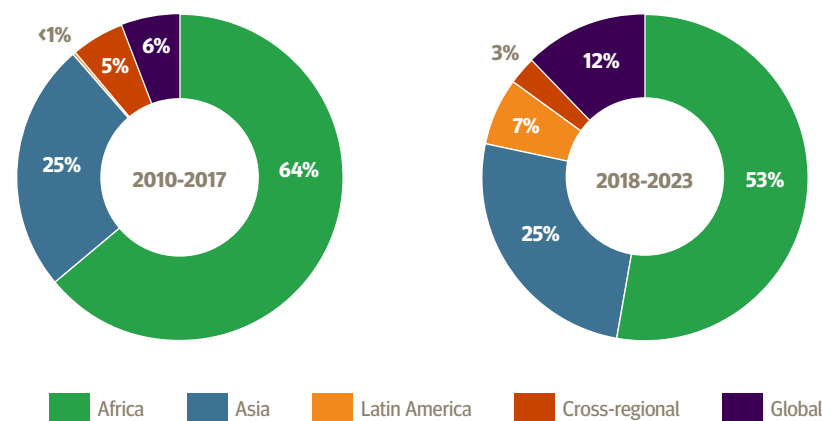
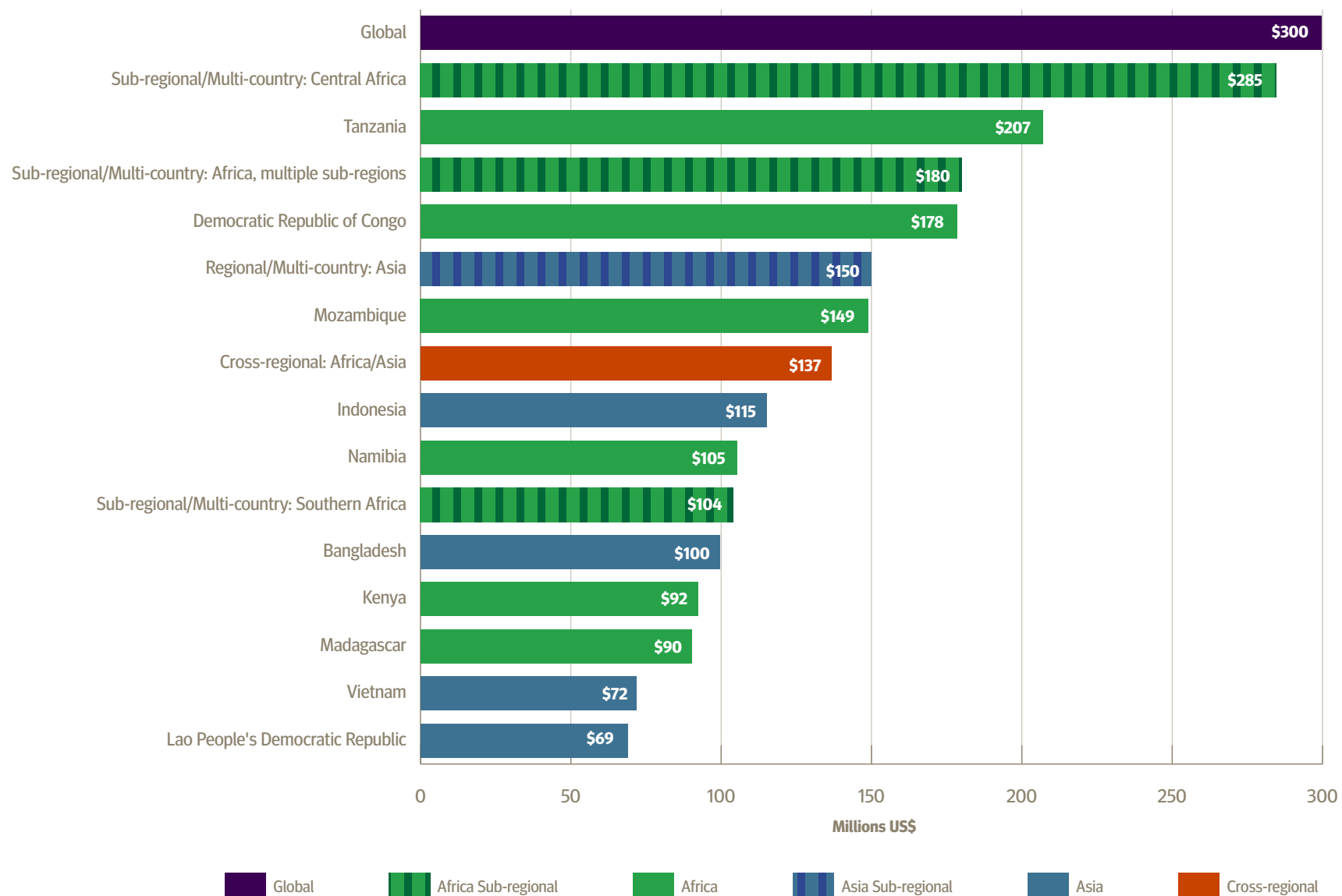


Figure 6. Proportion of Donor Investment by Geography (2010–2017 vs. 2018–2023)



⁶ Latin America data was only collated in the most recent data collection phase, meaning that there are potential gaps in 2010–2017 data.

Figure 7. Donor Investment in Top Geographies: Top 10 Countries and Highest Global and Multi-country Geographies (in Millions)

RECIPIENT TYPES

Figure 8 shows that most funding went to national governments, who received 37% (\$1.34 billion) of funds between 2010–2023. National governments are the top recipient type for multilateral donors and donor countries. They received 45% of multilateral donor investment and 35% of investment from donor countries. The second biggest recipient of donor investment in illegal wildlife trade was international NGOs who received 22% (\$809 million) of investment. Over three quarters of funding (77%) from foundations flowed to international NGOs. These dominant recipient types are followed by IGOs and mixed recipient types,⁷ categories that each received less than 10% of investment. Only small amounts of donor funding have gone directly to recipients from the private sector, academia, or sub-national governments, although these parties may receive funds from the primary recipients of donor investment. Data on recipient type were not provided for 13% (\$456 million) of investment. While data indicates a potential decline in the proportion of funds flowing to national governments as a sole recipient type (for example, the 2016 World Bank analysis reported that 61% of 2010–2016 donor funding was allocated to governments) it is difficult to confirm trends due to gaps and changes in categories of recipient data in the latest collection period.

Regionally, national governments are more likely to receive donor funds in Asia (50% of investment) compared to Africa (37%) and Latin America (35%), as shown in Figure 9. The proportion of investment received by international NGOs is correspondingly higher in Africa (24%) and Latin America (27%) than in Asia (18%). National governments, not surprisingly receive less of the funding allocated to global and cross-regional investments. IGOs are the dominant recipient type for interventions in multiple regions, receiving 30% of global investment and 49% of cross-regional investment.

Importantly, national governments receiving donor funds provide significant investment of their own towards combating illegal wildlife trade. This investment is often counted as co-financing against donor investment. Recipient country investment is not included in this analysis, which is restricted to trends in donor funding. However, a case study on the complementarity of government and donor investment in combating illegal wildlife trade is provided in Box 1.

Figure 8. Donor Investment by Recipient Type and Donor Type (in Millions)

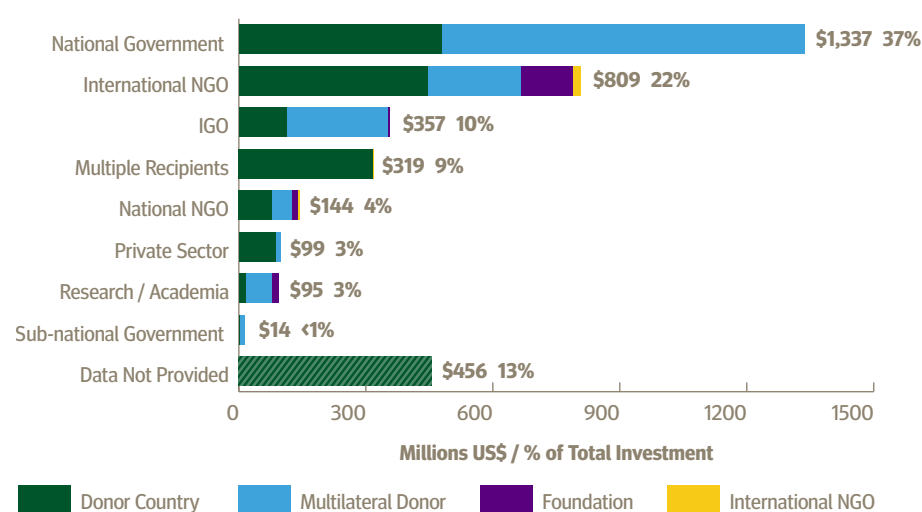
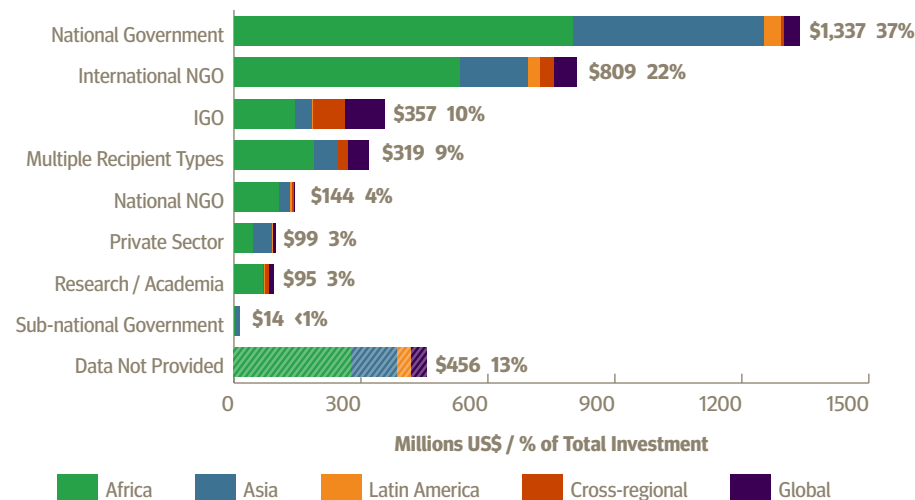


Figure 9. Proportion of Investment to Recipient Types by Geography (in Millions)



⁷ Mixed recipient types applies to projects in which donor funds are shared among multiple recipient types, such as a mix of national government, IGO and national NGO.

BOX

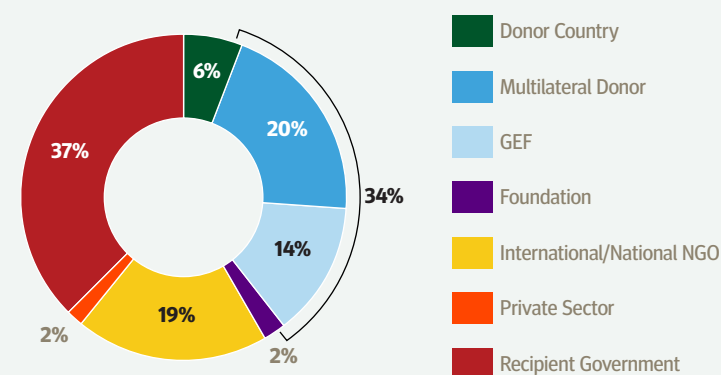
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Global Wildlife Program — an Indicative Assessment of Recipient Government Investment in Combating Illegal Wildlife Trade Alongside International Donor Investment

The financing contributions towards the GEF-funded, World Bank-led GWP show the relative contributions of government investment in combating illegal wildlife trade against that of international donors and other partners. The program encompasses 38 countries from Asia, Africa, and Latin America, each with a national GEF project to strengthen wildlife conservation, including by combating illegal wildlife trade. In line with GEF requirements, co-financing supporting the GEF investment (including from recipient national governments) is identified at the time of project approval, with flexibility to identify additional co-financing during implementation.

Total GWP investment comprises \$359 million of GEF financing and \$2.32 billion of committed co-financing.⁸ Figure 10 shows the relative distribution of the program investment by funding source.⁹ Parallel co-financing from recipient governments represents the largest share of investment, at 37% of committed funds. This is followed by multilateral donors (including GEF financing) at 34%, international and national NGOs (19%), donor countries (6%), and smaller co-financing amounts from foundations and the private sector. All major international donors in combating illegal wildlife trade are represented through their landscape-level interventions at GWP project sites and through complementary cross-regional and global initiatives aligned to the GWP global knowledge platform. A large proportion of multilateral donor co-financing is multilateral development bank loans (mainly World Bank Group) in GWP landscapes, with the GEF funds used as grant financing to mainstream wildlife conservation into broader development interventions. The GEF

Figure 10. GEF Financing and Associated Co-financing Commitments to the Global Wildlife Program



investment acted as a catalyst, attracting further co-financing, and amplifying the overall impact of the program.

This pattern plays out at the national scale for the 38 participating countries, reflecting their economic status, national context and capacities, and the alignment of the GWP project with international donor investments and activities of local partners. GWP investment in two countries is summarized: Thailand (an upper-middle income country) and Ethiopia (a least developed country).

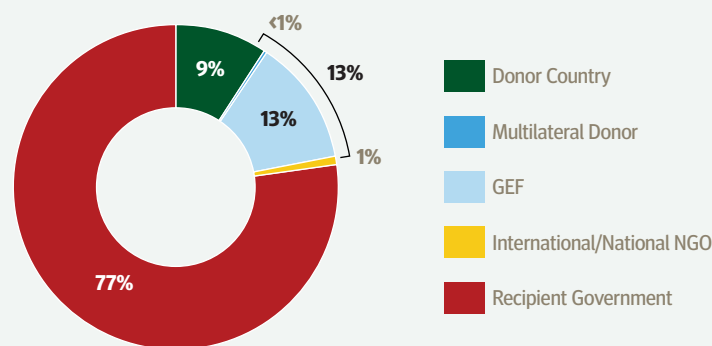
⁸ Co-financing committed at project approval. Committed co-financing is assessed at project mid-term and final evaluations to determine the extent to which co-financing materialized during implementation (including from any additional sources identified during implementation).

⁹ In line with the ex-ante nature of this donor investment analysis, this case study reports GEF investment and co-financing at project approvals (and concept notes for GEF-8), with recoding of GEF co-financing sources as required to match the categories of the donor investment analysis. No effort has been made to identify investments solely to combat illegal wildlife trade and thus the investment reported includes broader wildlife conservation efforts across all GWP outcomes.

THAILAND

Under Thailand's GWP project 'Combating Illegal Wildlife Trade, focusing on Ivory, Rhino Horn, Tiger and Pangolin,' recipient government co-financing was 77% of the \$32 million committed project financing (Figure 11). This co-financing was a baseline investment of the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation in setting and enforcing legal frameworks to combat wildlife trafficking including enhanced regulation of the domestic ivory market, and operation of the Natural Resources and Environment Crime Suppression Division of the Royal Thai Police. This high level of co-financing followed substantial regulatory reforms made by the government under Thailand's CITES National Ivory Action Plan. The GEF funds provided targeted investment to strengthen capacity and operations of the Thai Wildlife Enforcement Network, increase wildlife forensic science capacities, and deploy consumer behavior change campaigns to reduce purchase of illicitly-traded wildlife products. Other co-financers included the United States via the regional USAID Wildlife Asia Program which had a complementary focus on law enforcement and demand reduction.

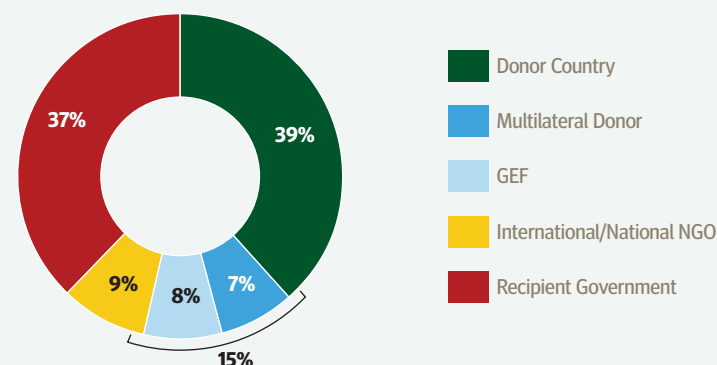
Figure 11. GEF Financing and Associated Co-financing Commitments to GWP Thailand Project



ETHIOPIA

In comparison, Ethiopia's GWP project 'Enhanced Management and Enforcement of Ethiopia's Protected Areas Estate' had recipient government co-financing of 37% of the \$91 million committed (Figure 12). The baseline investment from the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority covered management, infrastructure and operational costs for the protected area network, national legal and law enforcement settings, and community engagement and livelihoods development. Co-financing from the Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute supported the collection and analysis of wildlife monitoring data. Donor country and multilateral donor investment (including GEF funds) made up over half of the committed project financing. The GEF funds were used to build government capacity for wildlife law enforcement and protected area management, including targeted efforts in five protected areas threatened by poaching. The diverse mix of co-financers included Germany (via the KfW Biodiversity Programme and GIZ Protected Areas Programme) and the European Commission (via the Intergovernmental Authority on Development Biodiversity Programme and Horn of Africa Regional Law Enforcement Centre) who invested in protected area management and infrastructure, and United Kingdom (via Defra) who invested in the criminal justice system.

Figure 12. GEF Financing and Associated Co-financing Commitments to GWP Ethiopia Project



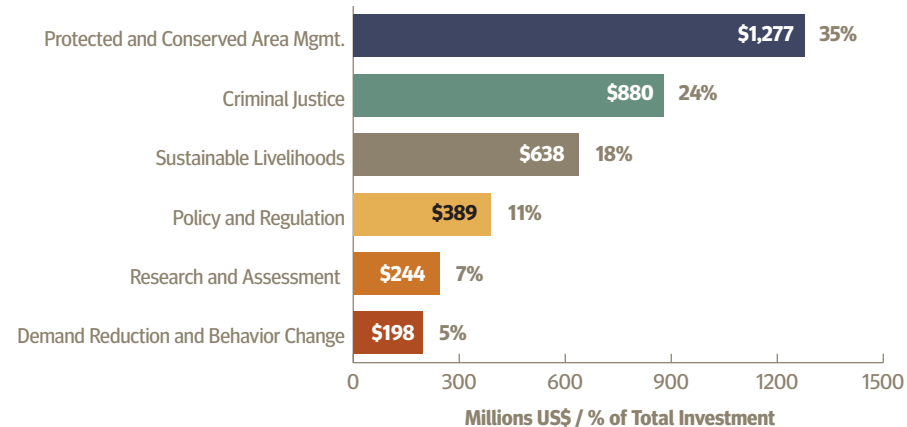
INTERVENTION CATEGORIES

Over 2010–2023, most funds were invested in protected and conserved areas management, which accounted for over a third of total funding or \$1.27 billion (Figure 13). The second highest investment went to criminal justice system strengthening, which received 24% of investment (\$880 million). This was followed by investment in sustainable livelihoods diversification (18%; \$638 million), policy and regulatory reform (11%; \$389 million), research and assessment (7%; \$244 million), and demand reduction (5%; \$198 million). Matching prior analyses, demand reduction remains the intervention category of lowest investment.

Investment in these intervention categories has varied over time. Figure 14 shows annual investment in each intervention category and Figure 15 compares investment up to and including the global investment peak (2010–2017) with that following the peak (2018–2023). Notably, funding for protected and conserved areas management appears to have slowed in recent years and has been replaced by increasing investment in criminal justice. In 2011, 2013 and 2014, over half of annual investment went to protected areas management. Protected area interventions received 41% of investment from 2010–2017 but declined to 27% of investment for 2018–2023.¹⁰ Conversely, investment in law enforcement and criminal justice, which comprised 19% of 2010–2017 investment, rose to 31% following the 2017 investment peak. In every year since 2018, strengthening of criminal justice systems has received more investment than protected and conserved areas management.

Trends also indicate a moderate increase in policy-related interventions and a decline in sustainable livelihoods investment. For example, policy and regulation represented 9% of investment from 2010–2017, growing to 13% from 2018 onwards. In comparison, sustainable livelihoods interventions comprised 19% of investment until the 2017 peak, dropping to 16% thereafter. Investment in research and assessment has been relatively consistent, in most years falling well below 10% of annual investment. Demand reduction and behavior change has typically accounted for 5–6% of annual investment, with only a minor proportional increase

Figure 13. Donor Investment by Intervention Category (in Millions)

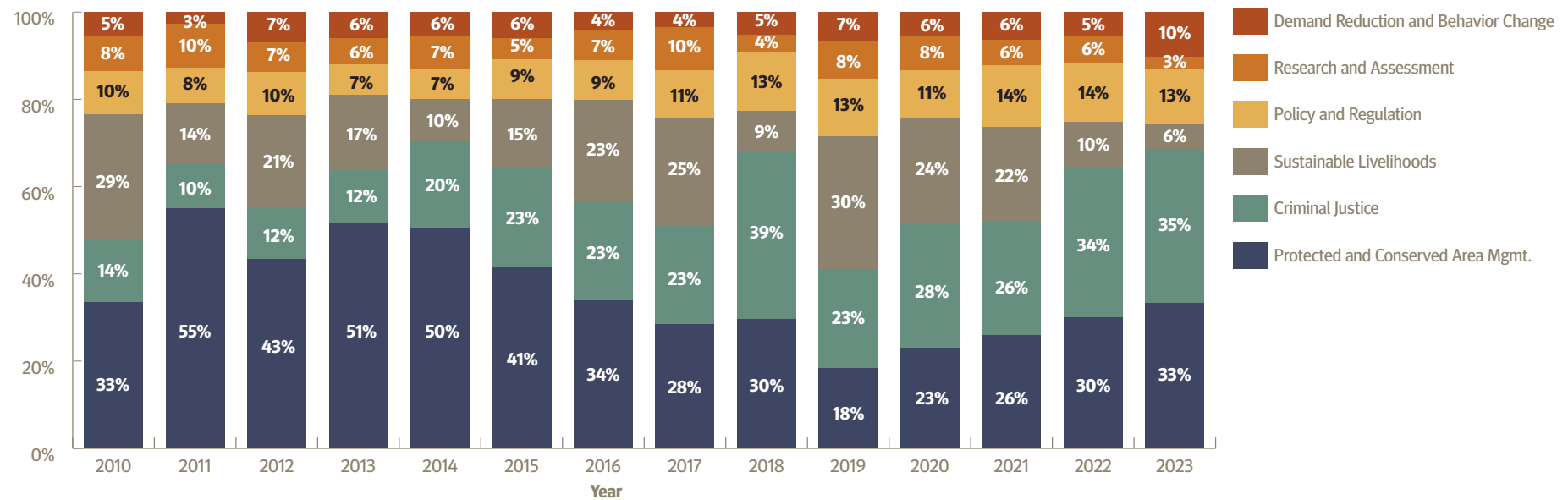
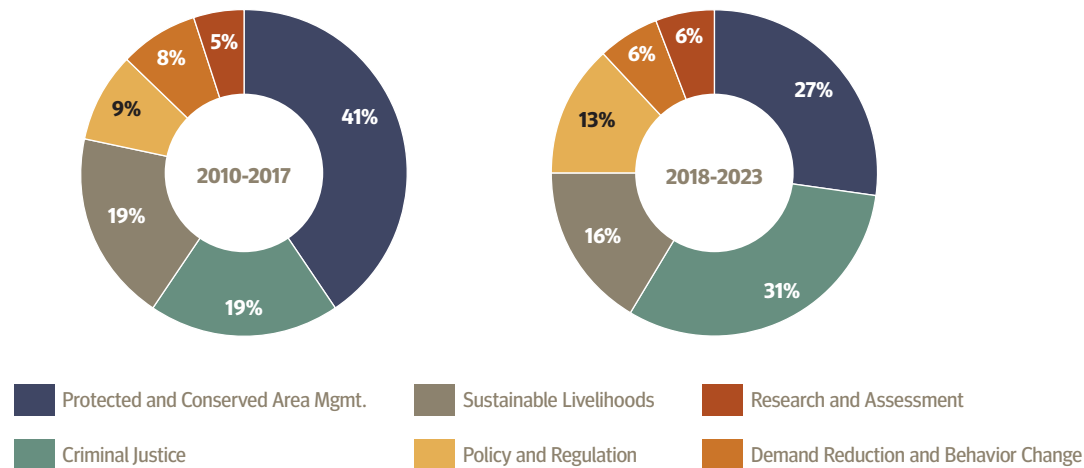


Funding does not total the full investment amount as around \$4 million of donor data was provided without intervention categories.

over time. This category was narrowed to only encompass demand reduction, improving clarity on the actual investment in demand reduction (vs. more general awareness raising) and confirming that investment remains low despite the increased profile and growing promotion of social and behavior change approaches.

There are no clear signs that COVID-19 influenced investment in intervention categories. There is a slight relative increase in protected area management in 2022 and 2023 that could be responding to disruptions to site-based enforcement and patrolling during the pandemic; however, this increase does not extend to diversifying sustainable livelihoods, which were also disrupted as travel and tourism ceased. Data for 2023 shows demand reduction at an all-time high of 10% of investment. This may be linked to rising awareness of the health risks of some illicit wildlife markets, although there are not enough data to identify trends.

¹⁰ This declining trend could also reflect the tightened definition for protected and conserved area management applied in the latest data collection phase for 2018–2023.

Figure 14. Proportion of Donor Investment in Intervention Categories by Year**Figure 15.** Proportion of Donor Investment by Intervention Category (2010–2017 vs. 2018–2023)

INVESTMENT IN THEMATIC AREAS

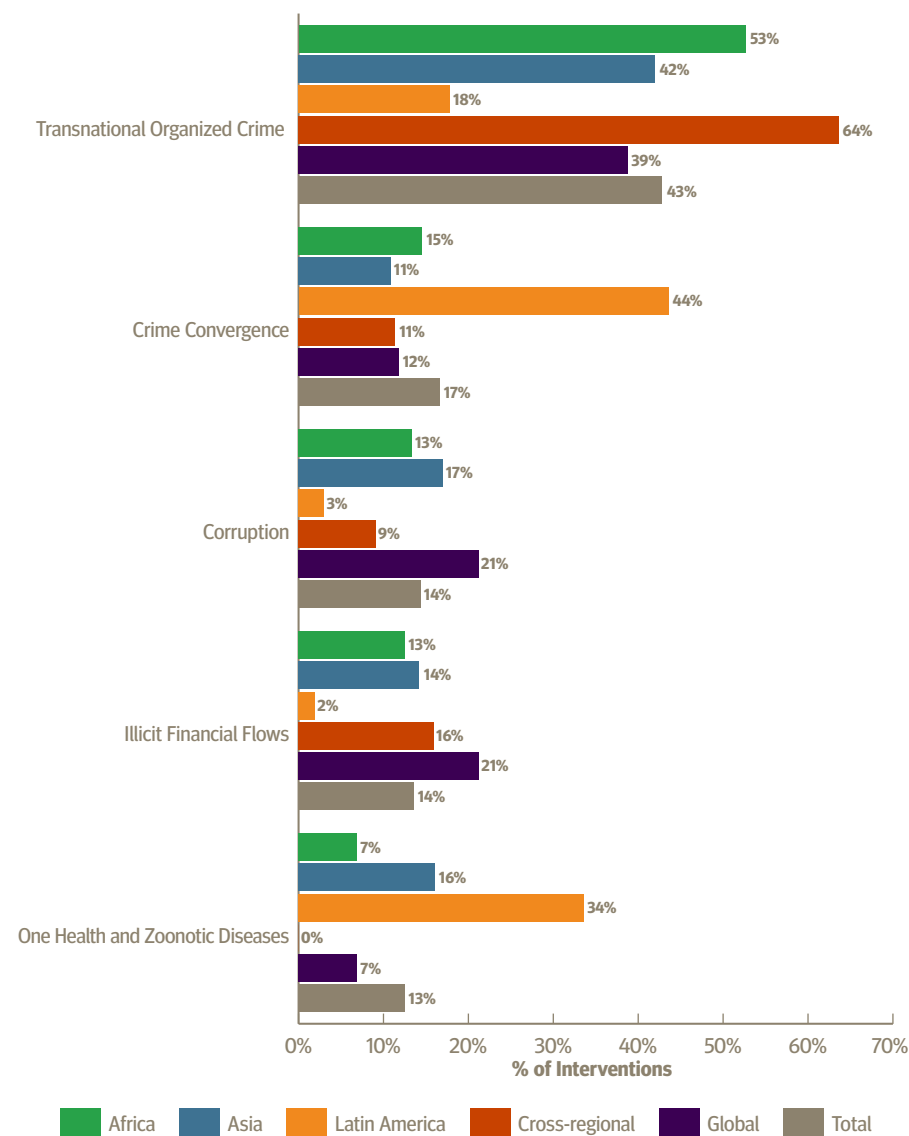
Figure 16 shows the proportion of 2018–2023 interventions that were ‘tagged’ against five thematic areas. Transnational organized crime was the top theme in interventions (43% of 2018–2023 interventions). This was followed by crime convergence (17%), corruption (14%), illicit financial flows (14%), and One Health and zoonotic diseases (13%). The focus on transnational organized crime aligns with the general recognition that many aspects of wildlife trafficking meet the definition of organized crime under UNTOC.

Geographically, transnational organized crime has been most frequently covered in cross-regional interventions and in Africa, with 64% and 53% of interventions tagged respectively. This is not surprising given that many cross-regional interventions have tried to disrupt Africa-Asia trafficking chains that are frequently used by transnational organized criminal networks. Further, while the UNTOC definition of transnational organized crime is broad, research shows that organized criminal activity may begin at the source of the supply chain, with professional poachers, often non-locals, targeting high-value species as part of wider poaching networks (UNODC, 2024). Examples include poaching of elephants and rhinoceros in Africa, where protected area managers may need to combat organized crime inside their reserves and throughout the illegal supply chain.

The second highest tagged theme was crime convergence, which was most frequently tagged in Latin America (44% of interventions). The region also had the highest number of tags, which is notable as Latin America received only 3% of donor investment since 2010. Growing research on convergence shows that wildlife trafficking increasingly uses the extensive resources and networks of partner criminal organizations, and that this can drastically alter market dynamics and exacerbate wildlife crime (UNODC, 2024).

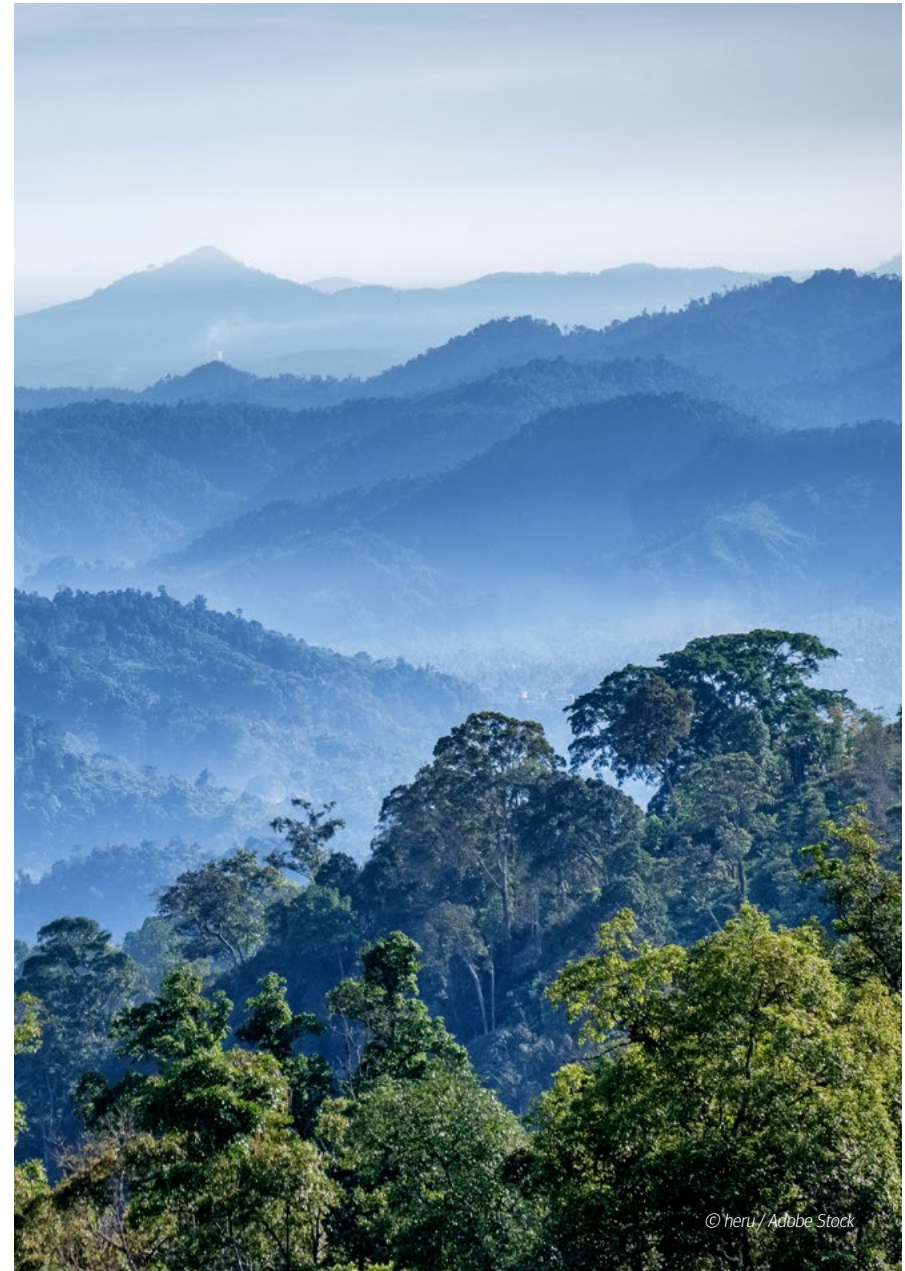
Corruption and illicit financial flows were each tagged for only 14% of interventions despite their critical role fueling illegal wildlife trade and undermining efforts to disrupt and deter trafficking. Tagging was particularly low in Latin America, with only 3% and 2% of interventions for corruption and financial crimes respectively. The data shows that donor attention to prevent corruption and financial crimes remains

Figure 16. Proportion of Interventions Tagged per Thematic Category by Geography (2018–2023 Only)



relatively low, despite the increasing recognition of the connection of these crimes, and the generally low national capacities to combat them. For example, case evidence shows that prosecution of traffickers under corruption laws is uncommon, even though they cater for strong investigative powers and potentially high penalties (UNODC, 2024). Similarly, in 2020, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) reported that many jurisdictions do not police illegal wildlife trade financial flows in accordance with the risks they present. This leaves jurisdictions vulnerable and allows illegal wildlife trade and its underpinning illicit financial networks to persist.

Finally, One Health and zoonotic diseases was the least-tagged intervention theme, accounting for 13% of interventions. This topic only became prominent with the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Latin America (34%) and Asia (16%) reported more tagging against this theme than Africa (7%). This could reflect the dynamics of illegal trade in these regions and higher risks of pathogen spillover arising from the presence of large illegal wet markets, illegal trade in certain taxonomic groups, and live animals in illegal trade.





Geographical Deep Dives

2010–2023 donor funding profiles for the five geographies explored in this analysis:



Africa

34



Asia

42



Latin America and the Caribbean

53



Cross-Regional and Global Investment

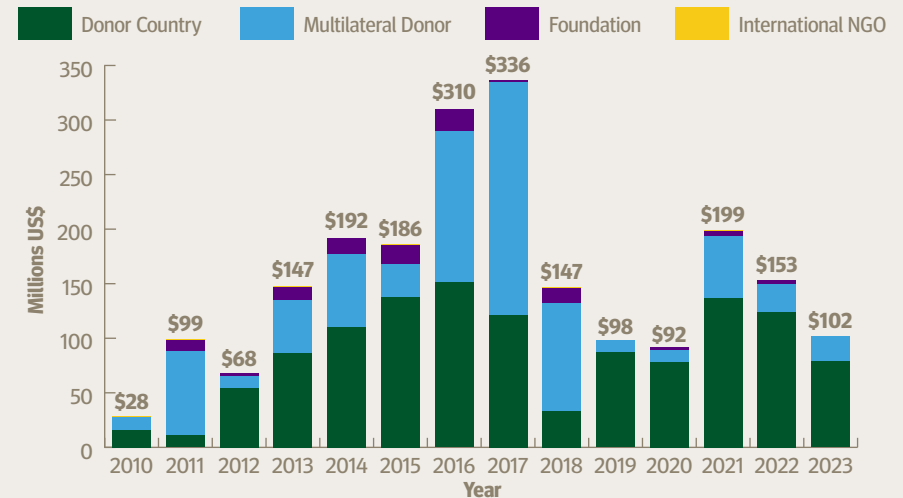
59



Africa

Africa had the most donor funding of the three regions assessed in this report, receiving \$2.16 billion (59% of investment). Overall, the average annual investment for Africa for 2010–2023 was \$160 million. Matching the global trend, Africa received the largest investment (\$336 million) in 2017 (Figure 17).

Figure 17. Donor Investment in Africa by Donor Type and Year (in Millions)



Forty-three donors helped to combat illegal wildlife trade in Africa, comprising 10 donor countries, six multilaterals, 19 foundations and eight international NGOs. Investment has steadily declined since the 2017 peak, largely due to reduced investment from multilateral donors. For example, multilateral investment exceeded \$213 million in 2017, dropping to \$99 million in 2018, \$11 million in 2019, and staying relatively low thereafter.

Reflecting the global situation, the top five donors globally were the major donors for Africa. The United States provided 32% of investment (\$689 million) since 2010, followed by Germany with 22% (\$468 million), the European Commission



with 18% (\$383 million), GEF with 13% (\$281 million), and the World Bank Group with 7% (\$153 million). Collectively, these donors provided 92% of investment in combating illegal wildlife trade in Africa.

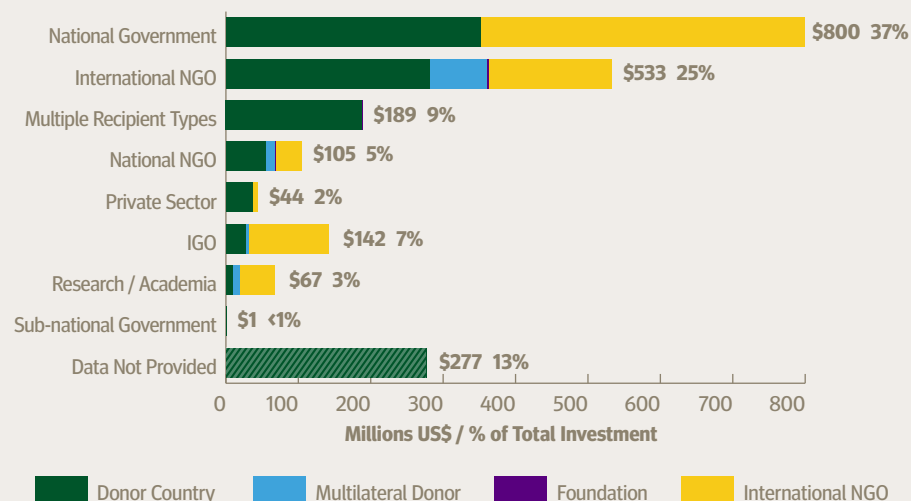
RECIPIENT TYPES

National governments in Africa were the primary recipients of donor funds, receiving 37% (\$800 million) of investment since 2010 (Figure 18). Almost all funding to recipient governments has come from multilateral donors and donor countries (except for a minor contribution of \$340,000 from a foundation). National governments received 55% of multilateral and 29% of donor country investment. International NGOs were the second highest recipient type for donor funding, receiving 25% (\$533 million) of investment. This was the highest recipient type for investment from foundations, receiving 74% of their investment. As noted above, very little (<1%) international NGO investment was directly provided to national government recipients. Data on recipient type was not provided for 13% of investment.

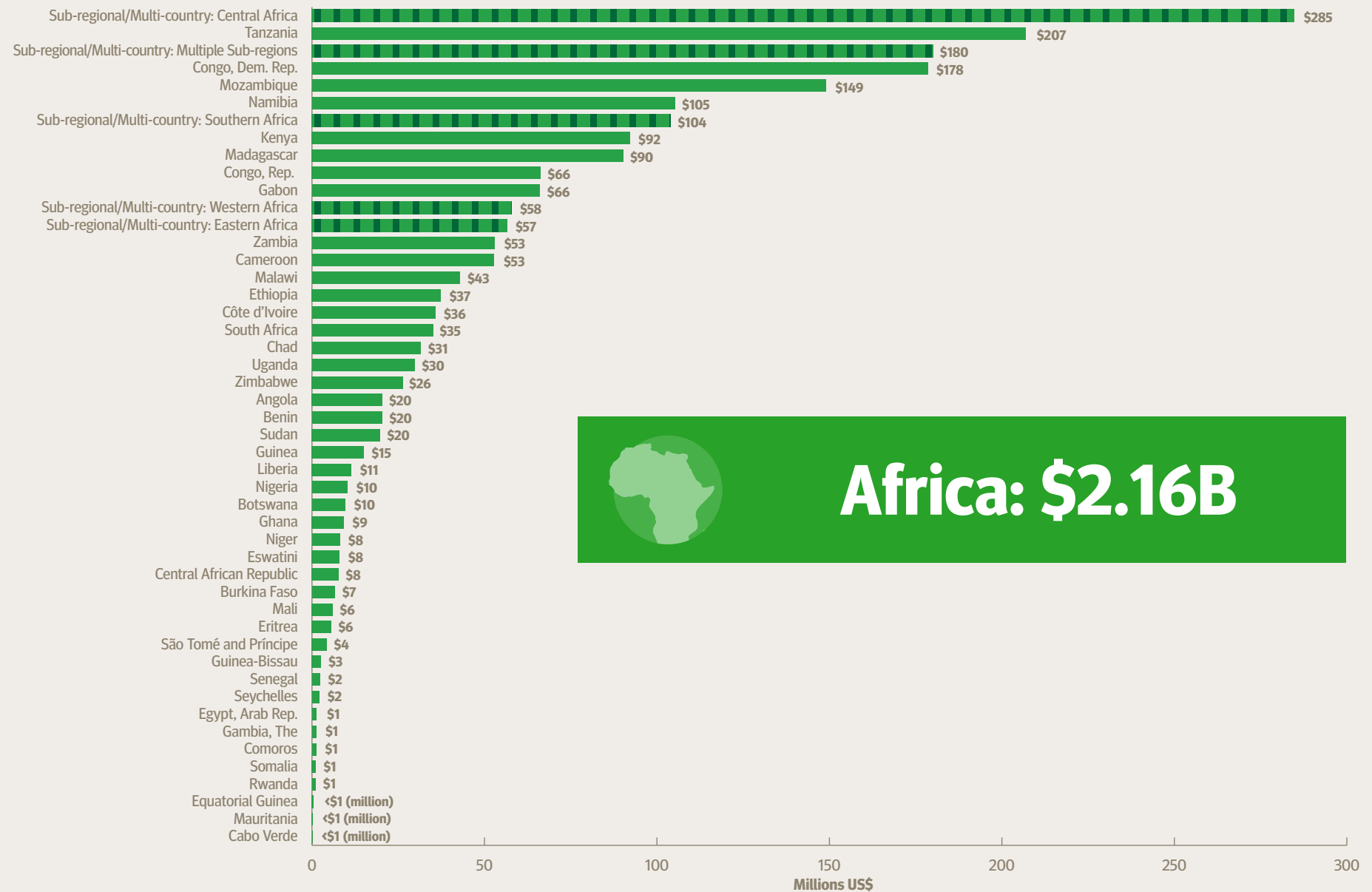
GEOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

Investment was made in 43 countries and across four sub-regions (Central, Eastern, Southern and Western Africa) (Figure 19). Since 2010, 10 geographic areas have accounted for 64% of investment (\$1.38 billion). The largest investment was in sub-regional or multi-country investment in Central Africa, which received 13% of investment (\$285 million). This is followed by Tanzania, investment across multiple sub-regions, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Namibia, southern Africa, Kenya, Madagascar, and the Republic of Congo. The remaining 36% of investment in Africa went to 37 countries and two sub-regions (Western and Eastern Africa). The concentration of donor funding across sub-Saharan Africa, with relatively limited investment in northern Africa, mirrors the identified high-crime areas based on illegal trade data.¹¹ For example, the latest UNODC analysis reports that during 2015–2021, Africa had the most seizures of illegally-traded products, with sub-Saharan Africa accounting for 19% of global seizures according to the aggregated standardized seizure index.

Figure 18. Donor Investment in Africa by Recipient Type and Donor Type (in Millions)



¹¹ Challenges of using seizures to identify high-crime areas have been well-recognized. For example, seizures are influenced by changes in enforcement levels, so increasing or decreasing seizures do not necessarily reflect a shift in the occurrence of illegal wildlife trade. More than half of seizures in the dataset did not have a location.

**Figure 19. Donor Investment in Africa by Geography (in Millions)**



INTERVENTION CATEGORIES

Mirroring the global trend, protected and conserved area management was the intervention of highest investment in Africa, with 41% of donor investment (\$878 million) allocated to this category (Figure 20). This proportion is higher than the global average of 35%, Asia's 37% and Latin America's 18%. The second highest funded intervention category in Africa is sustainable livelihoods, receiving 22% of investment (\$464 million). This was followed by criminal justice (21%; \$448 million), policy and regulation (8%; \$174 million), and research and assessment (6%; \$121 million). Demand reduction and behavior change received the least investment at 3% (\$69 million).

Trends in investment before and after the 2017 investment peak are shown in Figure 21. The Africa data reflects the trends observed globally — a reduction in protected area management over time (44% from 2010–2017, dropping to 35% from 2018), displaced by an increase in criminal justice interventions (17% rising to 28%). Investment in protected area management peaked in 2016 at \$127 million. Investment in sustainable livelihoods has remained relatively stable. Diversifying economic opportunities for communities that live within and around protected areas forms a critical part of many site-based anti-poaching interventions across Africa (for example, see Boxes 2 and 3).

There is considerable variation across intervention categories in individual countries in Africa (Figure 21), reflecting their specific context for illegal wildlife trade as well as the alignment of donor and national priorities. Investment patterns can differ substantially even between neighboring countries. For example, almost 60% of investment in Mozambique has supported protected area management (see Box 3), while this has been a more modest 35% of investment in neighboring South Africa. In comparison, the greatest investment in South Africa has been in strengthening criminal justice, which received 43% of investment compared to only 14% of investment in Mozambique.

Figure 20. Donor Investment in Africa by Intervention Category (in Millions)

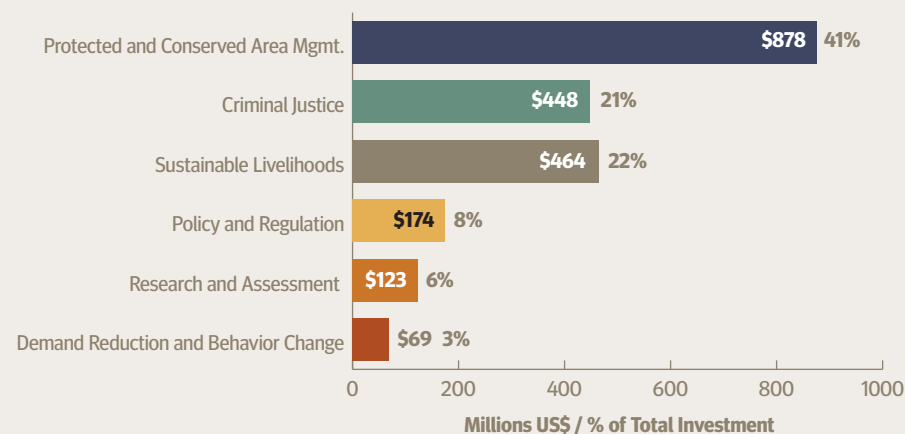
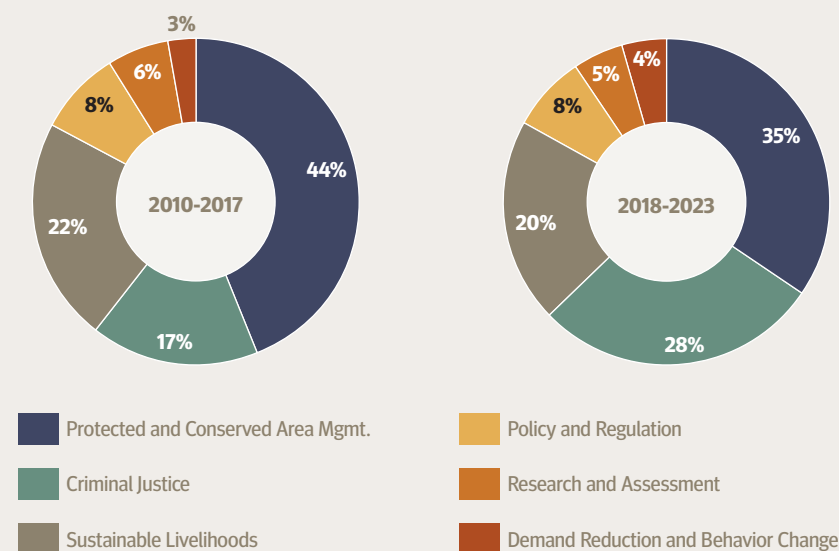


Figure 21. Proportion of Donor Investment in Africa by Intervention Category (2010–2017 vs. 2018–2023)





BOX

2

Intervention Spotlight — Diversifying Economic Opportunities for Communities in West Africa to Prevent Poaching

Project Title: Creation of Alternative Income-Generating Activities for Communities Living Around the W-Arly-Pendjari Complex (Création d'activités génératrices de revenu alternatives pour les communautés vivant autour du complexe W-Arly-Pendjari)

Intervention Category: Sustainable Livelihoods

Lead Recipient: International Trade Center

Donor: European Commission

The W-Arly-Pendjari complex is a protected area spanning three West African countries — Benin, Burkina Faso, and Niger — recognized for its rich biodiversity, including elephants, lions, and other wildlife. Launched in 2022, this project is strengthening local livelihoods for communities living around the W-Arly-Pendjari complex to provide viable economic alternatives to reduce reliance on activities such as poaching or unsustainable agriculture. The project has been developing income-generating activities such as sustainable organic cotton farming, eco-tourism, and artisanal crafts, helping increase and diversify sources of income. Skills and competitiveness of local communities have been built through workshops, hands-on training, and partnerships with local cooperatives or NGOs. By providing sustainable income sources that reduce dependency on wildlife, the project contributes to decreased poaching and human-wildlife conflict.



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BOX

3

Intervention Spotlight — Preventing Poaching Through Protected and Conserved Area Management in Mozambique

Project Title: Mozambique Conservation Areas for Biodiversity and Development — Phase 2 (MozBio2)

Intervention Category: Protected and Conserved Area Management

Lead Recipients: National Administration of Conservation Areas, Ministry of Land, Environment and Rural Development, Foundation for Biodiversity Conservation (BIOFUND), Ministry of Economy and Finance

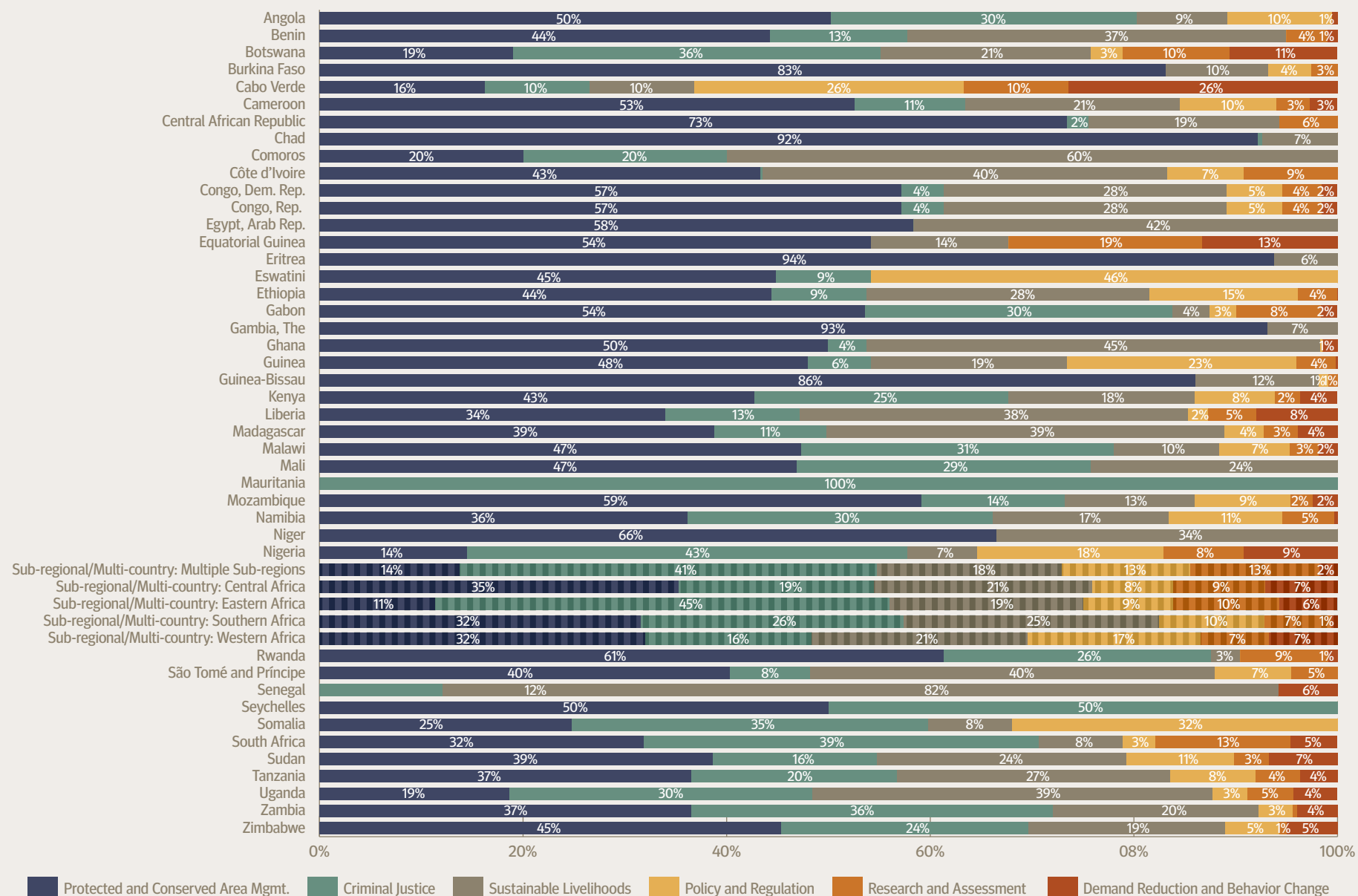
Donor: World Bank

Building on [phase 1](#), the second phase of the [conservation areas for biodiversity and development initiative](#), ‘MozBio2’, aimed to improve the management of key conservation landscapes in Maputo National Park, Chimanimani National Park, and Marrromeu National Reserve, as well as enhance the living conditions of adjacent communities. Project activities have enhanced institutional capacities to combat illegal wildlife trade and meet CITES obligations, including through establishment of a CITES e-permitting system; enhanced protected area infrastructure including construction of a training center and visitor facilities for nature-based tourism; secured long-term co-management agreements with technical partners for each site; and enhanced community engagement. Initiatives with communities led to the establishment and support of the Futhi Community Conservation

Concession, the Nhabawa Community Conservation Area, and the Djabula Community Conservation Area. The project has worked closely with local communities to promote conservation-compatible development, with over 43,000 beneficiaries receiving livelihood diversification support. As a result, protected areas have seen improved management effectiveness, wildlife populations in target landscapes are stable or increasing, and local communities have more positive perceptions of conservation and its contribution towards wellbeing.



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**Figure 22.** Proportion of Donor Investment in Africa by Intervention Category and Geography

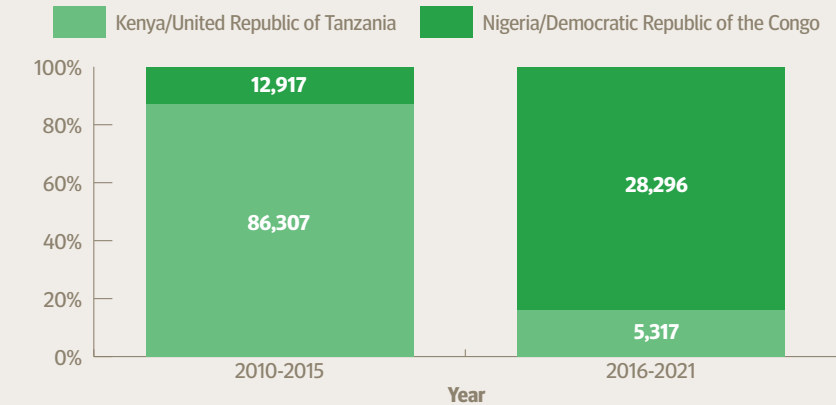
ALIGNING DONOR INVESTMENT WITH ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE TRENDS — THE CASE OF GEOGRAPHIC DISPLACEMENT

On a regional level, elephant poaching has declined over the last decade across Africa and a similar decline is observed for ivory seizures (UNODC, 2024). Geographic shifts in poaching across Africa have also been observed. Since most trafficked species can be sourced and smuggled from multiple countries, strengthened enforcement and greater risk of penalties in one country can lead traffickers to shift operations to others. To minimize the risk of getting caught, they also alter shipment routes to avoid detection.

The poaching of elephants appears to have shifted from Eastern Africa to Central and West Africa in recent years. For example, as shown in Figure 23, the weight of elephant ivory shipments either detected in or originating from Kenya and Tanzania has declined over time, with a corresponding increase in shipments detected in Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of Congo. This geographic displacement of poaching followed the prosecution of high-profile traffickers in Kenya and Tanzania (CITES, 2018). Similar patterns are observed in other illegally traded species. Like ivory, exports of African pangolins have shifted to Nigeria, with one study reporting over 190,000 kg of pangolin specimens seized in Nigeria from 2010–2021 (Emogor et al., 2021).

Donor investment in these countries is shown in Figure 24, indicating no overall correlation with trafficking trends and displacement observed. Tanzania was the top-funded country globally (\$207 million from 2010–2023, representing 10% of Africa’s investment). Rising investment from 2013–2017 was followed by lower levels of funding, aligning to the pattern of geographic displacement observed. Figure 25 shows that the focus of investment in Tanzania largely mirrors the global pattern and has covered all intervention categories. Most investment has been in protected area management (37%), followed by building sustainable livelihoods for local communities (27%), which has received higher relative investment than the global and Africa averages. However, in comparison, donor investment in Kenya has been comparatively low (4%; \$92 million), with no pattern of reduced investment due to geographic displacement.

Figure 23. Percentage Share and Weight (in kg) of Ivory Seized from Kenya and Tanzania Compared to those Seized from Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of Congo, 2010-2015 and 2016-2021



Source: UNODC, 2024

The Democratic Republic of Congo saw the second highest investment in Africa (8%; \$178 million), but most of this investment was committed prior to 2016 before the geographic displacement reported above. Investment in Nigeria has been low and has not increased despite the increasing attention on Nigeria as a source and transit state for illegally traded wildlife. The 2024 World Wildlife Crime report indicates Nigeria’s clear emerging role from 2018 and perhaps earlier. By 2020, Nigeria was identified as a Focus Country in a report to the US Congress on major wildlife trafficking countries (US Department of State, 2020). Despite this increasing recognition, Nigeria appears to have received little donor investment.¹² Across 2010–2023, this analysis recorded only \$10 million of donor investment in combating illegal wildlife trade in Nigeria — less than 1% of donor investment in Africa and 0.3% of global investment. Over \$9 million of this was recorded in 2021–2022, with very little investment over the period in which Nigeria was regarded an area of increasing concern. Despite limited donor investment, interventions in Nigeria appear to have recognized the broader threats and context of its role in trafficking, and have addressed transnational organized crime, corruption, and illicit financial flows.

¹² Importantly, this analysis does not assess the level of enhanced government response over this time or technical support provided to the government to strengthen responses and build government capacities.



Figure 24. Donor Investment in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Nigeria and Tanzania by Year (in Millions)

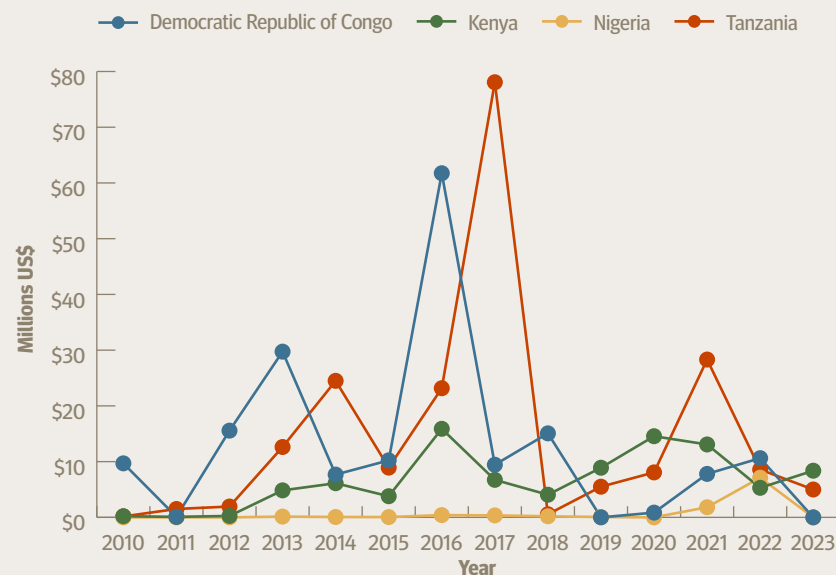
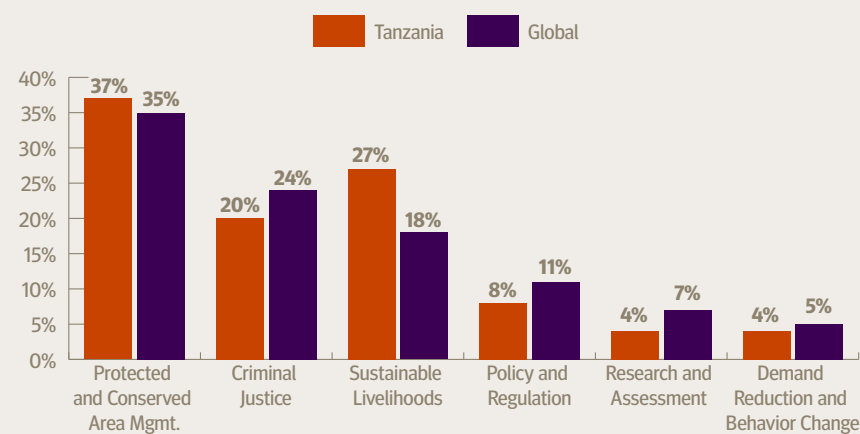


Figure 25. Proportion of Donor Investment in Tanzania by Intervention Category vs. Global Average



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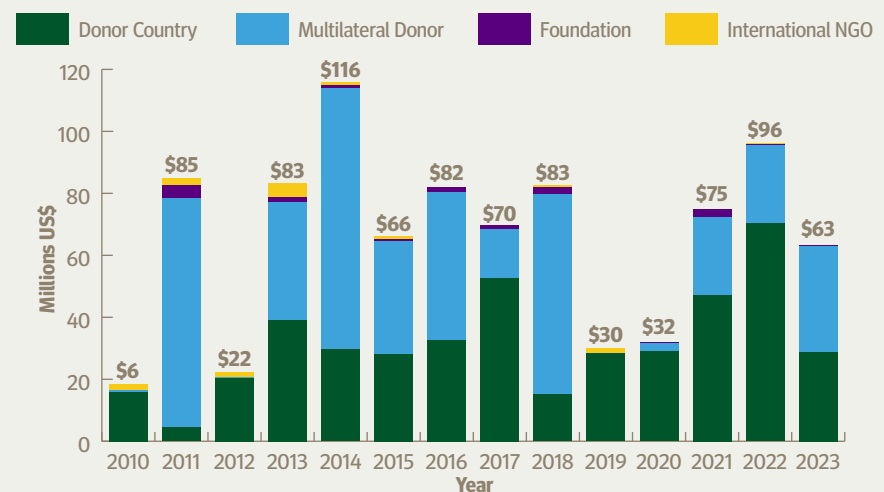
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Asia

Asia was the second highest region of donor investment in combating illegal wildlife trade, receiving 25% (\$909 million) of investment. The average annual investment from 2010–2023 was \$63 million, around 40% of the annual investment in Africa. Asia recorded its highest investment of \$116 million in 2014, peaking slightly earlier than global (and African) investment in 2017.

Fifty-two donors contributed to combating illegal wildlife trade in Asia, comprising eight donor countries, six multilaterals, 28 foundations and 10 international NGOs. In contrast with Africa, investment from multilateral donors exceeds that of donor countries in Asia. Between 2010–2023, multilateral donors invested \$449 million (49% of investment) across the region. Donor countries invested \$430 million (47%), with minor contributions from foundations (\$16 million; <2%) and international NGOs (\$15 million; <2%). Annual investment by donor type is shown in Figure 26.

Figure 26. Donor Investment in Asia by Donor Type and Year (in Millions)





The five top donors globally are also the donors of greatest investment in Asia, although in a different order. Investment is again led by the United States, with \$264 million (29% of investment). This is followed by GEF as the second biggest donor in Asia at \$226 million (25%), the World Bank Group at \$148 million (16%), Germany at \$135 million (15%), and the European Commission at \$55 million (6%). These five donors collectively provided 91% (\$829 million) of donor investment since 2010.

RECIPIENT TYPES

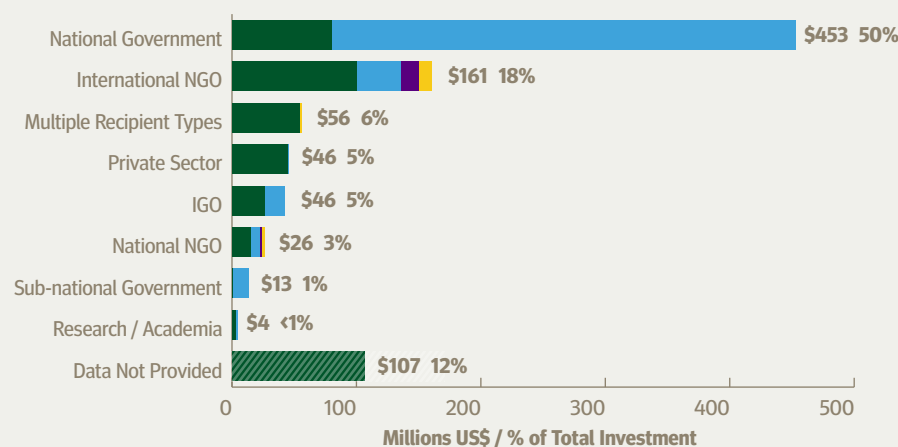
National governments were again the main recipient type, receiving \$453 million or 50% of investment (Figure 27). Asia had the highest proportion of funds flowing to national governments across all regions. National governments received the majority (83%) multilateral donor investment. In comparison, they received only 19% of donor country investment. The top recipient type for donor countries was international NGOs, who received 23% of donor country investment. International NGOs were the second highest recipient type in Asia, receiving 18% of investment (\$161 million). Data were not provided for 12% (\$107 million) of investment. Multiple recipient types represented 6% (\$56 million) of investment and all other recipient types received small investments.

GEOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

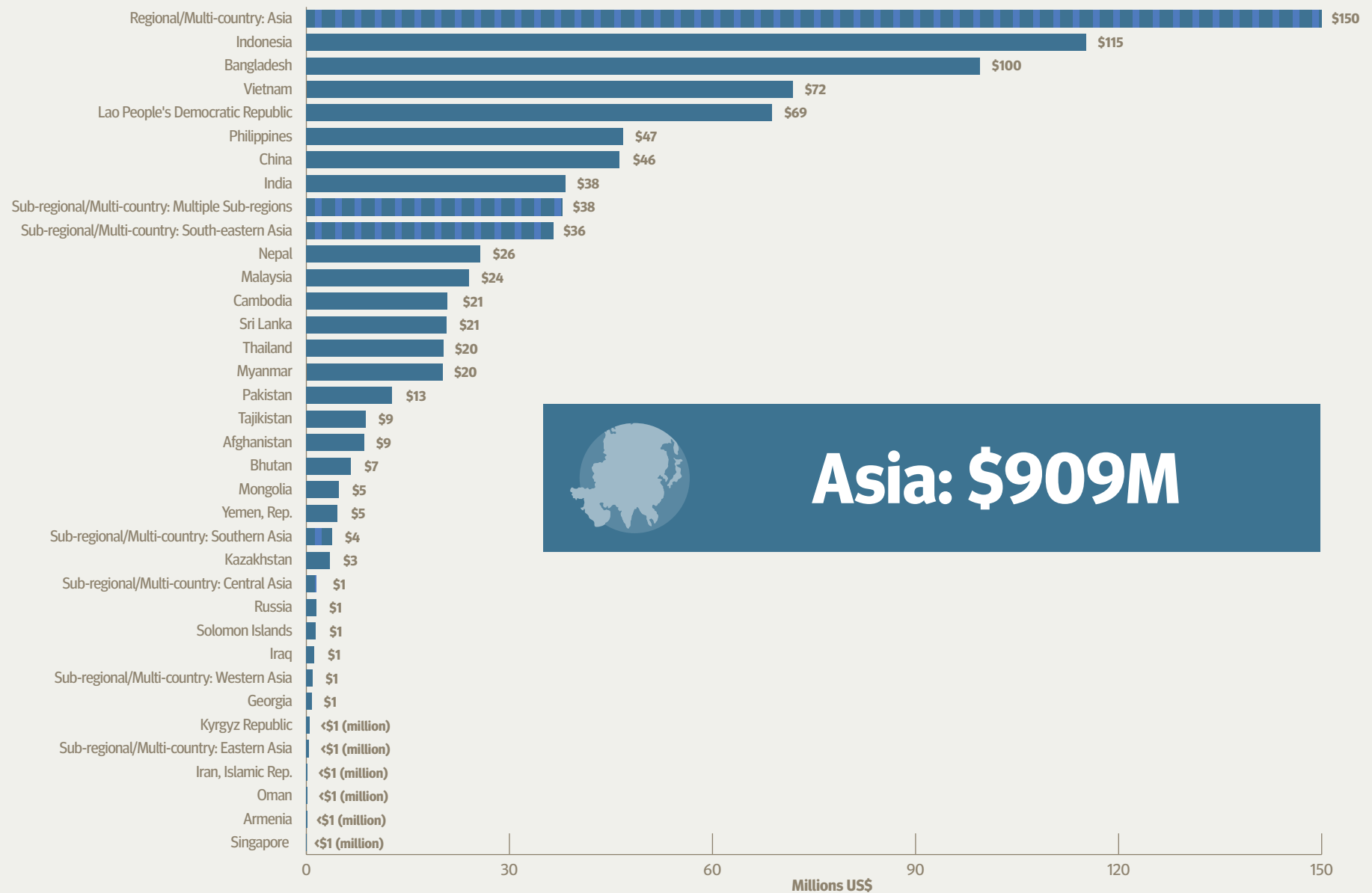
Investment was made in 27 countries and across five sub-regions (South-eastern, Southern, Central, Eastern and Western Asia), in addition to interventions across multiple sub-regions and the region as a whole (Figure 28). Since 2010, the top 10 geographies have received 81% of investment (\$737 million) to combat illegal wildlife trade. The largest investment has gone to regional efforts across Asia which received 16% (\$150 million). This is followed by Indonesia, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Philippines, China and India, and by multi-sub-regional investment and investment in South-eastern Asia. The remaining 19% of investment was distributed across 20 countries and four sub-regions (Southern, Central, Western and Eastern Asia).

These trends in donor investment mirror the broad geographic profile for illegal wildlife trade in Asia. Along with Africa, specific regions of Asia have a high percentage share of 2015–2021 seizure records, specifically Southern Asia (accounting for 9% of the total¹³) and South-eastern Asia (4%) (UNODC, 2024) — the areas of highest donor investment in this study.

Figure 27. Donor Investment in Asia by Recipient Type and Donor Type (in Millions)



¹³ Aggregated by standardized seizure index. More than half of seizures in the dataset did not have a location.

**Figure 28.** Donor Investment in Asia by Geography (in Millions)

INTERVENTION CATEGORIES

Matching the global trend, protected and conserved area management received the most investment in Asia, accounting for 37% (\$334 million) of funds (Figure 29). Criminal justice received just over one fifth of investment (22%; \$198 million), followed by sustainable, diversified livelihoods at 15% (\$135 million), policy and legislation at 13% (\$120 million), demand reduction at 8% (\$77 million), and research and assessment at 5% (\$44 million). Demand reduction in Asia received the highest relative funding across regions, above the global average of 5%. This result is expected given the presence of some major consumer markets for illicitly traded wildlife products in Asia.

Trends in investment across intervention categories are shown in Figure 30. Again, the biggest change appears to be a reduction in funding for protected area management over time — a reduction that has been observed earlier than in other regions, with protected area investment peaking at \$65 million in 2014. The corresponding increase in criminal justice investment has been observed, as has a proportional increase in investment in policy and regulation. This is the only region in which this latter trend is evident. From 2010–2017 less than 9% of investment in Asia was allocated to policy-related interventions. This more than doubled from 2018–2023, to comprise 19% of investment. There is a slight trend of increased investment in demand reduction.

The profile of donor investment in each geography is shown in Figure 31.

Figure 29. Donor Investment in Asia by Intervention Category (in Millions)

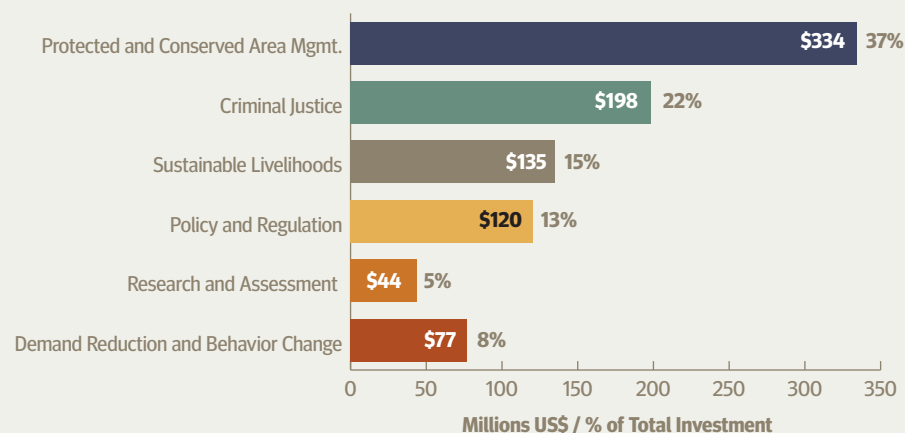
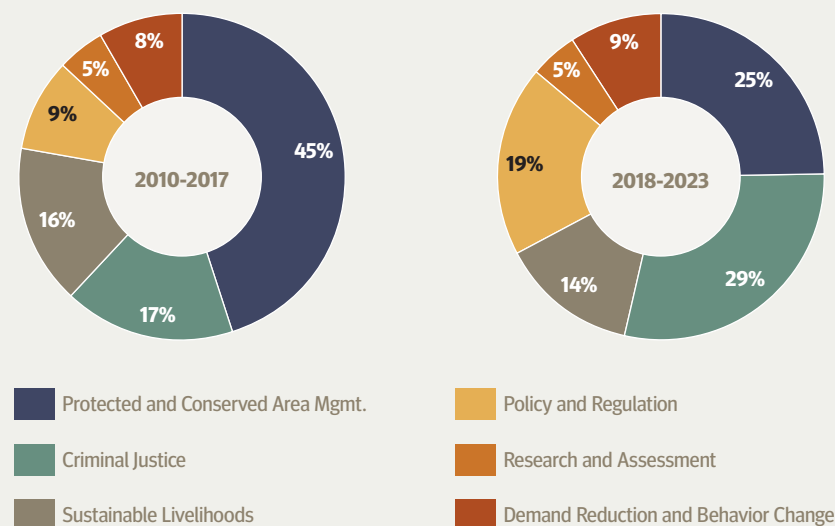
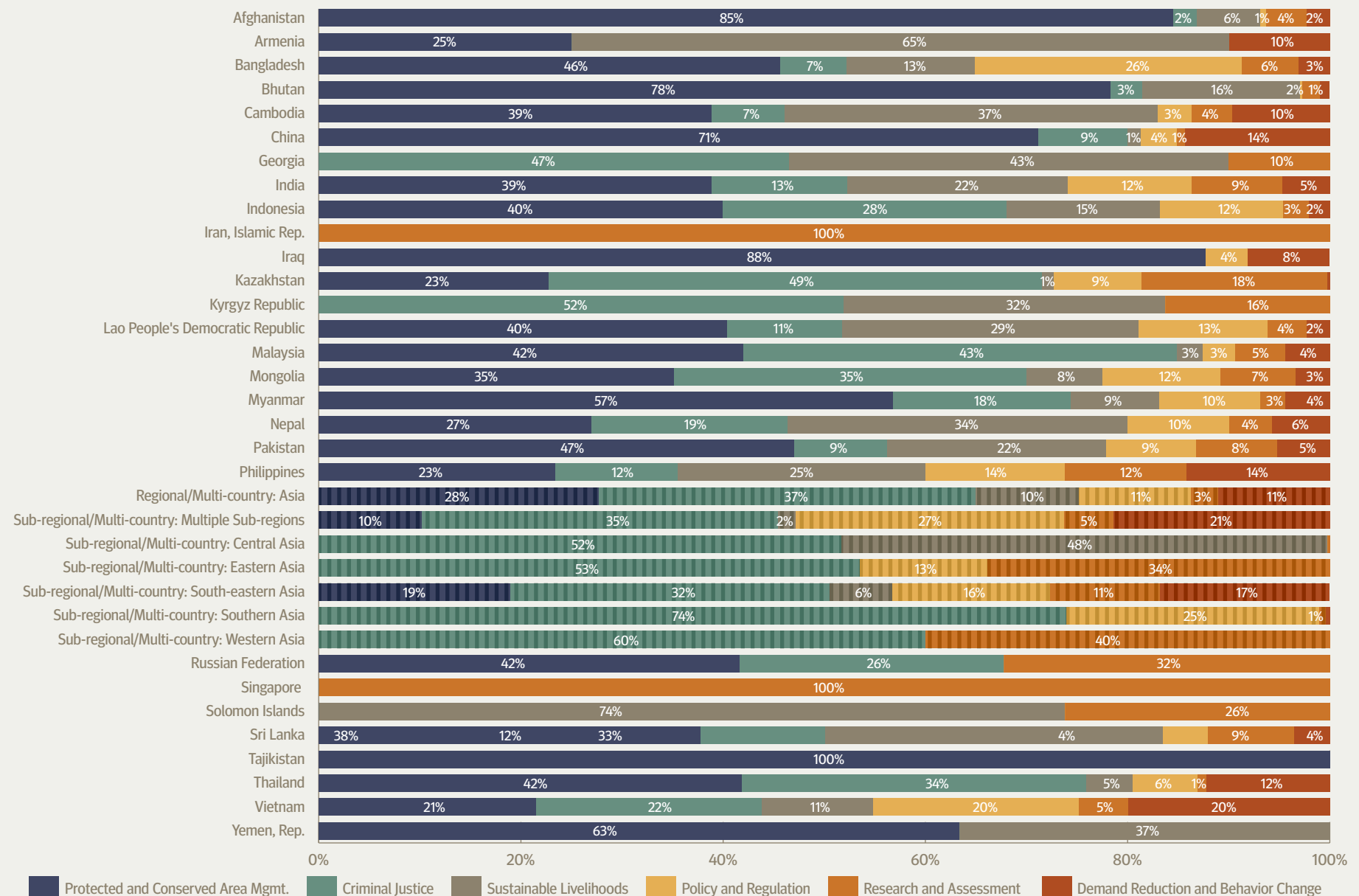


Figure 30. Proportion of Donor Investment in Asia by Intervention Category (2010–2017 vs. 2018–2023)



**Figure 31.** Proportion of Donor Investment in Asia by Intervention Category and Geography



ALIGNING DONOR INVESTMENT WITH ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE TRENDS — ADDRESSING DEMAND

Research indicates that demand for illegal wildlife products can shift rapidly due to changes in consumer preferences, market prices, and trafficking patterns that create new or alternative markets for these products. The 2024 World Wildlife Crime report shows how markets for illegal wildlife products have been reinvented across regions. For example:

- After bans in China and Yemen, demand for rhino horn shifted to Vietnam, reemerging in the mid-2000s.
- In Vietnam, declining demand for medicinal use led to repurposing of rhino horns for decorative items such as cups and beads.
- A novel market for jaguar parts was created by traffickers in Latin America, driven by the availability of supply from animals killed in retaliation for human-wildlife conflict and livestock protection, rather than any pre-existing demand.

These examples show the ongoing threat of demand for illegal wildlife parts and products, and the adaptability of trafficking networks to drive and supply this demand. It has long been recognized that demand reduction deserves enhanced attention. For example, calls for increased attention on demand reduction were emphasized at the second London conference on the Illegal Wildlife Trade in 2018. This recognized that resources and effort spent globally on reducing demand had been small in comparison to other types of interventions and that ending illegal wildlife trade would require tackling demand for illegally traded wildlife products.

This updated analysis shows that investment in demand reduction continues to lag behind other interventions. Between 2010 and 2023, demand reduction received less funding than any other intervention category, receiving just 5% (\$198 million) of investment. Almost 40% of this investment went to reducing consumer demand in Asia (\$77 million) — the highest relative investment across regions. There is a positive sign of increasing investment, with 6% of global donor investment from 2018–2023 specifically focused on demand reduction and behavior change initiatives, and almost 10% of 2018–2023 investment in Asia.

Moreover, despite the low proportional investment, demand reduction investment is delivering impacts. The focus on consumer demand alongside efforts to stem supply and strengthen enabling environments is credited for the decline in poaching and illegal trade in elephant ivory and rhinoceros horn. Social and behavior change campaigns in South-eastern Asia have yielded promising results. For example, nine campaigns were implemented by USAID Wildlife Asia in China, Thailand, and Vietnam between 2018 and 2021 aiming to change attitudes and behaviors and reduce demand for elephant ivory, pangolin, rhinoceros horn, and tiger parts. Post-campaign market surveys revealed a significant decline in consumer intent to purchase wildlife products, with a notable 50% reduction observed between 2018 and 2020 (USAID, 2022). Additionally, there was a 30% decrease in the perceived social acceptability of buying and using such products. Other examples from Asia also provide promising results and insights on how to apply behavioral science to demand reduction (for example see Box 4).

These successes have encouraged increasing calls for the adoption of social and behavior change approaches. Among others, behavior change is a priority for the GEF-8 phase of the GWP, which recognizes its potential to address the drivers of wildlife loss and encourage increased investment and impact in reducing consumer demand.



BOX

4

Intervention Spotlight — Applying Behavior Change to Reduce Demand for Bear Products in Cambodia

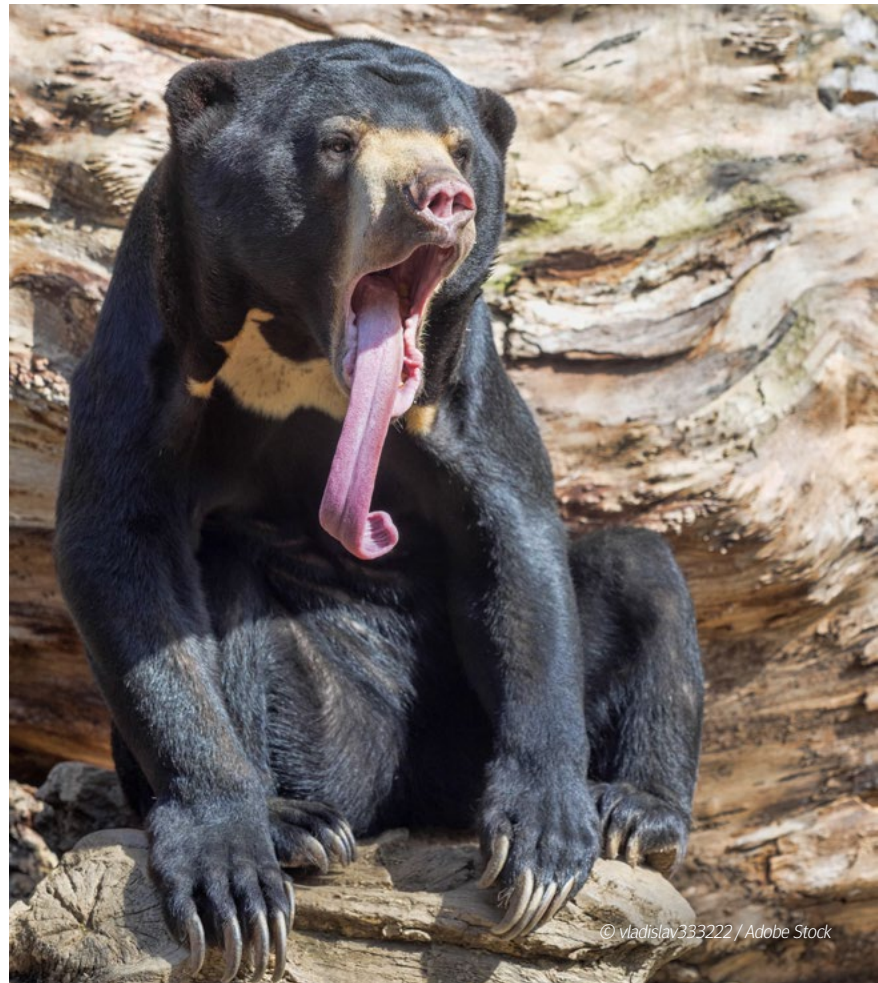
Project Title: Understanding People's Attitudes and Behavior Towards Wildlife: Designing a Theory of Change for the Demand Reduction of Bear Products in Cambodia

Intervention Category: Demand Reduction and Behavior Change

Lead Recipient: Zoological Society of San Diego

Donor: United States

The two-year project investigated the social and cultural factors influencing the demand for Asiatic black bear and sun bear, which are both poached for their meat and parts, and for traditional Chinese medicine in Cambodia and other parts of Southeast Asia. Based on research findings, the project developed a Theory of Change to reduce consumption of bear products and mapped out strategies to shift attitudes and behaviors among targeted consumer groups. Campaigns were designed to resonate culturally with Cambodians, using messaging that highlights the health, ethical, and legal aspects of bear product consumption. Capacity building on behavior change communication and outreach was provided to Cambodian partners such as Free The Bears and the Royal University of Phnom Penh. The research and framework completed under the project helped inform subsequent policy interventions targeting bear product consumption in Cambodia.



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SELECTED COUNTRY INSIGHTS

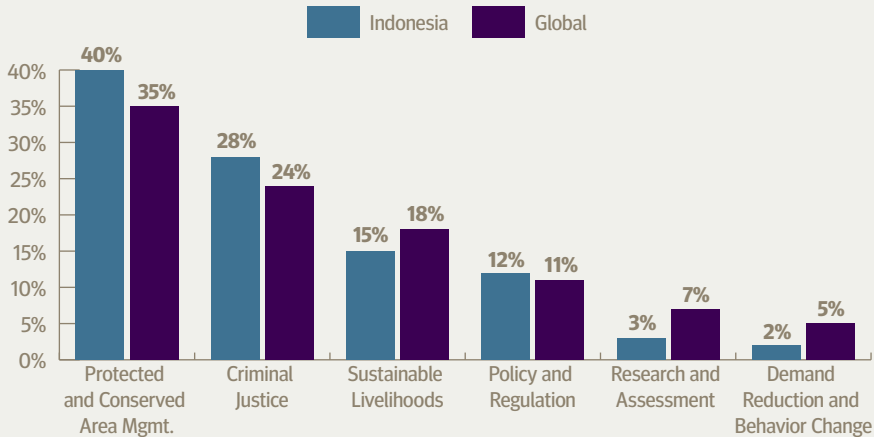
Indonesia

Indonesia is one of the most biodiverse countries and is implicated as a source, transit and destination country for wildlife trade, both legal and illegal. Indonesia’s strategic location in South-eastern Asia makes it a key transit point for illegal wildlife trade. Traffickers often use Indonesia as a route to smuggle wildlife to other parts of Asia, particularly China and Vietnam, where demand for exotic animals and animal products is high. Furthermore, Indonesia has a substantial legal wildlife trade, particularly in birds and reptiles. This legal trade is often exploited by traffickers who smuggle protected species under the guise of legality, or who mix illegal shipments with legal ones (OECD, 2019).

Indonesia has received more illegal wildlife trade investment than any other country in Asia, and ranked fourth globally, receiving \$115 million or 3% of funds over 2010–2023. Reflecting this high investment, it has received funds from all donor types. Half of Indonesia’s investment comes from donor countries (\$58 million), while multilateral donors contributed 44% (\$51 million). Five percent of contributions came from foundations (\$5 million) and international NGOs accounted for \$870,000 (less than 1%). Executing capacity in the country is relatively strong and donors have used a range of recipient types. The national government received 57% of investment, followed by international NGOs (17%) and IGOs (less than 1%).

Funding across intervention categories in Indonesia broadly reflects the global investment pattern (Figure 32). Protected and conserved area management was the most funded intervention, receiving 40% of investment. This is a slightly greater proportion than the global average but makes sense given Indonesia’s role as a source country for illegal wildlife trade. Similarities to the global pattern are observed for criminal justice, policy, and sustainable, diversified livelihoods, with a slightly smaller proportion of funding going to demand reduction and research in Indonesia compared to the global picture.

Figure 32. Proportion of Donor Investment in Indonesia by Intervention Category vs. Global Average



Despite the large overall investment in Indonesia, and the 28% of investment used to strengthen criminal justice, thematically, no interventions were tagged for corruption, crime convergence or illicit financial flows (although see Box 5 for an example of a criminal justice intervention to prevent money laundering). In comparison, interventions were tagged as addressing transnational organized crime and One Health and zoonotic diseases.



BOX

5

Intervention Spotlight — Enhancing the Criminal Justice System in Indonesia to Combat Wildlife Trafficking

Project Title: Combating Illegal and Unsustainable Trade in Endangered Species in Indonesia

Intervention Category: Criminal Justice

Lead Recipient: Directorate General of Law Enforcement on Environment and Forestry (Gakkum), Ministry of Environment and Forestry

Donor: GEF

The GWP's GEF-6 project in Indonesia aimed to reduce the scale and impact of illegal wildlife trafficking with a focus on strengthening policy frameworks and building institutional law enforcement and criminal justice capacity. Among other actions, the project established operations rooms in the provinces of East Java and Riau and upgraded the central command center and information and communications capabilities at Gakkum headquarters, providing targeted capacity building on media monitoring, remote sensing, digital forensics, intelligence data management applications and reporting. The project helped operationalize an illegal wildlife trade cyber patrol team to monitor online activities related to protected wildlife, resulting in arrests of wildlife traffickers. A mobile application was also developed to support easy and efficient identification of trafficked wildlife. Inter-



agency collaboration was strengthened through new taskforces and Memoranda of Understanding between Ministries with a role in combating illegal wildlife trade. This included the establishment of a taskforce involving the Ministry of Environment and Forestry and the Indonesian Financial Transaction Report and Analysis Centre to handle money laundering cases in wildlife and forest crimes through a set of standard procedures and data sharing agreements.

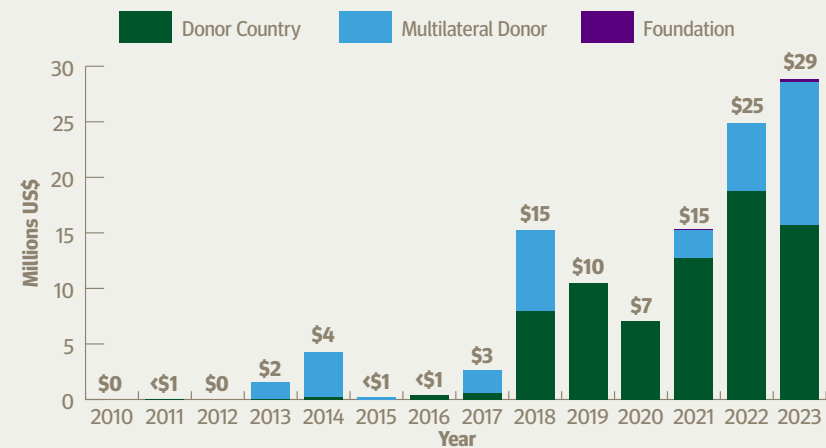


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Latin America and the Caribbean

Latin America received the least funding of the three regions, accounting for 3% of global investment (\$111 million). Annual average investment from 2010–2023 was \$8 million. Most funding has been invested since 2018, but this may reflect more limited reporting prior to 2018. The highest amount of investment was received in 2023, with \$29 million or over a quarter (26%) of investment made in that year (Figure 33).

Figure 33. Donor Investment in Latin America by Donor Type and Year (in Millions)

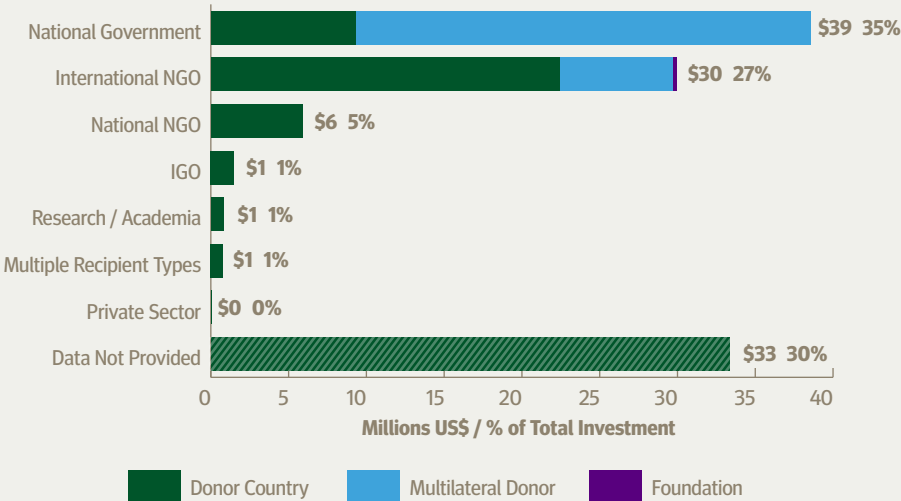


Nine donors invested in combating illegal wildlife trade in Latin America, comprising four donor countries, three multilaterals, and two foundations. No international NGO investment was recorded. The top five global donors are the top donors for Latin America. The United States alone accounts for 61% (\$67 million) of investment in Latin America. This is followed by GEF (25%; \$27 million), the European Commission (5%; \$6 million), the United Kingdom (4%; \$4 million), and the World Bank Group (4%; \$4 million). These five donors provided 98% of investment (\$108 million) since 2010.

RECIPIENT TYPES

National governments in Latin America were the top recipient type, receiving \$29 million or 35% of investment (Figure 34). International NGOs received 27% of investment (\$30 million) and national NGOs 5% (\$5.9 million). All other recipient types received 1% or less of investment. Data were not provided for 30% of recipient types, impeding assessment of trends.

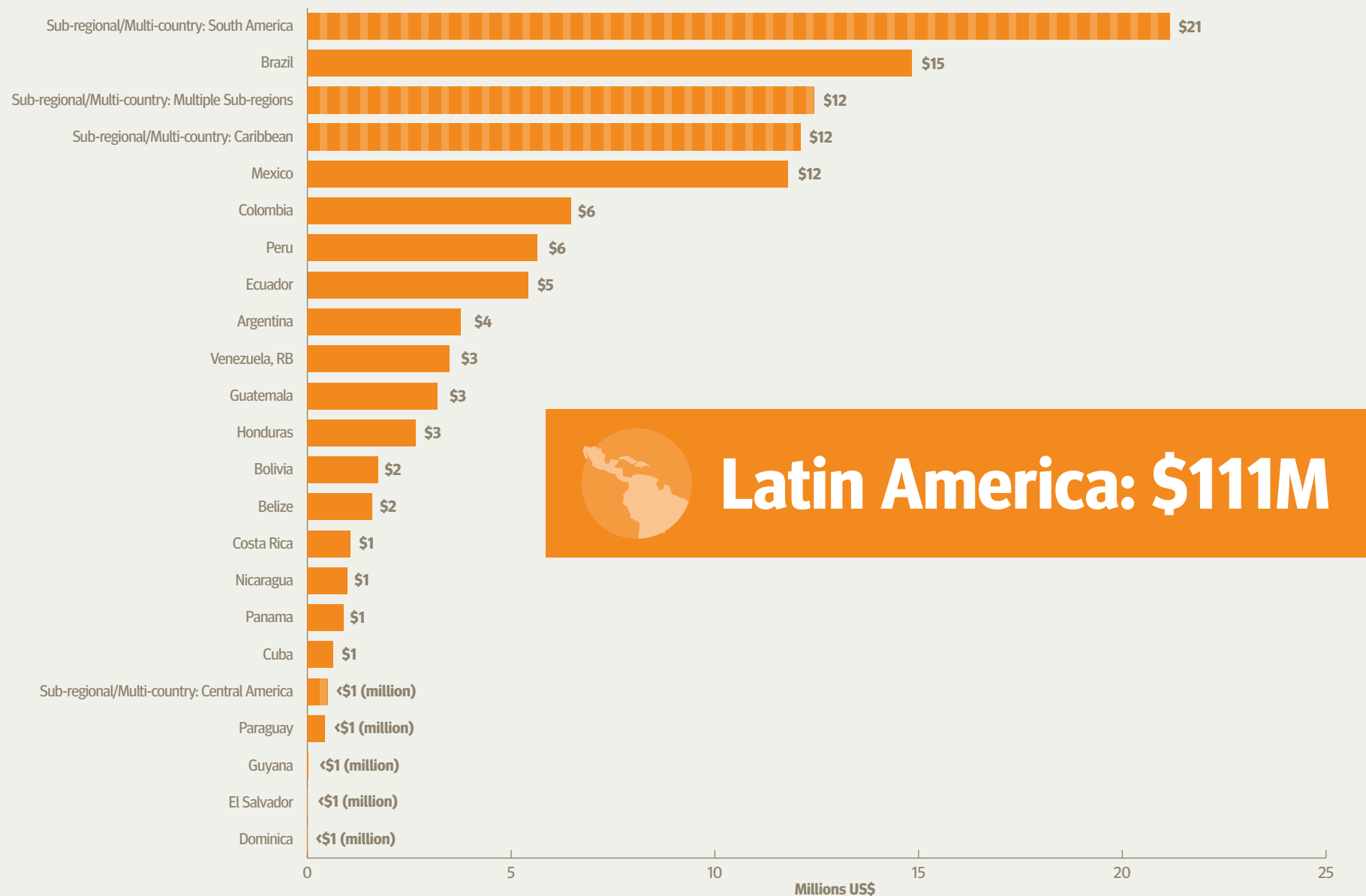
Figure 34. Donor Investment in Latin America by Recipient Type and Donor Type (in Millions)



GEOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

Investment was made in 19 countries and three sub-regions (South America, Central America and the Caribbean) (Figure 35). The top 10 geographies account for 88% of the region’s investment, totaling \$97 million. In line with trends in Africa and Asia, the largest portion of funding (19%; \$21 million) went to sub-regional and multi-country initiatives for South America. This is followed by Brazil with 13% of investment (\$15 million), while multi-subregion initiatives, and interventions in the Caribbean and Mexico each received 10% (\$12 million) of investment. Colombia, Peru, Ecuador, Argentina and Venezuela completed the top 10 geographies. The remaining 12% of investment was distributed across 12 countries and one sub-region: Central America.

Latin America has received increased attention for its role in wildlife trafficking chains, including concerns over increasing illegal trade in jaguar parts (UNODC, 2020). The region accounted for 2% of global seizures over 2015–2021 (UNODC, 2024) but has substantial gaps in knowledge of illegal wildlife trade compared to Africa and Asia.

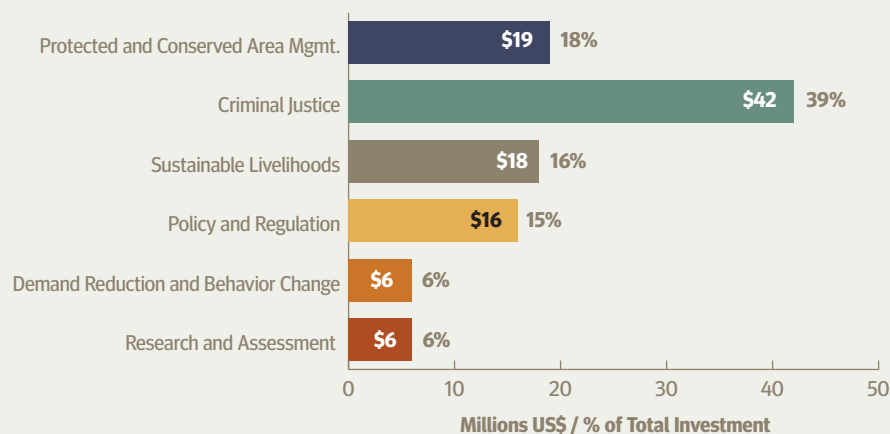
**Figure 35.** Donor Investment in Latin America by Geography (in Millions)

INTERVENTION CATEGORIES

In contrast to Africa and Asia, most investment in Latin America went to criminal justice strengthening, which accounted for 39% (\$42 million) of investment (Figure 36). This was followed by protected and conserved areas management (18%; \$19 million), sustainable livelihoods (16%; \$18 million), and policy and regulation (15%; \$16 million). Research and assessment and demand reduction both received low amounts of funding, each accounting for 6% of investment (\$6 million). Data are too limited and skewed towards recent years to assess trends over time.

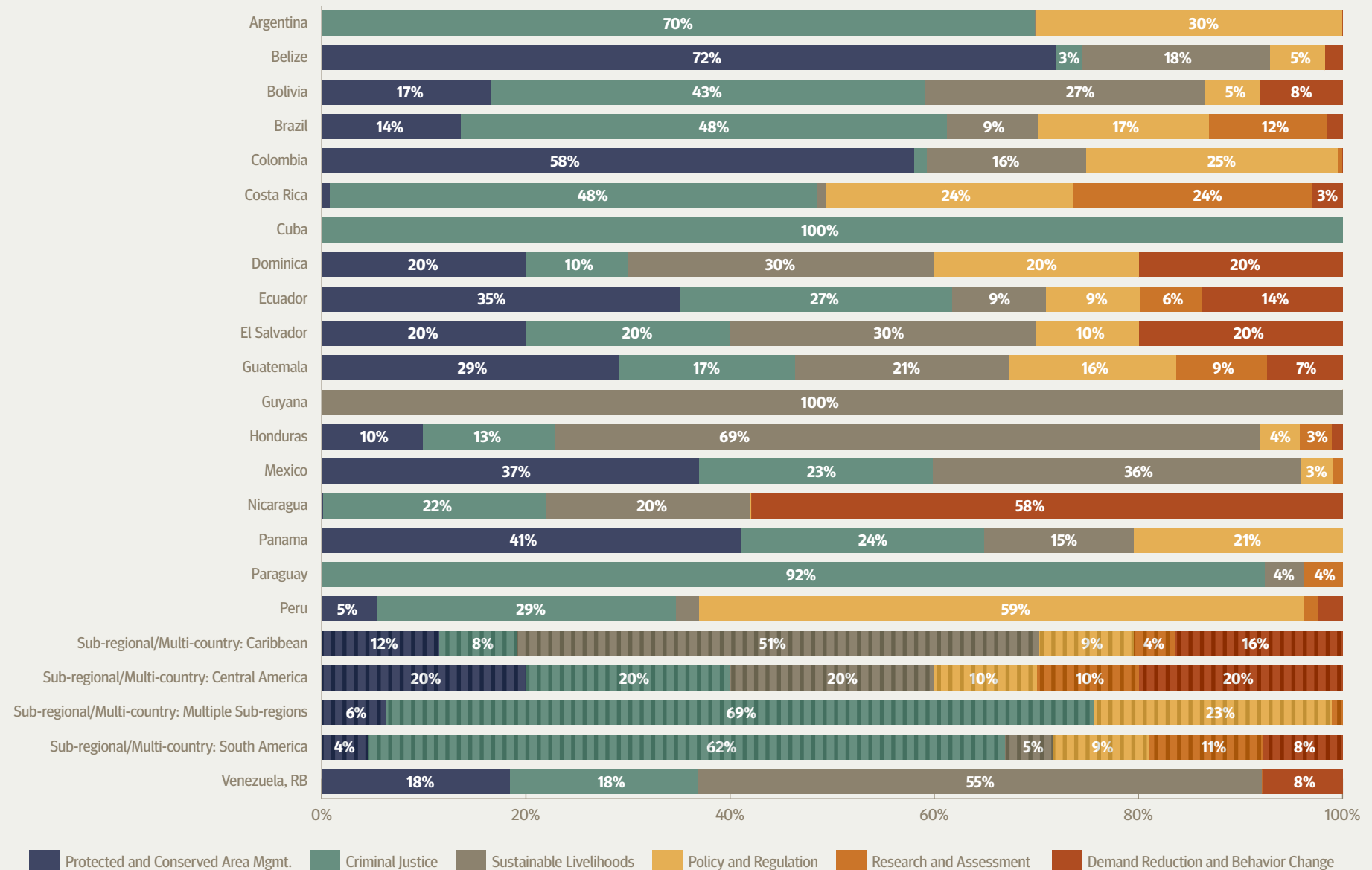
Figure 37 provides the proportion of investment in each intervention category by geography.

Figure 36. Donor Investment in Latin America by Intervention Category (in Millions)



Funding does not total the full investment amount for Latin America, as around \$4 million of donor data was provided without intervention categories.



**Figure 37.** Proportion of Donor Investment in Latin America by Intervention Category and Geography

SELECTED COUNTRY INSIGHTS

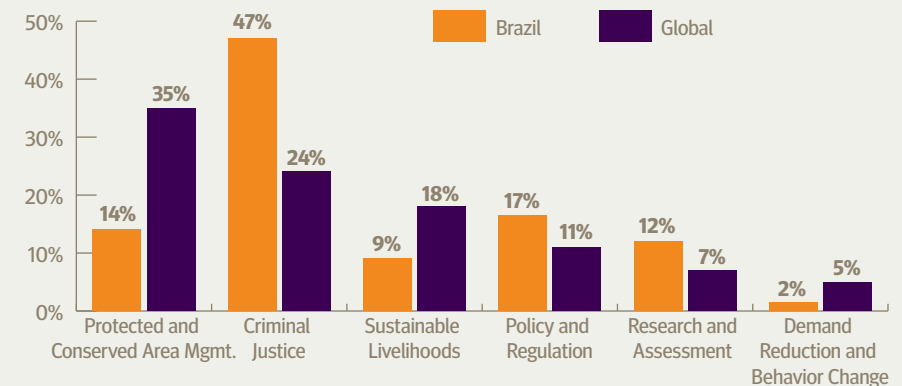
Brazil

An analysis and overview of illegal wildlife trade in Brazil (Charity and Ferreira, 2020) found that many perceive it to be extensive, with detrimental effects on biodiversity, the economy, and governance, although data on illegal wildlife trade is limited. The absence of illegal wildlife trade data also hampers authorities' understanding of, and responses to, wildlife trafficking in Brazil.

Brazil received 13% (\$15 million) of donor investment in Latin America between 2010–2023, with 70% of investment coming from donor countries and 30% from multilateral donors. Most donor investment is received by international NGOs (34%), followed by the national government (31%), and with 1% of funding going to national NGOs.

Consistent with illegal wildlife trade trends in Latin America, nearly half of investment in Brazil (47%) went to strengthening the criminal justice system, considerably higher than the global average for this intervention category (Figure 38). This was followed

Figure 38. Proportion of Donor Investment in Brazil by Intervention Category vs. Global Average



by policy and regulation, which received 17% of investment. An example supporting both of these intervention categories in Brazil is shown in Box 6. Differing from the global average, only 14% of donor investment in Brazil was allocated to protected area management. Interventions in Brazil featured transnational organized crime, crime convergence, and One Health and zoonotic diseases.





BOX

6

Intervention Spotlight — Strengthening Capacities and Cooperation to Prevent and Address Corruption, Fraud and Laundering linked to Wildlife Crime in Brazil

Project Title: Integrated Approach for Countering Wildlife Trafficking in Brazil and South America

Intervention Category: Criminal Justice; Policy, regulation and legislation

Lead Recipient: Freeland Foundation

Donor: United States

This project helped build investigative and enforcement capacity, strengthened legislative frameworks to prosecute and prevent wildlife crime, and developed capacity for cross-border and transcontinental law enforcement cooperation. An ‘observatory’ of experts and analysts was convened to monitor and analyze news and official reports on wildlife seizures involving Brazil. The team used tools such as open-



source data, GIS mapping, databases and analytical platforms to provide data-driven insights into trafficking trends and actionable intelligence. Since its inception in 2020, the observatory has highlighted gaps in enforcement and raised awareness about the scale of illegal wildlife trade in Brazil. The project collaborated with Transparency International Brazil to publish ‘[The Wildlife](#)

[Laundromat](#)’ report. The analysis uncovered 24 forms of corruption, fraud and laundering within the wildlife trafficking supply chain and recommended strategies such as anti-money laundering measures, national coordination, and digital transparency initiatives. Training programs were conducted to enhance the skills of law enforcement and the judiciary in handling wildlife crime, foster regional cooperation among countries in South America, and develop frameworks for more effective prosecution.



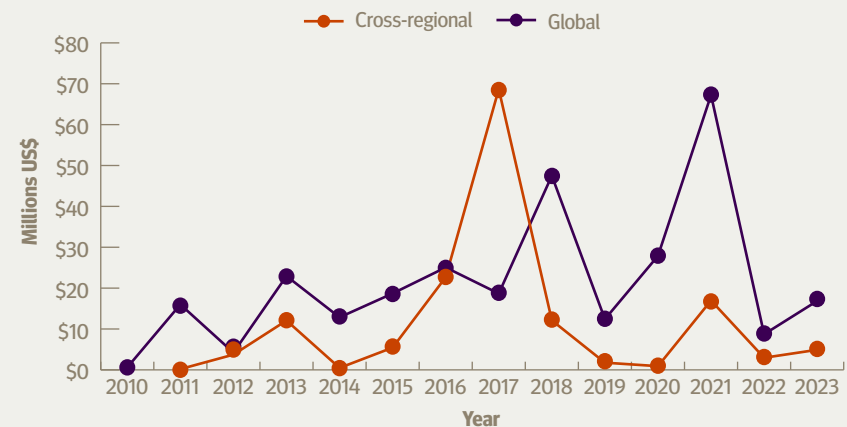
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Cross-Regional and Global Investment

Investment in illegal wildlife trade efforts at a global level account for 8% (\$300 million) of investment and peaked in 2021 with \$67 million invested (Figure 39). Cross-regional interventions account for 4% (\$153 million) of investment. These peaked in 2017, at the same time as the global peak, when \$69 million was invested.

Between 2010 and 2023, \$137 million, or 89% of cross-regional funding, was for interventions in Africa and Asia. The most frequently reported trafficking routes involve shipments originating from sub-Saharan Africa (followed by Southern Asia; UNODC, 2024). Trafficking from source locations in Africa to transit or market destinations in Asia is a common route for wildlife traffickers. Other donor investment has spanned Africa, Asia and Latin America, which received \$10 million (10%), and recent investments have targeted Latin America and Asia (1%; \$1 million), and Latin America and Africa (0.1%; \$0.1 million; see Box 7).

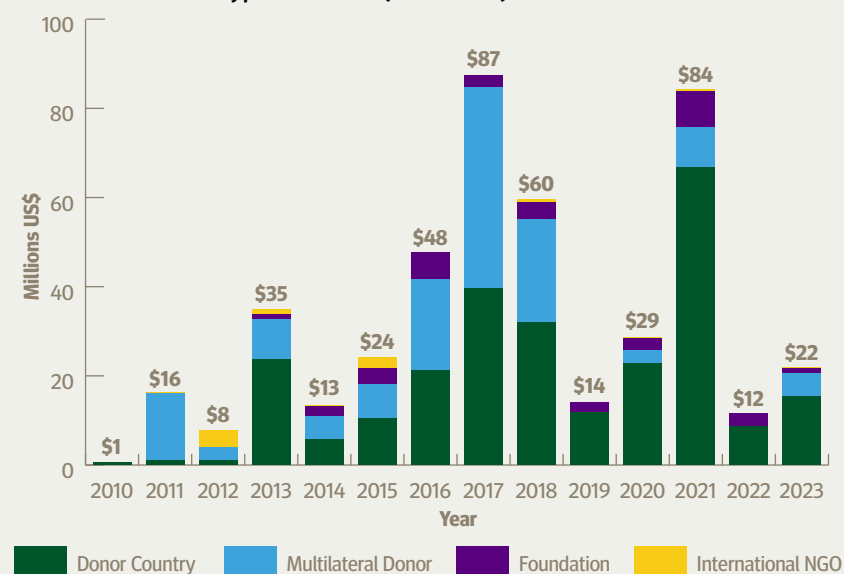
Figure 39. Donor Investment in Cross-Regional and Global Interventions by Year (in Millions)





Thirty-nine donors have invested at the cross-regional or global level. These comprise 10 donor countries, four multilateral donors, 19 foundations and six international NGOs. Donor countries contributed the largest investment at \$261 million or 58% of investment, followed by multilateral donors (32%; \$146 million), foundations (8%; \$36 million) and international NGOs (2%; \$10 million) (Figure 40).

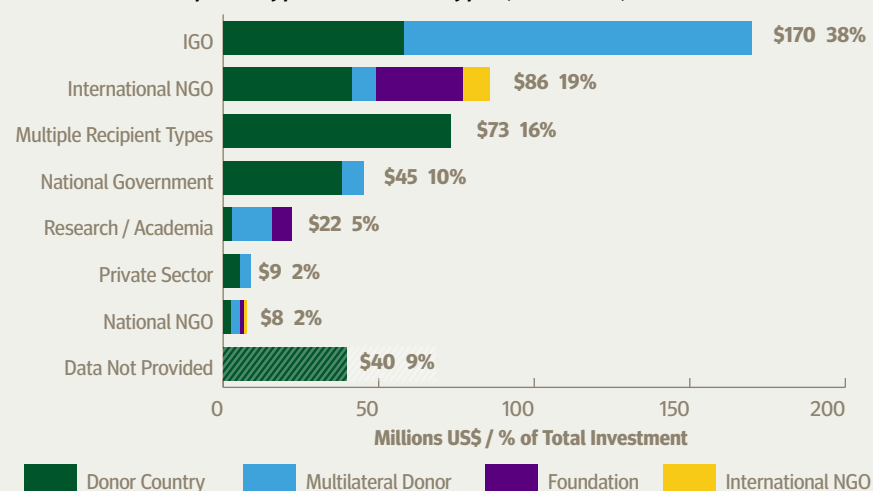
Figure 40. Donor Investment in Cross-Regional and Global Interventions by Donor Type and Year (in Millions)



RECIPIENT TYPES

Intergovernmental organizations are the most frequent recipient type from cross-regional and global interventions and receive 36% (\$165 million) of investment (Figure 41). They are followed by international NGOs (18%; \$82 million) and a combination of multiple recipient types (16%; \$73 million). Counter to other types of investment, national governments seldom receive donor investment for cross-regional and global interventions, receiving only 11% (\$51 million) of funding. This is not surprising as these interventions span countries and include global capacity-building programs and collaborative workshops which engage many national governments.

Figure 41. Donor Investment in Cross-Regional and Global Interventions by Recipient Type and Donor Type (in Millions)



INTERVENTION CATEGORIES

As shown in Figure 42, over 40% of cross-regional and global investment has supported the strengthening of criminal justice systems (42%; \$189 million). This is followed by policy and regulation at 17% (\$78 million) and research and assessment at 16% (\$71 million). Demand reduction features relatively strongly, given the overall low investment in this intervention category, at 10% of investment (\$47 million). Not surprisingly, protected and conserved area management and sustainable livelihoods receive considerably less investment than at the regional level, as cross-regional and global interventions are less likely to have site-based field activities. Protected and conserved area management comprises 11% (\$48 million) of cross-regional and global investment, and sustainable livelihoods only 5% (\$21 million). Trends suggest an increase in investment on policy and regulation, rising from 12% to 22% of investment (Figure 43). Funding for research and assessment has seen the reverse trend, declining from 22% to 9%. Examples of global investment in these intervention categories are shown in Boxes 8 and 9.

Figure 44 shows the proportion of investment in each intervention category at a global level and in cross-regional combinations.

Figure 42. Cross-Regional and Global Investment by Intervention Category (in Millions)

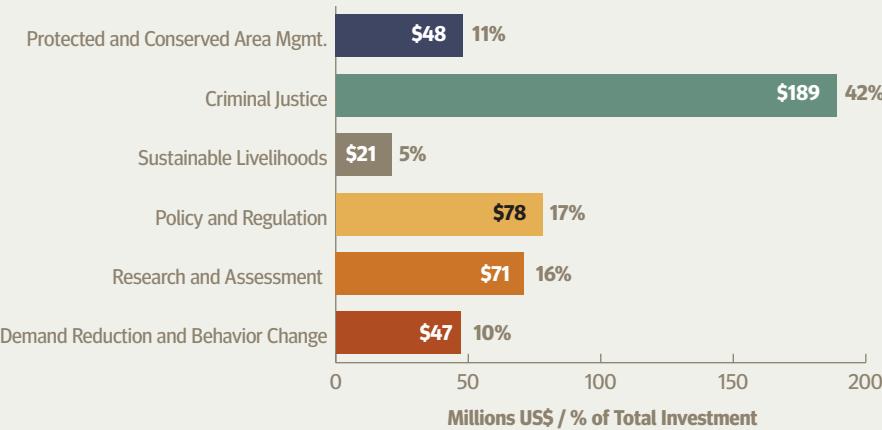


Figure 43. Proportion of Cross-Regional and Global Investment by Intervention Category (2010–2017 vs. 2018–2023)

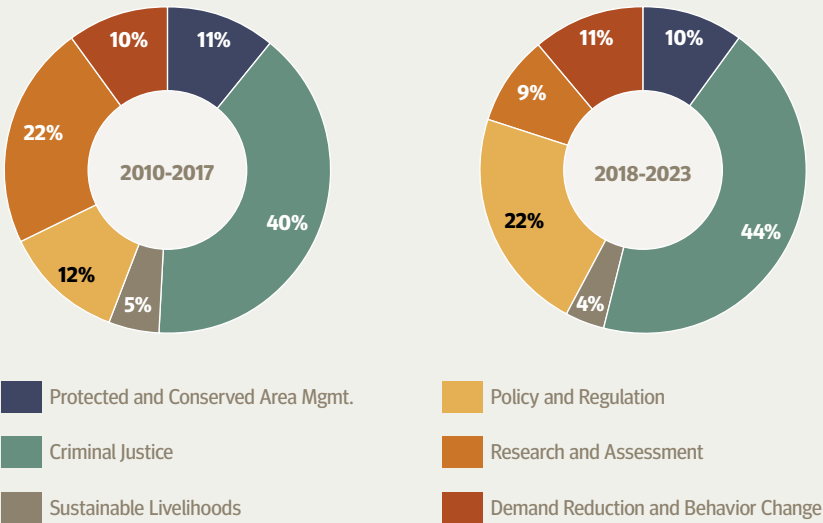
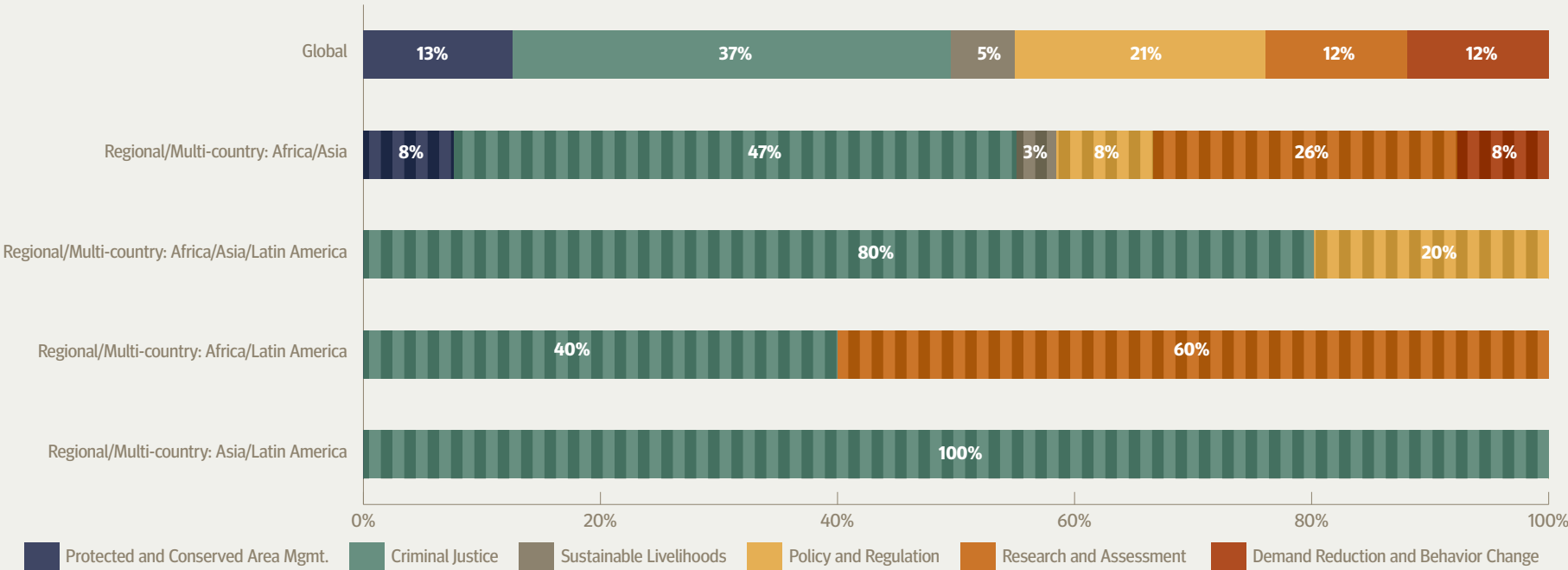




Figure 44. Proportion of Cross-Regional and Global Investment by Intervention Category and Geography



BOX
7**Intervention Spotlight — Using Situational Crime Prevention Assessments to Prevent Wildlife Poaching in Liberia and Nicaragua**

Project Title: Building Evidence-based Situational Crime Prevention to Curb Illegal Wildlife Trade

Intervention Category: Research and Assessment

Leading Recipient: Fauna and Flora International

Donor: United Kingdom

This cross-regional project funded by the Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund aimed to combat illegal wildlife trade in Africa and Latin America using evidence-based situational crime prevention strategies, a crime science approach proven effective at reducing crimes such as drug trafficking and maritime piracy but seldom applied to wildlife crime. Situational crime prevention is a proactive approach that aims to prevent the crime from happening, rather than address the consequences of the crime through law enforcement. The



project applied research and assessment to develop comprehensive, proactive crime prevention strategies and built the capacity of conservation practitioners and law enforcement officers to apply these techniques in Liberia (for the Western chimpanzee) and Nicaragua (for the yellow-naped parrot). The project worked to prevent poaching by identifying and addressing the root causes and opportunities for crime, distinguishing between profit-driven and poverty-driven illegal activities — helping focus limited resources more effectively and preventing illegal wildlife trade while minimizing further social inequalities. A [toolkit and other resources](#) on situational crime prevention were created in multiple languages to support replication of these techniques to other wildlife crimes.



BOX

8

Intervention Spotlight — Global Alliance Supporting Strengthened Policies and Regulations to Reduce Health Risks from Wildlife Trade

Project Title: Support for International Alliance against Health Risks in Wildlife Trade

Intervention Category: Policy and Regulation

Lead Recipient: GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit)

Donor: Germany

Launched at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Marseille in September 2021, the [International Alliance Against Health Risks in Wildlife Trade](#) is an inclusive, interdisciplinary platform aiming at the prevention of zoonotic spillover at the source with a One Health approach. Since its inception, over 500 individual experts and over 180 national and international organizations joined as members, confirming their commitment to two goals: reducing zoonotic spillover risks and enhancing awareness and policy action on the issue.

The Alliance advances understanding of health risks linked to wildlife trade by bridging science and policy. It aims to translate the political will of its



members into policy action by providing and communicating evidence, translating science and knowledge into recommendations for improved regulation, identifying knowledge gaps, and supporting and evaluating interventions. Among others, the Alliance delivers regular webinars and reports to build the knowledge base, as well as offering targeted consultation services to governments of countries with a high risk of zoonotic spillover with pandemic potential to guide on-the-ground actions including recommendations for strengthened regulation and legislation.



BOX

9

Intervention Spotlight — Assessing Vulnerabilities in Global Trafficking Networks to Drive Private Sector Engagement in Combating Wildlife Crime

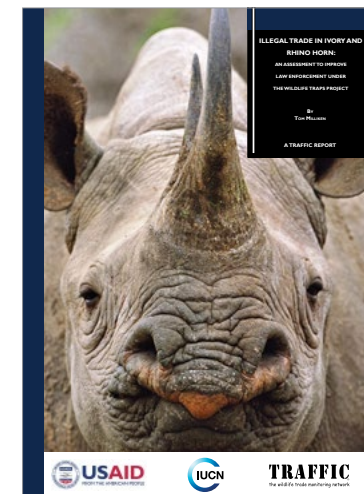
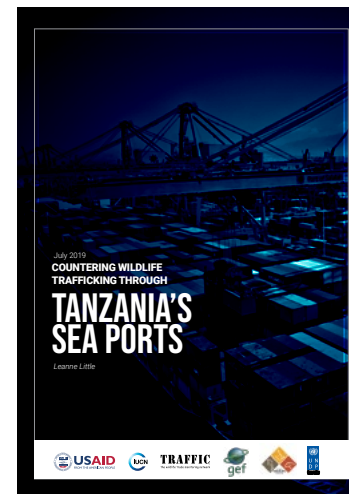
Project: Wildlife Trafficking Assessment, Planning and Priority Setting (TRAPS)

Intervention Category: Research and Assessment

Lead Recipient: TRAFFIC

Donor: United States

The first phase of the Wildlife TRAPS project focused on wildlife trafficking routes linking Africa and Asia. This phase was designed to identify vulnerabilities in wildlife trafficking networks and develop actionable strategies to combat these networks. Extensive baseline assessments were conducted, revealing key trafficking hotspots, trade routes, and species at risk, such as pangolins, elephants, and rhinoceros. The assessment findings and recommendations underpinned pioneering work to engage more sectors in counter wildlife trafficking, notably actors in the transport and finance sectors, to work alongside law enforcement. For example, partnerships with the freight forwarding and maritime transport sectors led to the creation of red flag indicators, training and protocols to detect and report illegal wildlife shipments.



SECTION 3:

Conclusions



This analysis highlights ongoing substantial international donor investment in combating illegal wildlife trade and provides updated data on the patterns of investment to guide future priority-setting. This assessment re-affirms that most donor investment goes into operational interventions at the source of poaching or along trafficking chains, particularly through the management of protected and conserved areas, through livelihoods interventions to provide economic opportunities for local communities, and through targeted support to strengthen law enforcement and criminal justice systems. This latter category is an area of increasing investment, as is work to strengthen policy and regulatory frameworks. These trends reflect the high-profile attention across many countries to recognize wildlife crime as a priority crime (UNODC, 2024).

At the other end of the scale are demand reduction interventions, and assessment and research, which continue to receive lower levels of donor investment than other categories. These interventions are both crucial parts of integrated strategies to counter wildlife trafficking and should not be overlooked. A recent UNODC review (2024) indicates that data on wildlife crime are limited compared to those available for other crimes, impeding abilities to monitor global and local trafficking trends. Recent data also highlight the adaptive nature of consumer markets for illicitly-traded wildlife products, including the emergence of new markets driven by trafficking networks in the absence of existing demand. There are increasing case studies on the successful application of behavior change to consumer demand reduction, and of situational crime prevention assessments of wildlife crime, which offer promise for replication across regions.

While Africa continues to receive the highest (yet a declining) share of international donor investment, wildlife crime remains a global challenge. The spread of donor resources reflects this, spanning targeted investment in 89 countries across Africa, Asia and Latin America, with increasing attention to global-level interventions. This report assessed donor investment in combating illegal wildlife trade in Latin America for the first time, reporting low but increasing investment targeting 19 countries to date, and a growing number of cross-regional and global investments that include Latin America. While drawing on limited data, crime convergence is a particular focus for donor interventions in Latin America, reflecting the presence



of some of the world's largest natural resource trafficking networks and criminal groups. The increasing attention to environmental crimes in Latin America, driven by rising concerns over deforestation, illegal mining, pollution and wildlife trafficking,¹⁴ should offer opportunities for coordinated, increased investment to address organized crime as a whole.

For the first time this report assessed donor attention to related crime topics. Data shows promising results on the consideration of transnational organized crime in wildlife crime investments, but suggests further attention is warranted on corruption prevention and illicit financial flows. These issues fuel wildlife crime and are hard to stop due to the low national capacities of many countries.

Importantly, this report only tracks input-based finance at the time of project approval, not the outcomes that finance sets out to achieve. As noted in the latest World Wildlife Crime report (UNODC, 2024), more evidence is needed to clearly track the impact of investments. Evidence is particularly sparse for interventions aiming to disrupt criminal activity through law enforcement and other criminal justice actions — an area of rising donor investment in this analysis. This could be an area for enhanced donor coordination: to share and coordinate monitoring and evaluation approaches, and to collate lessons on assessing the results of investment. Such

efforts should ideally go beyond international donor investment and consider the investments of recipient governments in strengthening national responses to prevent and combat wildlife crime. These discussions would help increase collective understanding of impacts.

This report re-affirms the importance of ongoing coordination and exchange among donors. Summary data such as that shown in this report can be enriched by deep dive discussions on investment in different regions, countries and intervention categories (as well as factors that drive these investments); the sharing of successful and less successful case studies (for example, see e-Library of case studies in World Bank Group, 2018); and by coordination mechanisms that bring together donors, implementing partners and governments to discuss respective efforts, opportunities to enhance synergies and reduce duplication, and priorities for future investment. While the Global Wildlife Program supports a global donor coordination group, there are national coordination mechanisms in place in many countries (for example, see World Bank Group, 2023) as well as some regional platforms. The national and regional investment data in this report may offer a useful entry point for these discussions, ideally in combination with data on trafficking trends and on the measurable outcomes of counter wildlife trafficking efforts.

¹⁴ For example, the Belém Declaration on enhancing cooperation to combat environmental crimes signed during the August 2023 Amazon Summit.

ANNEXES



Annex I. Organizations that Provided Data for the 2025 Report

Earlier data providers are listed in World Bank Group (2016) and World Bank Group (2018).

No.	Organization	Participant Type	Organization/Donor Type
1	African Wildlife Foundation	Implementing Partner	International NGO
2	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Secretariat	Implementing Partner	Intergovernmental Organization
3	Environmental Investigation Agency	Implementing Partner	International NGO
4	European Commission	Donor	Multilateral Donor
5	Fauna and Flora International	Implementing Partner	International NGO
6	Global Environment Facility (GEF) Secretariat	Donor	Multilateral Donor
7	Germany Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV), and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)	Donor	Donor Country
8	INTERPOL	Implementing Partner	Intergovernmental Organization
9	Japan	Donor	Donor Country
10	Paul G. Allen Family Foundation	Donor	Foundation
11	Sweden	Donor	Donor Country
12	TRAFFIC	Implementing Partner	International NGO
13	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Implementing Partner	Intergovernmental Organization
14	UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)	Donor	Donor Country
15	US Agency for International Development (USAID)	Donor	Donor Country
16	US Department of State (USDOS)	Donor	Donor Country
17	US Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS)	Donor	Donor Country
18	United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC)	Implementing Partner	Intergovernmental Organization
19	Wildlife Conservation Society	Implementing Partner	International NGO
20	Wildlife Justice Commission	Implementing Partner	International NGO
21	World Bank Group	Donor	Multilateral Donor

Annex II. International Donors with Data Included in the Analysis

No.	Organization	Donor Type	Data Collection Periods		
			2016 Report (2010–2016 data)	2018 Report (2016–2018 data)	2025 Report (2018–2023 data; Latin America: 2010–2023)
1	Arcadia	Foundation	x	x	x
2	Arcus Foundation	Foundation	x		
3	Asian Development Bank	Multilateral Donor	x	x	
4	Association of Zoos and Aquariums	International NGO	x	x	
5	Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity of Kazakhstan	Foundation			x
6	Belgium	Donor Country			x
7	Blue Moon Fund	Foundation	x		
8	Brook Foundation	Foundation			x
9	Canada	Donor Country	x	x	
10	Cambridge Conservation Initiative	Foundation			x
11	Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund	Multilateral Donor	x	x	x
12	China	Donor Country			x
13	Contribute Foundation	Foundation			x
14	Crissy Belandi	Foundation			x
15	David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation	International NGO			x
16	Disney	Foundation		x	
17	DN Batten Foundation	Foundation	x	x	
18	EJF Philanthropies	Foundation			x
19	Elephant Crisis Fund	International NGO	x	x	x
20	Ernest Kleinwort Charitable Trust	Foundation			x
21	European Commission	Multilateral Donor	x	x	x
22	Fondation Segré	Foundation	x	x	x
23	France	Donor Country	x	x	x
24	Full Circle	Foundation	x	x	x
25	Global Environment Facility	Multilateral Donor	x	x	x
26	Germany	Donor Country	x	x	x
27	Hermes Foundation	Foundation			x

No.	Organization	Donor Type	Data Collection Periods		
			2016 Report (2010–2016 data)	2018 Report (2016–2018 data)	2025 Report (2018–2023 data; Latin America: 2010–2023)
28	Hong Kong	Donor Country			x
29	James Thornton	Foundation			x
30	Japan	Donor Country	x	x	x
31	Liz Claiborne and Art Ortenberg Foundation	Foundation	x	x	
32	Marisla Foundation	Foundation			x
33	National Geographic Society	International NGO			x
34	Nationale Postcode Lotterij	Foundation			x
35	Netherlands	Donor Country	x	x	
36	Network for Social Change	Foundation			x
37	Norway	Donor Country	x	x	
38	Oak Foundation	Foundation	x	x	x
39	Pangolin Crisis Fund	International NGO			x
40	Panthera	International NGO			x
41	Paul G. Allen Family Foundation	Foundation	x	x	x
42	Peace Building Fund	Multilateral Donor			x
43	Peace Parks Foundation	International NGO			x
44	Prince Bernhard Nature Fund	Foundation			x
45	Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation	Foundation			x
46	Save the Elephants / Wildlife Conservation Network	International NGO			x
47	Save the Rhino	International NGO			x
48	Save the Rhino International	International NGO			x
49	Save Wild Tigers	Foundation			x
50	Spain	Donor Country	x	x	
51	Stop Poaching Stiftung	Foundation	x	x	
52	Sweden	Donor Country	x	x	x
53	Swedish Postcode Foundation	Foundation			x
54	The BAND Foundation	Foundation	x		x
55	The Baring Foundation	Foundation	x		
56	The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust	Foundation	x	x	

No.	Organization	Donor Type	Data Collection Periods		
			2016 Report (2010–2016 data)	2018 Report (2016–2018 data)	2025 Report (2018–2023 data; Latin America: 2010–2023)
57	The Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund	Foundation	x		
58	The Royal Foundation	Foundation	x	x	
59	The Rufford Foundation	Foundation	x	x	x
60	Turing Foundation	Foundation			x
61	Tusk Trust	Foundation	x	x	
62	United Kingdom	Donor Country	x	x	x
63	UK Postcode Lottery	Foundation			x
64	UNDP	Multilateral Donor	x	x	x
65	UNEP	Multilateral Donor	x	x	
66	United States	Donor Country	x	x	x
67	Undisclosed	Foundation			x
68	World Bank Group	Multilateral Donor	x	x	x
69	Wildlife Conservation Network	International NGO	x		x
70	WildAID	International NGO	x	x	
71	WildCat	Foundation	x	x	
72	WWF	International NGO	x	x	x
73	Zoological Society of London	International NGO	x	x	

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